



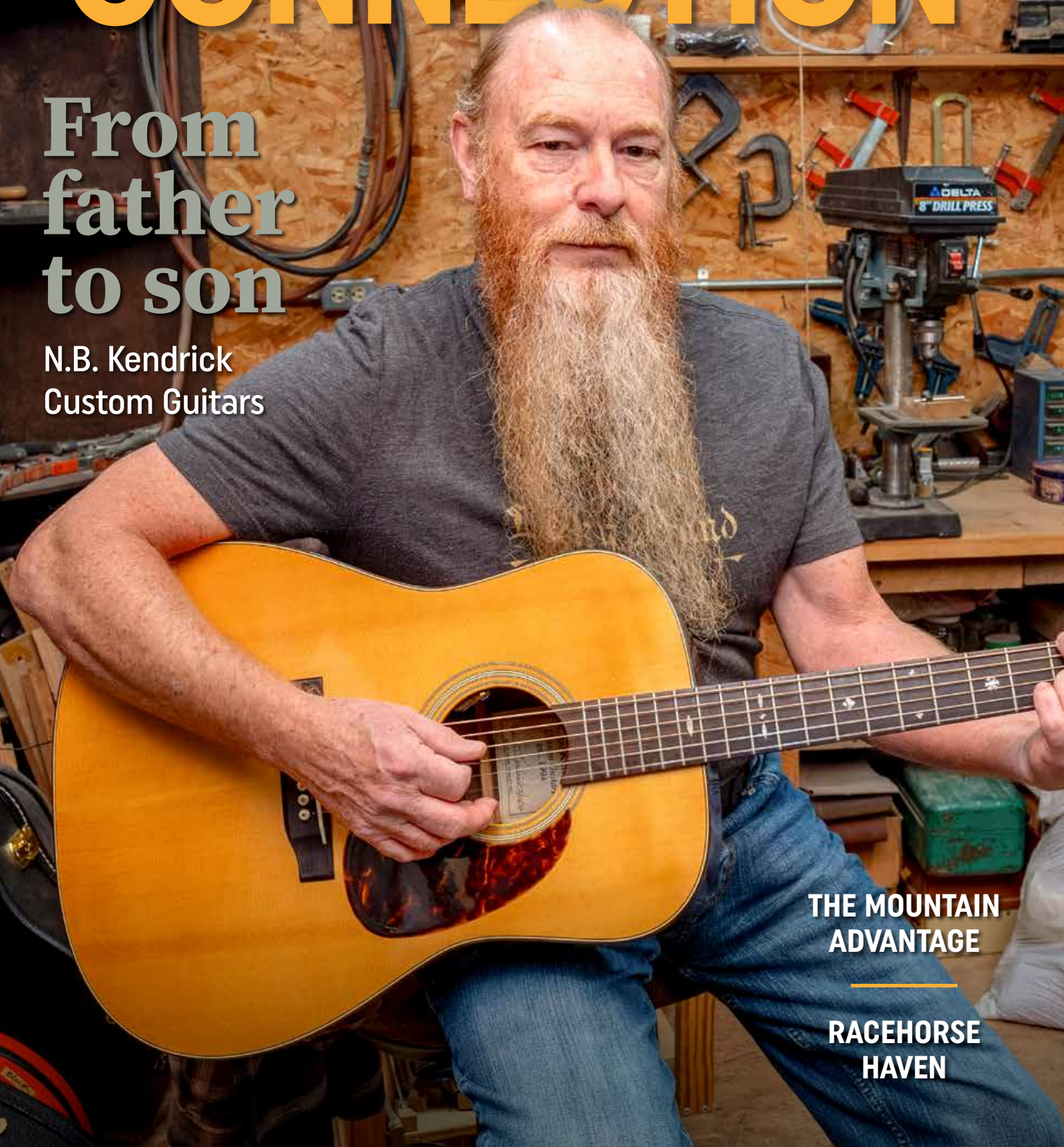
Mountain Telephone

MAY/JUNE 2024

CONNECTION

From father to son

N.B. Kendrick
Custom Guitars



**THE MOUNTAIN
ADVANTAGE**

**RACEHORSE
HAVEN**



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association

Seven decades of service

Supporting rural communities through better communications

NTCA proudly represents more than 850 telecommunications companies across rural America as they provide a variety of services including robust broadband, landline, wireless, data, video and IT support. June 1 marks our 70th anniversary, and it’s a perfect opportunity to reflect upon how far this life-changing industry has traveled.

