



Mountain Telephone

The Mountain Telephone

MARCH/APRIL 2018

CONNECTION

LOCAL CELEBRITY

Former cafeteria
manager stars on
Food Network

TRASH TO TREASURE

Collinsworth turns junk yard
pieces into art

BIRTHDAY CELL-EBRATION

Happy 45th to the modern
mobile phone





BY SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Rural youth are the future

At NTCA and the Foundation for Rural Service, we believe an investment in our rural youth is an investment in the future of rural America.

That's why we are committed to making those kinds of investments. Each year, our partners at FRS award \$100,000 worth of scholarships to assist rural students in attending college or technical school. FRS also coordinates a trip each year for rural youth to visit Washington, D.C., and learn about the way our government works.

I am thrilled about the launch of the FRS Rural Youth App Challenge and excited to see the bright ideas that come from the minds of our rural youth.

I believe deeply in the importance of these programs, but for NTCA members like your local provider, support for our rural youth goes much deeper.

Your broadband provider works hard to bring a reliable internet connection to students' homes — and often their schools — to get the education they need. They make sure teachers can connect to the resources and research needed to provide quality instruction. And once these young men and women graduate, it will be your broadband provider whose service enables them to apply for jobs, start a business or work remotely.

I'm proud of the investments NTCA, FRS and our member telcos have made and will continue to make in the future of rural America. ☑



Apps play a big role in making life easier. They are often the fastest and easiest way to access social media, check the weather forecast, pay bills, listen to music, shop and access just about anything imaginable on the internet.

That's why the Foundation for Rural Service created the FRS Rural Youth App Challenge. Students will develop a concept for a mobile app that addresses a problem or improves a process in their rural community, or anywhere in rural America, says Jessica Golden, executive director of the Foundation for Rural Service. "Youth engagement is a huge part of what we do," she says.

The FRS is the charitable arm of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association and has been involved in scholarships, youth tours in Washington, D.C., and many other programs geared toward engaging the youth of America, Golden says.

It's all part of the emphasis on the importance of broadband, which is becoming a vital thread in the American fabric. "We want all our youth to see themselves as a gamechanger and a voice of the rural communities," she says. "We want them to think outside the box."

The App Challenge will judge students based on how well-researched and well-presented the app is. While the idea can be similar to an existing app, it must be an original idea.

The program launched Jan. 23, and the deadline for submissions for the contest is April 20. Students in grades 7-12 are eligible.

Either a single student or groups with as many as five participants may enter. A parent of at least one student in the group must be a member of a cooperative that is an NTCA member.

Winners will be announced in mid-to-late May. The winning team will receive \$1,000 in gift cards and Codecademy scholarships. The first 10 student applicants with complete applications will also receive a subscription to Codecademy-PRO, worth about \$84. ☑

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Go to frs.org, send an email inquiry to foundation@frs.org, or call 703-351-2026.

**HEY
TELEMARKETERS:**

DO NOT CALL!

The Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission established a National Do Not Call Registry. Joining this registry can drastically reduce the number of telemarketing calls you receive.

JUST THE FACTS ABOUT DO NOT CALL:

- Once you've registered, telemarketers have 31 days to stop calling your number.
- Register as many as three non-business telephone numbers. You can also register cellphone numbers — there is not a separate registry for cellphones.
- Your number will remain on the list permanently unless you disconnect the number or you choose to remove it.
- Some businesses are exempt from the Do Not Call Registry and may still be able to call your number. These include

political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors and businesses with whom you have an existing relationship.

Strict Federal Trade Commission rules make it illegal for telemarketers to do any of the following, regardless of whether or not your number is listed on the National Do Not Call Registry:

- Call before 8 a.m.
- Call after 9 p.m.
- Misrepresent what is being offered
- Threaten, intimidate or harass you
- Call again after you've asked them not to

**ATTENTION LOCAL
BUSINESS OWNERS:**


**Make sure you follow
the Do Not Call rules**

No matter if you're a one-person shop or a beloved company, local business owners should remember that National Do Not Call Registry rules and regulations apply to you. After all, you don't want to upset a loyal customer, or frustrate potential new customers, with unwanted phone calls.

If you are a company, individual or organization that places telemarketing calls, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the operations of the National Do Not Call Registry. Unless you fall under one of the established exceptions, such as telemarketing by charitable organizations or for prior business relationships, you may not make telemarketing calls to numbers included in the National Do Not Call Registry.

For information regarding National Do Not Call regulations, visit the National Do Not Call Registry at www.telemarketing.donotcall.gov. You can find the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission rules governing telemarketing and telephone solicitation at 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200 and 16 C.F.R. Part 310, respectively.

OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION:

The Do Not Call initiative, regulated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), requires telephone service providers to notify customers of the National Do Not Call rules and regulations. 

IT'S EASY!

**Add your number to the
Do Not Call Registry**

**Register online at
www.donotcall.gov
or call 888-382-1222.
For TTY, call 866-290-4236.**

You must call from the telephone number you wish to register.

Keeping our part of the ‘net’ neutral

It’s very rare that telecommunications policy grabs headlines, dominates social media feeds, and leads the news broadcasts. But that’s exactly what we saw after the FCC’s decision on net neutrality.



SHAYNE ISON
General Manager

It’s encouraging to see people around the country take stock, realize how important their broadband service is to their daily lives, and take action to protect it. Concerns over net neutrality have caused some of our members to email, call or message us on social media. I’m proud that our members are tuned in to the issues and willing to communicate with us about the future of their service.

The term “net neutrality” refers to policy that would prevent internet providers from interfering with selective forms of internet traffic through blocking or slowing down certain services or websites.

There’s a lot of conflicting information about how the regulations and the FCC changes to the rules will affect broadband, but I wanted to set the record straight for Mountain Telephone customers. Our No. 1 concern has been and will always be delivering to you the best

online experience possible. We do not throttle, prioritize or block any internet traffic unless it is illegal or interferes with the functioning use of the network. We have no plans change this in the future. Essentially, we are keeping our members’ connections net neutral.

I understand that many people have concerns about this ruling, but please know that Mountain Telephone has no intention of making changes to our service based on the FCC’s decision.

“I can’t speak for what other profit-driven corporate telecommunications providers may do, but we have been net neutral and will stay that way because it’s the right thing to do for our customers.”

I can’t speak for what other profit-driven corporate telecommunications providers may do, but we have been net neutral and will stay that way because it’s the right thing to do for our customers.

The only thing the FCC’s decision will change for us will be reducing the amount of regulation hanging over small telcos. Representatives from NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association — which represents 850 small, rural, community-based member companies like ours — testified to this before congressional committees. While some regulation is needed in our industry, time and effort spent complying with regulation is time and effort we’d rather spend on growing and improving our network and customer service features.

NTCA Senior Vice President Michael Romano told Congress the 2015 rule’s “heavy-handed regulatory burdens can be distracting at best or devastating at worst.”

In summary, some experts would have us believe that the removal of net neutrality rules is a threat to the internet as we know it. But here at Mountain Telephone, we’re going to keep your internet service open and free as you enjoy it today — and will work hard to make it even better tomorrow. 📞

PLEDGE: Mountain Telephone does not throttle, prioritize or block any internet traffic, unless it is unlawful or interfere’s with the network’s operation.

The Mountain Telephone

CONNECTION

MARCH/APRIL 2018

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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 12,000 members.

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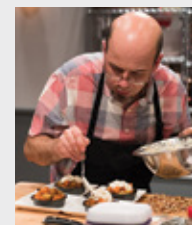
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On the Cover:



Food Network Star Jason Smith is the former cafeteria manager at Isonville Elementary School in Isonville, Kentucky. See story Page 8.



Calling all photographers!

Mountain Telephone is now accepting photo contest submissions

Let your creativity and skill shine in this year's contest to show the beauty of Bath, Elliott, Menifee, Morgan and Wolfe counties.

Submit your photos today for the chance to have one featured in the 2019 Mountain Telephone directory and calendar.

Each submission can include two photographs. Mountain Telephone prefers that images and files are sent digitally by emailing a high-quality JPEG to Lisa Fannin at lfannin@mountaintelephone.com.

Prints will also be accepted if they are either 4-by-6 inches or 5-by-7 inches and in color. These can also be mailed, along with a completed entry form for each, to Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative, ATTN: Photo Contest, P.O. Box 399, West Liberty, KY 41472.

Please attach a label to the back of each print with your name and address. Prints will not be returned to the sender.

Photographs will be judged on the basis of creativity, photographic quality and effectiveness of conveying the beauty of Bath, Elliott, Menifee, Morgan or Wolfe County. Winners will be notified in September using information provided on the entry form.

Entries must be submitted by the original photographer, who has sole ownership of any copyright. By entering this contest, you agree to have your photograph displayed on the MRTC directory or annual calendar without any fee or other form of compensation.

Visit www.mrtc.com for more information on the contest, rules and the submission form.

Mountain offices to close Good Friday

Mountain offices will close Friday, March 30, in honor of Good Friday. The cooperative wishes you and your family a happy Easter.



Spring forward!

Don't forget to move your clocks forward one hour!
Daylight saving time begins at 2 a.m. on
Sunday, March 11, 2018.

