



Mountain Telephone

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023

CONNECTION



Major upgrade

Super-fast internet coming to NE Powell County



HONE YOUR PHOTO SKILLS

SAIL AWAY



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Building the broadband workforce

Partnerships prepare for future growth

As we greet the new year, it's natural to look ahead to the next 12 months, which will again show our members supporting rural America by providing critical broadband internet service. It has been gratifying to see providers like yours working so furiously to build out broadband to communities still waiting for robust service while also serving existing customers. Yet, the work is never truly done.

Whether it is installations, upgrades or maintenance, there is certainly more than enough work to go around. That is why it is fitting that NTCA is stepping up to help broadband workers. Because retention and recruitment in rural markets is more challenging than urban areas, we are especially proud to work with some new partners to support the broadband providers we represent in creating a 21st century workforce.

We recently joined the White House's Talent Pipeline Challenge, a call to action for employers, education and training providers, and others to support equitable workforce development in critical infrastructure sectors like broadband. We have partnered with Northwood Technical College, the National Rural Education Association and the Communications Workers of America to expand training and job opportunities for rural America's broadband workforce.

These efforts seek to prepare for immediate growth in the broadband industry because of significant funding for network deployment in the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, as well as future demand for high-tech jobs.

It's an exciting time to work in broadband, and you are fortunate to live somewhere served by a committed community-based provider. As connections grow, so will the number and skills of broadband workers. Stay tuned for more information soon from your provider about these initiatives.

Happy New Year. 🍀

A nourishing change

FCC embraces new broadband labels

Rural broadband providers have a deserved reputation for openness, but not every national company can say the same — shopping for service can be trying.

The Federal Communications Commission, however, intends to require internet providers to prominently display a “nutrition label” clearly detailing the specifics of each plan. The FCC passed a rule late last year clearing the way for this change, although implementation may take time and require additional input.

The intent is to eliminate hidden fees, confusion about data caps and uncertainty about speeds and generally to shine a bright light on what can be a confusing choice.

Each label will show key information — details wise consumers should consider now:

- Monthly price and contract length
- Whether that price will change after a certain period and, if so, what it will change to
- A complete list of monthly and one-time fees, as well as any early termination fee
- Whether the company participates in the Affordable Connectivity Program and a link to check if the consumer qualifies
- Typical download and upload speeds
- Data cap and price for exceeding that cap
- And more

The FCC must complete additional steps before implementing this change, and internet service providers will have time to update websites and other sales material. 🗨️

THE INFORMATION YOU NEED

The FCC is working to limit confusion about broadband services by creating a “nutrition label” providers must display to consumers. While implementation might take time, the example label provided by the FCC offers a guide to information shoppers might consider now when choosing a service.

Broadband Facts

Provider Name
Service Plan Name and/or Speed Tier
Fixed or Mobile Broadband Consumer Disclosure

Monthly Price [\$]

This Monthly Price [is/is not] an introductory rate. [If introductory rate is applicable, identify length of introductory period and the rate that will apply after introductory period concludes]

This Monthly Price [does not] require[s] a [x year/x month] contract. [only required if applicable; if so, provide link to terms of contract]

Additional Charges & Terms

Provider Monthly Fees <small>[Itemize each fee]</small>	[\$]
One-time Fees at the Time of Purchase <small>[Itemize each fee]</small>	[\$]
Early Termination Fee	[\$]
Government Taxes	Varies by Location

Discounts & Bundles
Click Here for available billing discounts and pricing options for broadband service bundled with other services like video, phone, and wireless service, and use of your own equipment like modems and routers. [Any links to such discounts and pricing options on the provider's website must be provided in this section.]

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
The ACP is a government program to help lower the monthly cost of internet service. To learn more about the ACP, including to find out whether you qualify, visit affordableconnectivity.gov.

Participates in the ACP [Yes/No]

Speeds Provided with Plan

Typical Download Speed	[] Mbps
Typical Upload Speed	[] Mbps
Typical Latency	[] Ms

Data Included with Monthly Price [] GB

Charges for Additional Data Usage [\$/GB]

Network Management [Read our Policy](#)

Privacy [Read our Policy](#)

Customer Support
Contact Us: example.com/support/ / (555) 555-5555

Learn more about the terms used on this label by visiting the Federal Communications Commission's Consumer Resource Center.

fcc.gov/consumer

[Unique Plan Identifier Ex. F0005937974123ABC456EMC789]

GONE PHISHING

Don't get hooked by a ransomware attack



If you lost access to everything on your personal or work computer, how much would you pay to get it back? It's a question more people are asking themselves as ransomware attacks have continued to grow in number and severity.

About 21% of all cyberattacks in 2021 were ransomware attacks, according to IBM Security, costing individuals and businesses an estimated \$20 billion. From 2013 to 2020, the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center saw a 243% increase in ransomware reports. That growth comes thanks to services that offer ransomware-for-hire and the increased popularity of cryptocurrency, which make untraceable payments to these services easier than ever.