TAKING IT LOW AND SLOW

ON THE TRAIL FOR

THE BEST BBQ IN THE SOUTH

BY ANNE BRALY

Other regions of the country have certainly tried to imitate, but none have been able to duplicate the barbecue found in states across the South. Some restaurants have different sauces, while others are known by the type of wood they use for smoking. But all are known for the magical spell they put on the grill. Just follow the smoke from state to state on this road trip around the South to get your 'que on.

Owensboro, Kentucky — Moonlite Bar-B-Que Inn

2840 W. Parrish Ave.

It once said, "Bahhh," but your taste buds will say, "Ahhh," when you bite into the barbecued mutton that put Moonlite on the map. Order it by the plate, on a sandwich or by the pound, and don't forget an order of the famous Kentucky burgoo. There's a barbecue buffet serving lunch and dinner and a dine-in menu with traditional pork or beef barbecue, catfish and chicken.

Memphis, Tennessee — Central BBQ

147 E. Butler Ave., 2249 Central Ave. and 4375 Summer Ave.

Memphis is in the heart of the barbecue belt, so it's hard to visit and not find a good pit. Central, though, is consistently ranked in the top three and always comes home from competitions with a trophy. So when you want to pig out on ribs, pork, chicken, turkey, brisket, sausage and even bologna, Central can't be beat. No sauce meets the meat until the latter comes out of the smoker, and even then, not until you order. The spice mixture has been a deeply held secret since the first Central opened in 2002. Now, there are three locations, all of which have been featured in national publications, and it's a favorite stop for TV food personalities, too.

Little Rock, Arkansas — Whole Hog Cafe

2516 Cantrell Road; 12111 W. Markham St.; and 5107 Warden Road, North Little Rock

It's no small feat to garner a win in the esteemed Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, but Whole Hog has done it three times with two second-place wins for its ribs and a first-place for its whole hog. What began as a food truck in a parking lot in Little Rock has now spread across the nation, but its heart belongs in Little Rock, where you can order a simple pulled pork sandwich or get a taste of it all with the Ultimate Platter, which includes pulled pork, smoked beef, smoked chicken, ribs, three sides and dinner rolls. Hungry yet?

Dallas, Texas — Pecan Lodge

2702 Main St.

In a state known for its barbecue, Pecan Lodge was named one of the top four barbecue joints in the world — that's a pretty big deal. But owners Justin and Diane Fourton say they weren't out to set the world on fire, just the seasoned woods they put in the pit to smoke their mouthwatering brisket, among other meats. It's well worth the hour-long wait you might encounter. Order the brisket on a sandwich or by the pound, or have it piled into a salt-crust sweet potato with cheese, spicy sour cream, butter and onions. It all smacks of Southern comfort.

Jackson, Mississippi — Pig & Pint

3139 N. State St.

This joint puts a spin on barbecue with its barbecue chicken tacos and pork belly corn dogs, while also offering traditional favorites like pulled pork, smoked brisket and barbecued chicken. It gives a nod to other regional cuisines, too. There are Asian smoked wings and fried boudin balls, a Louisiana favorite served with beer mustard and housemade bread-and-butter pickles. The menu may sound outlandish, but the food is a hometown favorite that's picked up awards, including best barbecue in Mississippi by firstwefeast.com.

Decatur, Alabama — Big Bob Gibson Bar-B-Que

1715 Sixth Ave. S. and 2520 Danville Road SW

Cross the Alabama border and ask for a good barbecue place and chances are you'll be directed to the town on the banks of the Tennessee River just south of the Tennessee border where Big Bob started cranking out the 'cue back in 1925. Gibson created his empire from smoked chicken smothered in white sauce, a recipe that's appeared in numerous publications, as well as in bottles sold online and in the restaurant. The menu expanded over the years to include every kind of smoked meat you may crave — pork butts, turkey breasts, whole chickens, brisket and ribs. And don't forget a slice of peanut butter pie.

Gainesville, Georgia — The Hickory Pig

3605 Thompson Bridge Road

When you envision a barbecue shack, the building housing The Hickory Pig is what comes to mind. From the stack of wood out front, to the giant pig in the parking lot, to the ramshackle building, it's a place with pure Southern small-town charm. And the food? Just bite into a fork-tender rib and you'll see why it's a favorite in the north Georgia area for barbecue. The Brunswick stew is not to be missed.

Spartanburg, South Carolina — Carolina BBQ and More

7115 Lone Oak Road

Southern Living named Carolina BBQ as the best barbecue joint in the state, a reputation built on finger-licking 'cue: St. Louis-style ribs, hickory-smoked chicken and turkey, brisket and pulled pork. Brunswick stew is made from scratch, and you won't shut up about the chocolate hush puppies. The red slaw is known as some of the best in the business, and you're welcome to take home a bottle of the barbecue sauce for yourself. 🍷



Phil Beaubien is the owner of The Hickory Pig barbecue shack in Gainesville, Ga.




Pig & Pint in Jackson, Miss., puts a spin on barbecue with dishes such as its pork belly corn dogs.



Big Bob's Bar-B-Que is famous for its smoked chicken served with white sauce so good they bottled it.



The barbecued mutton made Moonlite BBQ in Owensboro, Ky., famous.



Jason Smith was the winner of "Food Network Star," season 13.

HE'S A WINNER!

Jason Smith cooks up a sensation

BY ANNE BRALY

Life for Jason Smith has been as unexpected, as busy, as scattered and as frenzied as a "bee in a whirlwind."

Smith — a former cafeteria manager at Isonville Elementary School in Isonville, Kentucky — is the state's latest triple crown winner, having won Food Network's "Holiday Baking Championship" in 2016, followed by "Holiday Baking Championship: Adults vs. Kids" in 2016, and crossing the finish line in first place as the winner of "Food Network Star" 2017.

"Oh Lord honey, it's been a whirlwind, but a good one," he says in a drawl that's become familiar to the many fans who have welcomed

his bling, a wardrobe as bright and colorful as a rainbow, and his culinary techniques, which are modifications of many of his family recipes.

There are also the Jasonisms: "Finer than a frog hair split four ways" and "butter my butt and call me a biscuit." Or, "As happy as a possum eating sweet tater pie."

The 40-year-old's passion for cooking started while he was growing up in London, Kentucky. "You know, I went from being a country boy to a Food Network celebrity within a year's time," he says. "That's just something that doesn't happen to very many people."

From the streets of Grayson to the wide avenues of New York City, Smith's face is well-known. "When I'm home, it takes me three hours to go to the grocery store, but that's OK. It's nice. And even in



Judge Jason Smith and Judge Marcela Valladolid taste Adalberto Diaz Labrada's completed mini tarts, as seen on "America's Best Baker," season one.

New York — it's a foodie town, so many people watch the Food Network — people walk up to me and they're like, 'Oh, I don't mean to bother you, but we loved you on TV. You're one of our favorites.'"

Q: So you never received any formal culinary training. Where did you get the confidence to enter the Food Network's contests?

A: Everybody in that competition was classically trained except for me and one other person, Amy from Hawaii. They looked at me like they were thinking, "Oh, well, this is nobody and I can knock him off really quick." But as the competition went along, they started looking at me different, thinking, "Hmm, OK, he really does know what he's doing." Then when I entered "Food Network Star" and they found out I'd won "Holiday Baking," they were like, "OK, so Jason is somebody we're gonna have to watch out for."

I wasn't classically trained, but I've been cooking since I was 6 years old with my grandmother, my mom and my aunts. Through the years, I taught

myself. What I didn't learn from them, I would learn through research, and I kept trying until I got it right. So I really was trained. I was just trained the hard way, and I didn't have to take out any student loans.

Q: You were up against some heavy competition. Did that make you nervous?

A: It's one of those things. Food has always been a part of me. And if it's anything to do with food, it gives me total drive. I'm one of those people who likes to push myself to the boundaries. I like to work on things, learn new things.

Q: What was your first food competition?

A: It was a local contest, the "Iron Skillet Cook-Off," in 2013. I used my grandmother's fried apple pie recipe. The judges couldn't believe I used a recipe that old and made it new again. That's what I like to do — take old recipes and tweak them to make them new. I had a backstory that I could tell about the dish, too. I've always got a story to tie with every dish I make. I can tell you the first time I ever made chicken and dumplings.

That's why I'm called Coun-

try Bling. I take good country recipes and give them new life, freshen them up.

Q: Was there ever a time when you questioned whether you'd win?

A: Yes, during "Holiday Baking." We were told to make an edible box filled with goodies, and I had the worst day with that. It was horrible. It came out looking like a chocolate coffin. They even showed me saying that on television. But the treats inside totally blew their minds. I was in the bottom that week.

Q: Do you think you'll get your own show?

A: I was a judge on "Best Baker in America." But there are shows coming. We're in the process of getting everything pinned down.

Q: What's your dream show?

A: I see a lot of shows that are heavy on entrees or other savory foods. I want to flip that and start with dessert. It's kind of a flip-flop. But whatever we do, we're hoping to be able to call it Country Bling, because that's what I'm known for.

Q: What's the most-asked question you get now?

A: People ask me if the contests are as hard as they look.


Q: Are they?