The FBI does not recommend victims of these attacks pay the ransom. Victims rarely see their data returned, and payment only encourages future attacks. Instead, the best protection against ransomware is to understand how it works, where it comes from and how to protect your data from the start.

WHAT IS RANSOMWARE?

Ransomware is a type of malware, or malicious software, which locks the victim

out of data on their computer until they pay for access to be restored. Most ransomware attacks target individuals, although attacks on large organizations with even bigger payouts have grown in popularity.

In the past, these situations largely involved attackers demanding a ransom to unlock the data. Today, most are "double extortion" assaults in which attackers demand payment for returning the data and to prevent it from being stolen again.

WHAT CAUSES IT?

Ransomware can infect your computer in many of the same ways as any other virus:


- **Phishing emails** — These emails trick users into downloading a malicious attachment disguised as a harmless file or visiting a website that can download the ransomware through their browsers.
- **Software vulnerabilities** — Hackers can find holes in a piece of software's cybersecurity protection or buy information on these flaws to download the malware onto a device or network.
- **Stolen logins** — Whether they're obtained through phishing, purchased on the dark web or hacked by brute force,

stolen credentials give cybercriminals direct access to download malware onto a device.

- **Repurposed malware** — Some ransomware is actually malware developed for other attacks like stealing bank information, and it's reworked to encrypt and lock personal data.

HOW CAN I AVOID IT?

Since paying attackers is not a reliable way to deal with ransomware, the best defense is to protect yourself and your devices before an attack can begin:

- Keep backups of any important data to eliminate most of the leverage an attacker might have.
- Update your computer's software and operating system regularly to protect against the latest threats.
- Update your computer's cybersecurity tools to help response teams detect and react to new ransomware attacks faster.
- Always be aware of phishing, social engineering and other strategies that can lead to a ransomware attack. 

TO LEARN MORE, visit www.stopthinkconnect.org.

Are you ready for the future?

Embrace 2023 and beyond

Happy New Year! This is always an exciting time, because in so many ways the months ahead seem like a fresh canvas waiting to be filled with plans, hopes, dreams, accomplishments and more. But if you're like many of us, a little bit of 2022 may linger.



SHAYNE ISON
General Manager

Maybe it's that credit card bill showing holiday purchases, some unfinished to-dos or paperwork needed for the march toward filing taxes, but last year's odds and ends tend to stick around. Really, how things went in the previous 12 months can inform how you approach 2023 because we rarely start completely fresh.

For example, as a business, our past performance informs us about our budget, the status of our infrastructure and the well-being of our staff. That's just a start. I imagine it's the same for most of you.

But, what if you relied on future-proof tools and strategies as a foundation you know will work not only today but for the next year? Even better, what if that system adapted as the rest of your life changes — a bigger family, a more demanding job or what-

ever else comes your way? You're ready.

Well, for us at Mountain Telephone that bedrock system does exist. We've invested in core technologies that are as future-proof as possible. Naturally, I'm talking about our fiber optic internet network, which is a true wonder woven throughout our community. Consider this: A single strand of optical glass fiber is three times stronger than steel and more durable than copper. It's still flexible, though.

As you know, there are immediate benefits for every home and business connected to this lightning-fast internet network. From telehealth and work-from-home opportunities to digital music and streaming videos, fiber provides a conduit to the tools and resources you deserve.


Those are the realities of today. Now, what about tomorrow? This is where an already exciting technology becomes even more magical. Fiber optic technology is built to stand the test of time.

Our network already provides performance that is superior to many of the internet networks found in metropolitan areas. That's today.

Changes happen fast. From connected TVs, appliances, home security systems and more, internet usage is only increasing. Fortunately, fiber has the capacity to grow along with the demand. Upgrades, maintenance and more will certainly be required, but that core technology is ready for the future.

Those fiber optic cables are tiny but powerful, which is why we've made a significant investment in the fiber serving you so well. We know it's also capable of growing to meet our needs. Faster speed. More overall capacity. We're ready for the online tools, services and new devices only now being dreamed up.

So, as MRTC heads into 2023 and we wrap up the final few details from last year, we know the foundation is solid. We can confidently go forward with excitement and anticipation. Our investments of the past will pay dividends.

Best of all, we are taking this journey with you. I hope you're as excited about what comes next as we are. 

The Mountain Telephone Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative, © 2023. 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.