A: Yes. They tell you you've gotta make, say, osso bucco, and I have 45 minutes to figure out how I'm going to make it and make a good presentation.

Q: What have you enjoyed most over the past year?

A: I have to say every single bit of it, from the traveling, to meeting all the different people, to being on television or in front of a crowd at a demo, to actually inspiring people to reach for what they've always wanted to do. That's something that has been truly big for me. I've gotten letters and emails from people who tell me that because of me, they've started reaching for their dreams again.

Q: That's a big compliment.

A: It is. It's huge. That's what I tell people. If they have a dream, don't ever stop reaching for it. 

FOLLOW JASON:

On Instagram:

official_chefjasonsmith

Tweet him: @lowcarb77

On Facebook: Lord Honey



Mobile phones turn 45

Wireline technology makes cellphone popularity possible

BY PATRICK SMITH

While you've likely heard of Steve Jobs, the influential entrepreneur and one-time leader of Apple, you probably don't know of Martin Cooper, a Motorola employee who made the first cellular phone call on April 3, 1973. Jobs' achievements with the iPhone, along with much of Apple's recent success with the device, wouldn't be possible without Cooper.

When Cooper stood in midtown Manhattan and placed a call 45 years ago, he forever changed how we communicate. Known as the father of modern cellphones, Cooper successfully connected to Bell Labs headquarters in New Jersey, calling on what would become the world's first commercial cellphone.

Much like Jobs' success was dependent on Cooper, today's cellular technology is dependent on a wired copper

and fiber optic backbone to connect wireless communications.

Wireless technology needs a hardwired foundation to operate. Without wireline technology, cellphones would neither be able to make calls nor use internet data.

THE WIRELINE BACKBONE

When it comes to cellphones and the wireline technology they need to operate, think of the concept like the wireless router in your home. A wired connection runs from the wall to your router so it can broadcast and receive a signal. The same principle applies to the fact that cellular phones need a wired connection to operate.

Copper and fiber lines running overhead and underground play a crucial role in carrying signals between more than 300,000 cell sites across the country. When you use your cellphone to make

a call or access the internet, your connection spends part of its journey on the same network that makes landline calls and internet connections possible.

RURAL TELCOS PLAY A VITAL ROLE

Telecommunications companies provide an essential service by keeping cellular callers connected in rural areas. Many rural telco providers supply wireline copper or fiber service to large cellular towers. These lines keep people connected when they are making cellular calls in rural regions, whether they're traveling through the area or residing there.

3G SPEEDS AND BEYOND

As fiber optic connections become more common, they also help to lay the groundwork for faster cellular speeds. The blazing-fast speed of fiber not only means faster upload

and download speeds for area homes and businesses, but it also means faster cellular data speeds.

Mobile data service — 3G, 4G and 4G LTE — relies on fast connections from telecommunications providers to cell towers, so users can have dependable mobile access to the internet.

While a release date has not been set, developers are working to create a new 5G technology, which could offer data speeds as fast as 10 Gbps. Peak 4G LTE speeds top out at about 50 Mbps today, making 5G potentially about 200 times faster.

And while it's impossible to predict the future and the developments that newer, faster cellular technology will bring, it's clear that progress isn't possible without a strong base of copper and fiber wireline technology to connect our calls and provide high-speed mobile data. ☞

Gadgets for the golden years

Los Angeles Times Publisher Ross Levinsohn once said, “The speed at which technology evolves affects everyone; we repeatedly hear that constant innovation is overwhelming for consumers, who struggle to keep pace.”

I couldn't agree more with that statement. It seems like as soon as I learn a new piece of software, or how to use the latest technology gadget, it becomes outdated and replaced with a newer version.

If it gets overwhelming for me — a professional who works with technology daily — I can just imagine how overwhelming it is for someone who considers themselves non-techie.

I want to take a bit of the guesswork out of researching technology and point out a few gadgets that I think are good starter items for those adopters in their golden years.

Tablet: Amazon Fire

The Amazon Fire is a great starter tablet for a couple of reasons. It is reasonably priced, coming in under \$100. It's great for watching movies or TV shows, checking email, playing games and, of course, reading books. The Fire even has a blue light filter that makes reading on the tablet less strenuous on



your eyes. If you have trouble reading small print, you can make the font larger so that it is easier to read, even without your reading glasses.

Gadget for a Non-Techie: Pix-Star Wi-Fi Picture Frame

If you are looking for a great gift for a parent or a grandparent, this is a good one. The picture frame is connected to Wi-Fi and has an email address. The system makes it very easy to add updated photos to the frame. Family and friends can simply email photos directly to the frame.

Medical Tech Gadget: MedMinder Pill Dispenser

Never worry about remembering to take your medicine at the right time each day. MedMinder can help you remember your meds by calling, texting or emailing you. Multiple features and differing models ensure the right style for different needs.