Send address corrections to:

Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative
P.O. Box 399 • 425 Main St., Suite A
West Liberty, KY 41472
Telephone: 606-743-3121

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jimmie Jones, 743 exchange
President

Katie Ison, 738 exchange
Vice President

Jodi Lawson, 768 exchange
Secretary

Susan Cable, 668 exchange
Treasurer

Jack Howard, 725 exchange
Director

Randy Halsey, 743 exchange
Director

Robert V. Bradley, 522 exchange
Director

Chris Dickerson, 738 exchange
Director

Mike Helton, 768 exchange
Director

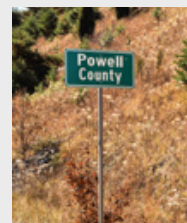
John Nickell, 662 exchange
Director

D. Joleen Frederick
Attorney

Produced for MRTC by:

Pioneer
UTILITY RESOURCES

On the Cover:



With help from a federal grant, Mountain Telephone will build a fiber network across a ruggedly beautiful stretch of Powell County.

See story Page 8.

Photo by William LeMaster

MOUNTAINS OF MONEY FOR SCHOOL!

Scholarship applications now being accepted

Mountain Telephone is proud to invest in our community by offering several ways to earn money for school. This year, we are excited to offer even more scholarships to help local students build bright and prosperous futures.

► **Mountain Telephone and Morehead State University scholarships**

- Multiple \$3,000 scholarships will be awarded.
- Scholarships are available to residents of Elliott, Wolfe, Morgan, Menifee and Bath counties who are attending Morehead State University.
- Application deadline is March 15.
- To find out more, visit www.moreheadstate.edu/scholarships or contact your high school guidance counselor.

► **Mountain Telephone and Maysville Community & Technical College**

- Multiple \$1,500 scholarships will be awarded.

- Scholarships are available to residents of Elliott, Wolfe, Morgan, Menifee and Bath counties who are attending Maysville Community & Technical College.
- Application deadline is April 15.
- To find out more, visit www.maysville.kctcs.edu or contact your high school guidance counselor.

► **Foundation for Rural Service scholarship**

- Multiple \$2,500 scholarships are awarded to students all over the country by FRS, a national nonprofit organization that advocates for rural telecoms.
- If a scholarship recipient from Mountain Telephone's territory wins, Mountain provides a portion of the scholarship money to FRS.
- Application deadline is Feb. 8.
- To find out more, or to apply, visit frs.org. Under the Programs tab, click on Scholarships.

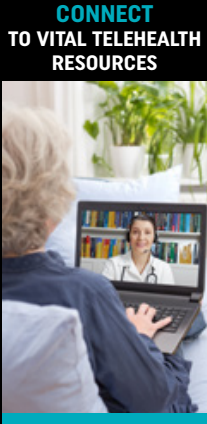
“The biggest mistake that students and their families make is they feel they wouldn’t qualify — they opt out.”
 — James Lewis, president and co-founder of the National Society of High School Scholars

LIVE BOLDLY

with better broadband



STREAM
HEALTHY COOKING TUTORIALS



CONNECT
TO VITAL TELEHEALTH RESOURCES



EXPLORE
REMOTE WORK OPPORTUNITIES



JOIN
A VIRTUAL “COUGH TO 5K” PROGRAM

With fast and reliable fiber internet from Mountain Telephone, there are no limits!

* Fiber broadband speeds vary based on availability.



Mountain Telephone
606-743-3121



Affordable Connectivity Program and MRTC internet

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a Federal Communications Commission program that helps connect families and households struggling to afford internet service.

The benefit provides up to \$30/month discount for internet service.

To find out if your household is eligible, visit fcc.gov/acp.

Brighten the winter

Plan now to cruise this year



Story by ANNE BRALY

When the days are cold, sun-down seems to arrive in the middle of the afternoon and skies are gray, there's no better time to turn daydreams of warm breezes, blue water and sand into reality. You might even save a little money while you're at it.

Cruising the Caribbean is a temptation thousands of people can't resist, and planning now can make a difference. "All of the major cruise lines have returned their fleets to full deployment," says Wes Rowland, president of cruiseexperts.com. "Cruising is back."

As a result, more cruise lovers are going to be on the water, and finding a deal for the best rooms and views is getting harder. There's so much to decide — dates, itineraries, cruise lines, room types and more. One of the first considerations is the port of origin. Fortunately, Southerners have options. In

Florida, you'll find ports in Tampa, Port Canaveral and Miami. Or, you can set sail from Charleston, South Carolina, or New Orleans. Even Galveston, Texas, can be a short, affordable flight away.

"It helps if you can find an experienced and trusted travel professional who can help you navigate the variables of a cruise purchase, understand your needs and expectations, help interpret value and give good guidance so you can make an informed decision in your best interest," Wes says.

The best cruise deals are not only about getting the lowest price. Cruise lines now offer attractive options, including amenities that once cost extra. Check out some of the top cruise sites online and you'll find that cruises now include more in the up-front price, such as beverage packages, tips, free specialty dining and Wi-Fi.

"It's a better value for the guest," Wes says. "Cruise lines took advantage of the unplanned downtime during the pandemic to retire the oldest ships from their fleets. With new ships coming on line, consumers have better choices of fabulous, amenity-packed ships than ever."

For example, Norwegian's 2023 schedule includes a seven-night cruise of the Western Caribbean, April 9-16, 2023, in a suite with a balcony for \$899 per person with double occupancy. The offer includes unlimited bar, a specialty dining experience, excursions and Wi-Fi.

CONSIDER 'SHOULDER SEASON'

Supply and demand determine rates, so if your travel dates are flexible take advantage of what budget cruisers consider the Holy Grail of deals — shoulder season. This window between the peak

blues



With cruises booking up for spring, planning now will help you find the adventure and pricing you want. So brighten the winter gloom with dreams of the sea.

and off-seasons, from late September through mid-November, offers the best deals and smaller crowds. “Sometimes it’s just the perception of when it’s better or worse to travel. You need to know what your priorities are,” Wes says.

TIPS FOR BUYING A CRUISE

If you choose to go it alone, do your homework. There’s no guarantee you’ll find the lowest rate, but these tips from cruiseexpert.com will help you be smarter about buying your vacation:

- Final deposits are due three months before the cruise. Usually, that’s the last date a cruise can be canceled without a penalty. This is when you can snag a good deal as cruise lines slash rates to try to fill empty cabins.
- Book for fall or spring when most families with school-age children cannot travel. There’s typically more

availability, and lower pricing, during these times.

- If you’re willing to risk it, book a Caribbean cruise during hurricane season when prices are much lower. Just be sure to invest in travel insurance and make sure your prepaid deposits and other expenses are covered.
- Aggregate sites — independent websites offering trips on multiple cruise lines — allow you to check out many options at once. Sites include cruisecritic.com, gotosea.com, cruises.com and cheapcruises.com.
- If you’re new to cruising and want to see if it’s right for you, try taking a short, two- to three-night cruise first. Royal Caribbean’s recently refurbished Freedom of the Seas is one option. It makes short cruises between Miami and the Bahamas. [👉](#)

Ready to set sail?

As cruise season is back and moving full steam ahead, here are some of the newest vessels sailing the high seas:

- ▶ Royal Caribbean's Odyssey of the Seas embarked on its first cruise in 2021 and is the first Quantum Ultra-Class Ship in North America offering bumper cars, glow-in-the-dark laser tag and virtual reality games. Passengers can kick back and relax beside the newly designed, resort-style pool. This ship is a game-changer for the cruise industry.
- ▶ Princess Cruises' Enchanted Princess launched in 2019 and offers a touch more sophistication than ships geared toward the teenage set. Dining options are excellent on all the cruise line's Medallion Class vessels, the category to which the Enchanted Princess belongs.
- ▶ MSC Cruises' Virtuosa set sail in 2019. There's a humanoid robot bartender in the Starship Club. The ship has the longest LED dome at sea, and it towers over a promenade of retail shops and restaurants. There are five pools that range from a waterpark for the kids to a quieter place to relax for adults.



GAME CHANGER

Mountain leads the way with fiber expansion and faster speeds

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Parts of Northeastern Powell County can expect a big boost to their internet speeds and more reliable connectivity thanks to Mountain Telephone and a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utility Services.

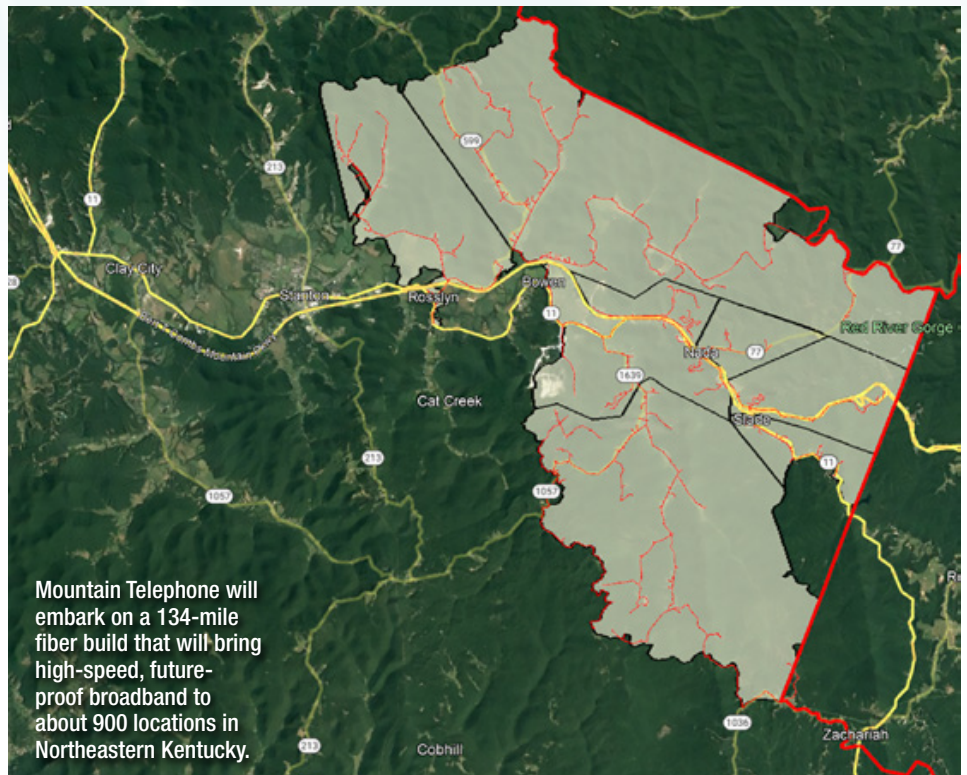
The \$12.5 million project will build a cutting-edge fiber broadband network in Slade and areas in and around Natural Bridge State Park Resort — fast-growing tourism destinations currently grappling with slow connections, interference and spotty internet access. In comparison, the upcoming 134-mile fiber build-out will provide more than 900 locations with some of the fastest broadband speeds available anywhere in the country. The project is expected to begin soon.