Voice Control Gadget: Amazon Echo Show

Once the Amazon Echo Show is set up, you can get the information you want easier. Ask the built-in helper, Alexa, for the temperature, score of the game, or a fact you can't

remember. My favorite feature of this device is the ability to “drop in” on loved ones to see how they are doing. Just by answering a call with your voice, you can see and hear the people you care about the most.

The best way to learn how to use the latest in tech gadgets is to give them a try. You never know; you may find you enjoy using them! 📱

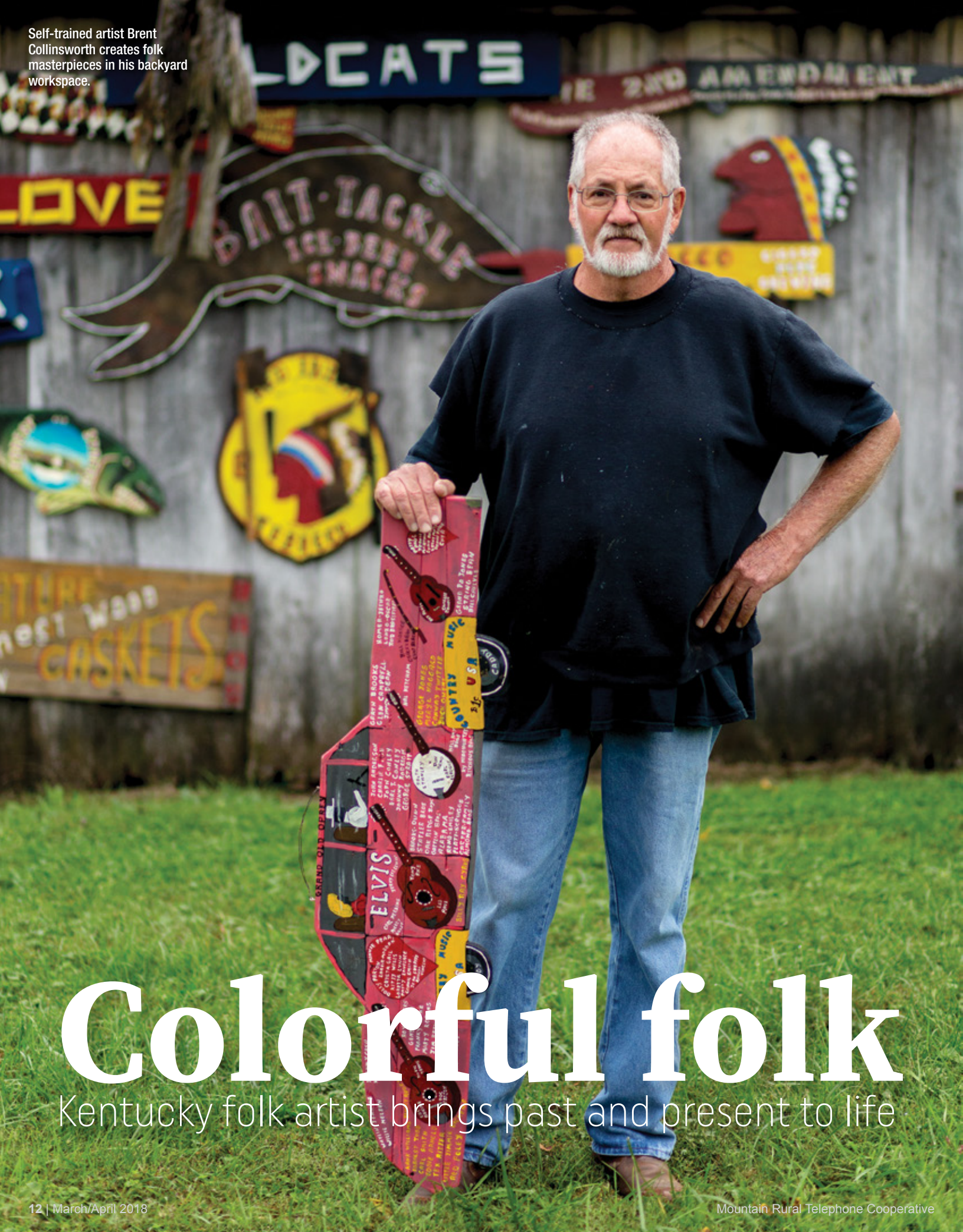


CARISSA SWENSON
IS A TRAINING AND EDUCATION CONSULTANT FOR CONSORTIA CONSULTING.