It’s an important development for the region, and Mountain is pleased to be part of it, says Shayne Ison, CEO and general manager of Mountain Telephone. “What a privilege to have been awarded this grant to extend fiber to our neighbors,” he says. “We are grateful that our board of directors has the foresight to always be proactive when serving our co-op members, and now, our adjoining neighbors.”

GETTING THE JOB DONE RIGHT

Ricky Pennington, director of business development, says the county’s steep hills, rugged terrain and low population density made it unappealing for national, for-

profit internet service providers to build high-speed broadband networks here. “That’s the reason it’s cost so much to get fiber into the territory,” he says. “It’s a rough build.”



Mountain Telephone will embark on a 134-mile fiber build that will bring high-speed, future-proof broadband to about 900 locations in Northeastern Kentucky.



Photography by William LeMaster

But Mountain Telephone's priorities aren't about massive profits for out-of-town shareholders. "Our main motivation is to provide top-level service so our customers can have the very best internet out there," Pennington says. "It doesn't matter if you live in the hollows of Kentucky. Your internet is going to be just as good or better than it is in Los Angeles, New York City and Chicago."

It's a mindset that keeps Mountain Telephone moving to the forefront of technology, even as much larger cities across the U.S. struggle with slow internet speeds and deteriorating copper wires. According to a recent study by the Fiber Broadband Association, only 43% of U.S. households have access to fiber internet, which is considered fast, reliable and future-proof in the constantly changing world of technology. "Any dollar we get, we want it funneled toward always looking to the future and that next step," Pennington says. "We want our customers to realize Mountain Telephone is a company that looks to the future and wants to offer that next state-of-the-art service coming down the road."



MORE GIGS

Staying on top of the technology game isn't just lip service for Mountain Telephone. It's not about being the best or winning awards. It's about improving the lives of the people in the community. In recent years, fiber technology has become a crucial infrastructure in an increasingly digital world because it fuels education, health care, businesses, tourism and other economic development.

Currently, Mountain Telephone offers packages that go up to speeds of 1 Gig. But that limit could change soon, as the company upgrades electronics that will enable speeds of 2 Gigs. When the Eastern Powell County build-out is complete, it will already be outfitted for speeds that could ultimately reach 10 Gigs.

Most households won't find the enhanced speed necessary just yet, Pennington says. "The 1G speed is more than enough for most of our customers' needs, unless they are taking advantage of virtual reality services, like Oculus VR," he says, referencing the systems with head-mounted displays and controllers for games and work training. "VR eats up a lot of bandwidth, so anybody using that technology might want to look at 2G."

Still, higher speeds are expected to become necessary in the near future as digital devices grow more sophisticated. "As tech progresses, we're going to need more and more bandwidth," Pennington says. "We want to be set up to provide that for any future applications that may come down the road." 🗨️

LEFT: The natural bridge in Natural Bridge State Park in Slade.

PHOTOS ABOVE: Mountain Telephone is heading up a \$12.5 million project to bring a cutting-edge fiber broadband network to Slade and areas in and around Natural Bridge State Park Resort.

WHAT IS A GIG?

Simply put, having Gig speed from your internet provider means everything you do online is better. Streaming movies and TV shows? Easier. Gaming? Faster. Sharing pictures and files? Seamless.

A Gig, or gigabit, is a unit of measurement. A gigabit, or Gb, is 1,000 megabits. A megabit is 1,000 bits. Many internet carriers throughout the U.S. commonly offer speeds of 10 megabits per second, or Mbps. This is the rate of speed at which information goes from its source to devices. That information could be anything from music to movies and videos, while devices are things like computers, tablets, smart TVs and gaming consoles. The rate of speed also affects home alarm systems, Wi-Fi and any devices that require the internet to function.

A study released by the Fiber to the Home Council found that communities with widely available access to Gig-speed internet make more money, making these speeds an undeniable perk for entrepreneurs, small businesses and big industries alike. In addition, companies that offer higher-paying jobs often only want to relocate to places with strong internet infrastructure, the study notes.

8 apps for every pet owner



Story by DREW WOOLLEY

New pets are always popular gifts around the holidays. But the new year is when the responsibility for all that feeding, walking and those never-ending bathroom breaks can really set in. Fortunately, technology is here to help you stay on top of all of your new best friend's needs, from training and wellness to games and socialization. Check out these apps to see how they can make pet care simpler, whether you're a new pet owner or an amateur zookeeper.



Puppr — Every new dog owner could use some help with training. With Puppr, you have access to training videos, over 100 lessons,

live chats with trainers, progress tracking and more. Celebrity dog trainer Sara Carson leads the programs, and your pup will be able to keep up with her “super collies” in no time.



Cat Training Tips — If you're looking to establish ground rules with a new feline friend, the more streamlined Cat Training

Tips app is a good reference for practical tips on common issues like litter box training and scratching.



Pet First Aid — Every pet owner worries about what to do in an emergency situation. The Pet First Aid app from the American Red

Cross has you covered. It offers step-by-step instructions for situations like your pet being attacked by another animal or eating something toxic. You can even learn how to give your pet CPR, check for warning signs and look up the closest veterinary hospital.



11pets — Keeping up with your pet's medical needs on top of your own can be a challenge, which is why it helps to have an app like

11pets to keep everything covered. Store your furry friend's medical history, medication and vet schedules, or track their weight and nutrition to make sure they're on the healthy path.



Cat Fishing 2 — Humans aren't the only ones who enjoy a good mobile game. Cat Fishing 2 from Friskies is designed specifically for

cats, and you can download it to your phone or tablet. Start it up, place your device on the floor and let your cat kill time swiping at colorful fish on the screen.



BarkHappy — If you're looking for dog-friendly people and places in your area, BarkHappy is the app for you. Use the interactive

map to find hotels, restaurants, bars and more where your dog will be welcome. You can also send out the call if your pup goes missing or find nearby dogs with whom to set up a play date.



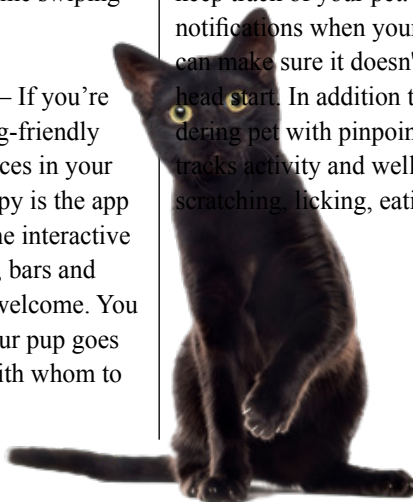
Rover — Rover is the top pet sitting app with over 200,000 caretakers in the U.S. and Canada. Rover's team handles the vetting,

and over 95% of reviewed services on the app have earned a five-star rating. Despite the name, Rover offers services for all kinds of pets, not just dogs. The app is also great for pet lovers looking for new job opportunities.



Whistle — You probably know an adventurous dog who likes to explore every chance it gets. With the

Whistle app and accompanying GPS tracker, it's never been easier to keep track of your pet. The app sends you notifications when your pet gets out so you can make sure it doesn't get too much of a head start. In addition to finding your wandering pet with pinpoint accuracy, the app tracks activity and wellness indicators like scratching, licking, eating and drinking. 🗨️



SIT, STAY, BINGE



Your furry friends might fetch the remote for these programs

With more TV shows streaming every day, there is more entertainment than anyone can keep up with. But did you know your pet might enjoy a good binge as much as you?

Programming for pets is on the rise but it's not a new idea. In 2012, the dog food brand Bakers began running a 60-second commercial targeted right at their canine consumers, complete with barking dogs to get their attention and high-pitched sounds human viewers couldn't hear.

If you're worried that your pets might get bored while you're away at work, or you just can't give them your full attention 24/7, consider some of this programming that can help stimulate, relax and even train your pet throughout the day.

DOGTV

When it comes to man's best friend, there's a dedicated streaming service to keep your dog happy and occupied. Available on major streaming devices like Roku, Chromecast and Apple TV, DOGTV offers a variety of programming.

Some programs offer playful sequences to prevent boredom and provide mental stimulation, while others offer calming scenes to keep pooches relaxed. Training programs help dogs get used to common

noises like doorbells and car sounds. There are even a few shows available for their humans.

SQUIRREL!

Think your furry friends might be getting bored while you're away from home? Many cats and dogs respond to videos of birds, squirrels and fish. Cats, in particular, are visual animals, making them more likely to be entertained and mentally enriched by watching the quick movements of prey across a screen.

Because dogs rely more on their sense of smell, breeds with better eyesight are more likely to show interest in the TV. They tend to respond to images of other dogs running or socializing and might try to interact as they would in real life by barking or sniffing. Fortunately, no matter what grabs your pets' attention, there are plenty of videos available on sites like YouTube designed to keep them occupied for hours while you're out.