To learn more about the gadgets mentioned in the article, visit the following websites:


- ▶ www.amazon.com/fire
- ▶ www.pix-star.com
- ▶ www.amazon.com/echo-show
- ▶ www.medminder.com

Self-trained artist Brent Collinsworth creates folk masterpieces in his backyard workspace.



Colorful folk

Kentucky folk artist brings past and present to life



Brent Collinsworth creates unique fishing bobbers, including this one shaped like a duck, from cane and hand paints details.



Brent Collinsworth relies on his imagination and a paintbrush to breathe new life into an old trunk.

BY JEN CALHOUN

Brent Collinsworth's skill and lively mind create images of the past, present and future. Paintings of colorful, small-town scenes from his youth stand next to vivid, wooden pieces depicting Native American harpooners or fanciful fish people.

More often than not, the 74-year-old Hazel Green folk artist's work tells stories. Other times, it recalls the past with a rosy glow. And every once in a while, the art speaks directly to the viewer with a candid, political opinion and a wink of the eye.

Collinsworth, who has lived on the same farm all his life, is not a trained painter. He spent most of his life working as a special education teacher in public schools. "That was where I thought I had the chance to do the most good," Collinsworth says.

FROM FARM TO FOLK ART

Working part time, he keeps the family farm going. He planted and maintains about 600 black walnut trees scattered across about 10 acres. He says the plantation is a way to leave his three granddaughters something.

After retiring from education, Collinsworth found satisfaction in painting and selling fishing lures, bobbers and decoys. Later, he branched out to acrylic paintings and three-dimensional pieces using materials he finds at flea markets. He was soon approached by others interested in his art, and he is now featured alongside other Appalachian folk artists in a permanent display at the Kentucky Folk Art Center at Morehead State University.

"I just picked up painting because I wanted to make things look the way I wanted them to," Collinsworth says. "My lines are not always straight or whatever. I just like to color a story into the picture. It's like, maybe once upon a time you might have seen something like this or would like to have."

Collinsworth makes do with what he has or what he can find for cheap. He scours flea markets and junk shops for old, framed paintings, and then he paints over them. That way, he says, he has both the canvas and the frame.


He uses an old junk building on the farm to store his materials. But most of what he calls his "good pieces" are painted in the kitchen of his home. His family supports his art, though not everybody is pleased with the paint spills in the house, he says.

MUSINGS

Collinsworth's influences are varied. Sometimes, he sees works by other artists and gets the itch to tell his own stories. Other times, he is inspired by pictures from the old days in Kentucky.

"I just like the looks of old buildings and old street scenes and the signs and the people," he says. "I like seeing Kentucky the way it used to be. All these little towns around here used to be big time, and now they're all deserted."

Every so often, he throws a political jab into his works, but Collinsworth's views are not easily definable. Some of his pieces offer concern, frustration and a desire for peace-



Brent Collinsworth has a variety of influences in his art, including the old days of Kentucky, politics and his desire for peace.

ful relations. Other times, it's not difficult to imagine his eyes twinkling in delight as he creates.

"I do a few things just to irritate people," he says with a laugh. "I've got little political things stuck in here and there."

One of his paintings, "Death Rides a White Horse," features a skeleton riding a horse tattooed with the hammer and sickle emblem of the former Soviet Union while trampling over a field of skulls.

GOING FORWARD

Collinsworth doesn't yet have his own website, but he does have a part-time agent. He sells his pieces at the Kentucky Folk Art Center's store, at art exhibitions and at craft shows within a 100-mile radius of his farm. The people who buy his art are rich, poor and everything in between, he says.

"I've been at this for about 20 years," he says. "I guess I know my way around the folk art world. I like to ramble around, and this pays my way."

His work is also featured on the blog myappalachianlife.blogspot.com, which is devoted to all things Appalachian and seeks to "preserve, defend and propagate elements of Appalachian culture." He also welcomes buyers at his home. ☺

LOOKING TO BUY?

You can check out Brent Collinsworth's folk art on permanent display at the Kentucky Folk Art Center at Morehead State University. Some of his pieces are also on sale at the center's store. For other pieces or more information, call Collinsworth at **606-662-4091**.

Baking for spring with Jason Smith

Springtime baking means shedding the heavy ingredients of winter: “All that butter and those heavy chocolates,” says Jason Smith.

Smith, a resident of Grayson, Kentucky, once a cafeteria manager at Isonville Elementary and also a florist and caterer, was the 2017 Food Network Star. Just months before that win, he won Food Network’s “Holiday Baking Championship,” followed by a victory on “Holiday Baking: Adults vs. Kids.” In less than a year’s time, he baked his way to three major wins, making more than 50 dishes to impress the judges.