FOR THE BIRDS

Birds can be extremely smart and emotionally sensitive animals, making it especially challenging to keep them occupied. Many birds have a natural interest in new sounds and colors, making the TV a

good way to keep them engaged throughout the day.

If you're trying to expand your feathered friend's vocabulary, some programming might even help to train them while you're out. Repetition is key for helping any bird pick up a new word or phrase, and there are numerous videos available that will repeat common phrases for hours on end. Hit play and run, keeping your bird mentally engaged while you're away.

FUN AND GAMES

If your cat likes to curl up next to you during a gaming session, consider adding "Stray" to your list. When BlueTwelve Studio released its cat-themed adventure game last year, it was an instant hit with cat owners. But it turns out the game was just as interesting to their feline friends.

Videos and photos of players' cats being entranced by the digital kitty on screen became so popular that PlayStation even put out the call for submissions for a charity event with the hashtag #StrayReactions. The best ones went into a digital photo book presented to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals along with a \$25,000 donation. That's a win for everyone. 🐾



Better-looking videos are just a few steps away

Here are some tips to help make sure your next video is your best one yet

Thanks to smartphones, recording and sharing videos has never been easier. Whether you're capturing precious moments to share with friends and family, showcasing your talents or documenting a moment the rest of the world needs to see, a high-quality video helps get your message across loud and clear.

CLEAN THE LENS — Sometimes it's easy to overlook the obvious. We're touching our phones constantly. We're taking them out of our pockets and purses multiple times a day, so they're bound to pick up a few fingerprints and smudges along the way. Take a second and give the lens a couple of swipes with a moistened cleaning wipe. No wipes? No worries — a quick breath and a swab with your shirttail can get the job done, too.

ORIENTATION — Make sure to turn your phone horizontally when shooting videos. Shooting horizontally, also called landscape orientation, results in a more aesthetically pleasing experience for viewers, and it looks great across multiple platforms, especially on wide screens. Shooting this way also allows you to capture more of the surroundings in the video.

STABILIZATION — Nothing is harder to watch than a shaky video. A simple way to make your video better is by using two hands to hold the phone steady. Instead of extending your arms, tuck your elbows in close to your sides and hold the phone closer to your chest. If a professional-quality video is what you're after, consider investing in a tripod or a gimbal to give your arms a rest. Also, many newer phones now include image stabilization features that can correct for inadvertent movements during shooting.

COMPOSITION — Take a moment to compose your shot before pressing the record button. For example, if you are making a video in a controlled environment, perhaps filming a tutorial in your home, look around and make sure the background is clear of anything you wouldn't want people to see.

LIGHTING — When recording indoors have the subject face a window if possible. If there is no natural light, consider purchasing an LED light ring. Light rings have become very popular and are an inexpensive way to make your video look professional. Avoid backlit settings, which can erase a person's features on video and replace them with a dark figure instead.

ZOOM CAUTIOUSLY — While the digital zoom option is a nice feature to have, using it while recording can result in an awkward-looking video. Instead, to keep the image crisp, take the time to frame the shot before recording and avoid using the zoom. Unless you're planning to use the zoom distortion as an effect, get as close to the subject as you safely can to preserve the image quality. 📷

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Smoothly navigate internet slowdowns



Your internet-connected devices are the last stops in a river of information bringing you entertainment, business services, communications tools and so much more. Sometimes, however, a clog upstream can turn a digital cascade into a trickle. Streaming movies lag. Websites become slow to load. File uploads take time. When slowdowns occur, it's helpful to understand potential chokepoints.



KNOTTED UP: It doesn't happen often, but there are times when the internet itself has difficulties. A storm might disrupt a massive data center — a place storing hundreds of computers. Or a technical glitch might cause the modern equivalent of a wrong phone number. It's doubtful all services will go out — the internet lives by redundancy. So, a quick Google search should give you the details. Then, a little patience is the cure.



THE LOCAL LINK: Cables carrying massive amounts of information connect our local systems to the broader internet. Our professionals work hard to keep everything up and running. If trouble does occur, we'll be on top of it. A check of our social media will give you the lowdown if there's a problem.



THE NETWORK: Fiber optic lines running through our community use beams of light to transmit digital information to homes and businesses. Rarely, an accident or storm might disrupt this network. Again, if there is a problem our social media will let you know. And remember, we'll make repairs as fast as we safely can.



THE BOX: On the outside of your home, you'll find a vital device. We call it the ONT, and it makes it possible to deliver services like TV, voice and data. If you're having trouble, we may remotely reset the ONT to get you up and running again.



THE WI-FI ROUTER: Your router keeps you connected, wirelessly. Turning the router on and off can unclog a surprising number of internet logjams. But keep in mind, multiple devices connected at once, appliances like microwaves, the distance between the router and your devices and more can all impede the performance of your Wi-Fi network. However, we're here to help.

When in doubt, give us a call at 606-743-3121.

AIR FRYERS

can solve dinnertime dilemmas

The savior of simple dishes and leftover pizza

Air fryers have crisped their way into America's heart. Ranging from models with one knob and a basket to others with lots of bells and whistles, they've become as common in the American kitchen as toasters and coffeepots.

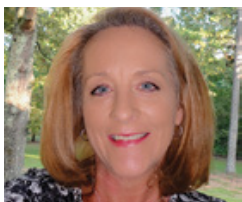
So how do you know which air fryer is the best fit for you?

You'll become a champion of the air fryer with the Ninja. Priced around \$150, it has a large basket and multiple settings that allow for dehydrating, reheating, baking and, oh yes, air frying. If you plan to do a good bit of cooking in your air fryer, this may be the model for you.

But if you're cooking for one, or just want to see if an air fryer is right for you, then a less-expensive option like Dash's air fryer — \$49.95 at online retailers — might be better. With just one setting and a compact size, it's perfect for one baked potato, a handful of French fries or a chicken thigh or two. It comes in multiple colors to add a little pizzazz to your kitchen counter.

It goes without saying that air frying is a healthier alternative to deep frying. Think of an air fryer as multiple appliances in one. It cooks quickly like a microwave, toasts like a toaster oven and fries like a deep fryer.

These kitchen wonders work magic on vegetables, proteins and baked goods because they're basically small convection ovens. They have a fan-and-exhaust system that blows hot air across your food for even cooking and browning. It works just as well whether you're making breaded onion rings from the freezer, roasting fresh broccoli or frying up some wings. Baking powder in the rub helps make air fryer wings crispy.



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

Photography by MARK GILLILAND | Food Styling by RHONDA GILLILAND



AIR FRYER CHICKEN WINGS

- 12 chicken wings, whole
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 cup Buffalo hot sauce
- black pepper. Toss wings until fully covered. Place the wings in a single layer — as many as will fit without overlapping — on the air fryer basket.

Air fry the wings at 380 F for 20 minutes, flipping them every 5 minutes. Increase the temperature to 400 F and cook an additional 2 minutes for extra crispy skin. Use a digital meat thermometer to ensure the internal temperature is 165 F.

Carefully remove the wings from the air fryer, cover with Buffalo sauce and serve with your favorite sides.



CRISPY AIR FRYER POTATOES

- 1 pound small Yukon Gold potatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning (optional)
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Lemon wedge, for serving
- Freshly chopped parsley, for garnish

In a large bowl, toss potatoes with oil, garlic powder, Italian seasoning and Cajun seasoning, if using. Season with salt and pepper.

Place potatoes in basket of air fryer and cook at 400 F for 10 minutes. Shake basket and stir potatoes, and then cook until potatoes are golden and tender, 8 to 10 minutes more. Squeeze lemon juice over cooked potatoes and garnish with parsley before serving.

AIR FRYER EGG ROLLS

- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1/2 pound ground pork or ground chicken
- 4 cups coleslaw mix
- 1/2 cup matchstick-cut carrots
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 green onions, sliced
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons rice or white vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon Chinese 5-spice seasoning
- 12 egg roll wrappers
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sweet chili sauce, duck sauce or hot mustard sauce, for dipping

Heat sesame oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the pork and cook until crumbled and cooked through, about 4 minutes. Add the coleslaw mix, carrots, ginger and garlic. Cook 2-3 minutes or until the cabbage has wilted.

Remove from the heat; stir in the green onions, soy sauce, vinegar, pepper, salt and 5-spice seasoning. Transfer to a plate and let cool slightly.

Place 1 egg roll wrapper flat on a work surface with the points of the wrapper facing up and down (like a diamond). Place about 1/3 cup of the pork/chicken mixture in the middle of the wrapper. Dip your fingers in water and dampen the edges of the wrapper. Fold the left and then right points of the wrapper in toward the center. Fold the bottom point over the center just like you would a burrito, rolling the wrapper toward the remaining point to form a tight cylinder. Press edges to seal. Place on a plate and cover with a dry towel. Repeat the process with remaining wrappers and pork/chicken mixture.

Preheat the air fryer to 375 F and spray the air fryer basket with cooking spray. Brush the tops of the egg rolls with olive oil. Working in batches, place the egg rolls in the basket and cook 7 minutes. Flip the egg rolls over and brush with more oil. Cook for an additional 2 minutes. Serve with your favorite dipping sauce. 📺





Mountain Telephone

P.O. Box 399 • 425 Main St., Ste. A
West Liberty, KY 41472

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
HILLSBORO, OR
PERMIT No. 66

SAMSUNG



**Galaxy
Z Fold4 | Z Flip4**

Appalachian
WIRELESS
An East Kentucky Network Company