Smith’s successes in the food competitions came as no surprise, says Felicia Green, who served as a teacher and a principal at Isonville Elementary for 27 years before retiring in November 2016. “He always went the extra mile,” she says. “I remember he was always making things for us to put in the teachers lounge. And on TV, his personality is so genuine.”

In the past year, Smith has also been a judge for Food Network’s “Best Baker in America.” He now has a show of his own in the works, which he hopes to make “very dessert heavy.”

Smith’s earliest memories of cooking go back to a hot day on his family’s tobacco farm



Jason Smith was a school cafeteria manager in Kentucky before winning the Food Network’s “Holiday Baking Championship.”

in Laurel County, Kentucky. “I decided I didn’t want to be outside hoeing tobacco, so I went inside and asked my grandmother if I could stay and help her in the kitchen,” he recalls.

On the menu that day? Fried chicken, fresh corn on the cob, potatoes and strawberry shortcake made with berries from the garden, along with biscuits left over from breakfast that morning.

Smith says his grandmother saw something in him that day that others had dismissed. “She always told my mom about how much I loved to be in the kitchen, whether it was to wash the dishes or peel potatoes,” he says.

Cookbooks are one of Smith’s hobbies. He collects them and enjoys reading the stories behind the recipes. “I’ve taken so many recipes and switched things around to give the recipes new life,” he says.

That’s a trademark of his as evidenced by recipes he shares.



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



BLACKBERRY-GRAPE PIE

- Dough for double-crust pie
- 2 pints fresh blackberries
- 2 cups green grapes
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- Zest from 1 small lemon
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger
- 1 1/2 cups sugar

Heat oven to 350 F. Spray an 8-inch pie plate and place 1 sheet of dough in it, allowing edges to hang over. In a large mixing bowl, toss the berries and grapes in the cornstarch, lemon zest, ginger and sugar, stirring to coat. Pour into pie shell. Place other sheet of dough on top, and crimp the edges of the 2 sheets of dough together. Then, using a sharp knife, make 4 slits in middle of top to let steam escape. Brush with egg wash (one egg whisked with a little cold water) and place pie on cookie sheet. Tent pie with a sheet of aluminum foil and bake 30-45 minutes. Remove foil and bake a few more minutes to brown the top.



Lemon Chiffon Cake with Blueberry Mousse

LEMON CHIFFON CAKE WITH BLUEBERRY MOUSSE

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 unbeaten egg yolks
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons cold water
- 2 teaspoons lemon extract
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sifted cake flour
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme, minced
- 4 egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Blueberry mousse:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 2 pints fresh blueberries
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup finely chopped or grated/
shredded white chocolate

Heat oven to 325 F. Mix together oil, egg yolks, water, lemon extract and lemon zest. Sift dry ingredients together, then mix into the wet ingredients in a stand mixer until smooth. In another large bowl, combine egg whites and cream of tartar,

beat with a mixer until stiff peaks form. Pour batter over the beaten egg whites and gently fold with a figure-eight motion until all streaks disappear. Pour into a lined 13-by-18-inch sheet pan or rimmed cookie sheet and bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick stuck into middle comes out clean. Take out and let cool; cut into 1-inch squares.

Meanwhile, make the mousse: Place the cream and sugar in a large bowl and whip into stiff peaks. Then fold in the vanilla and half the blueberries.

To assemble: Place 1/3 of the cake cubes and then 1/3 of the mousse in a trifle bowl. Then sprinkle a few blueberries and some of the white chocolate over the top. Repeat layers until all the cake, mousse, berries and white chocolate are used. Make sure to save a few berries for the garnish. You can also garnish with fresh thyme sprigs on top. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight before serving. Serve with strawberry sorbet if desired.

CARROT CAKE WITH COCONUT FROSTING

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1 3/4 cups packed light brown sugar
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup tomato soup
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup grated fresh carrots

Coconut frosting:

- 4 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 cups shredded coconut
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 1/2 cups powdered sugar

Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 10-cup tube pan. In a bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, soda, salt, cinnamon and allspice. Place brown sugar, oil and eggs in stand mixer and mix till fluffy; add the vanilla extract and tomato soup and mix in. Then add the dry mixture. Turn the mixer on low and slowly drizzle in the buttermilk until combined, and then stir in the carrots. Pour into pan and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Let cool and frost with coconut frosting.

Coconut frosting: Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a skillet and add the coconut; toast until lightly brown, then place on a paper towel to cool. Cream the rest of the butter and cream cheese till fluffy in a stand mixer; mix in milk and vanilla extract, then slowly add the powdered sugar, mixing well. Fold in 1 3/4 cups of the cooled coconut. Frost cake and sprinkle remainder of coconut on top. 📺



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