The independent telephone industry began to develop throughout rural America in the 1890s, largely because these regions were ignored by large national providers.

After World War II, as the telephone’s popularity surged and the value of connectivity was recognized, Congress passed legislation to extend loans to bring telephone systems to rural communities.

With funding on the way, the need for an independent national organization to represent small telephone companies was at an all-time high and, in 1954, NTCA was born.

Eight rural telephone systems in seven states became the original members and got to work advocating to grow the industry.

Over the last few decades, NTCA has focused on the evolution of our members from telecommunications to broadband providers as well as numerous key priorities for rural America, including building a sustainable future for universal service, building Smart Rural Communities, providing cybersecurity tools, being the catalyst for policy engagement and so much more.

As NTCA celebrates its platinum anniversary, we are excited to see what is next for this vibrant industry as it supports rural America and beyond. 📧

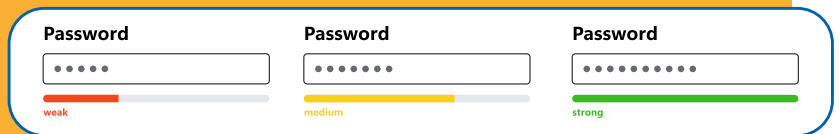
3 tips for password security



Illustration by origami8/Acobe Stock

Passwords are everywhere. From health care and school to work and play, software, websites, essential services and more, most of our daily online activities require a secure login.

The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency offers three tips to better password security — and a good password follows all three.



1 MAKE THEM LONG

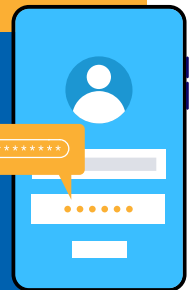
At least 16 characters — longer is stronger!

2 MAKE THEM RANDOM

Option 1: Use a random string of mixed-case letters, numbers and symbols. For example:
cXmnZK65rf*&DaaD or Yuc8\$RikA34%ZoPPao98t

Option 2: Create a memorable phrase of five to seven unrelated words. Then, get creative with spelling and the addition of a number or symbol.

- » Strong: HorsePurpleHatRunBaconShoes
- » Stronger: HorsPerpleHatRunBayconShoos
- » Strongest: HorsPerpleHat#1RunBayconShoos



3 MAKE THEM UNIQUE

Use a different strong password for each account. For example:

- » **Bank:** k8dfh8c@Pfv0gB2
- » **Email account:** LmvF%swVR56s2mW
- » **Social media account:** e246gs%mfS#3tv6



Fortunately, password managers can help you keep up with these longer, more complex codes. Options range from tools already in your web browser to commercial software.



The 30-second commute

Photo by StockPhotoPro/Adobe Stock

Remote work can be a wonderful opportunity

To those who spend long hours in an office, on the road or in the field, working from home might sound like a dream. And, for some, it is.

It's estimated that by 2025 about 22% of the U.S. workforce — or 32.6 million people — will work remotely. A 2023 study by Forbes Advisor found 12.7% of the nation's full-time employees work from home, while another 28% work a hybrid model, dividing the work week between home and the office.

Working from home can help save money on gas, as well as wear and tear on vehicles. The flip side, however, is being face to face with household chores all day. The isolating nature of solo work can also be a challenge, as can establishing the distinction between work and home life.

TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

- It makes sense that fast, reliable internet is the first component to remote work success. If your link to the working world is compromised, you can't get anything done. A backup location is another must, just in case a storm

knocks out the electricity or your peace and quiet is temporarily disturbed.


- Experts advise setting up a dedicated workspace — not in an area like your living room or bedroom — free from distractions, preferably with a door. While it might be tempting to work from the bed or couch, soft surfaces don't provide proper support and can lead to headaches, strains and arthritis. It's also important to consider how your workspace will appear to your co-workers and clients during on-screen meetings.
- Creating a routine is vital for remote work. If your family and neighbors know your schedule, they'll be less likely to present distractions.
- The opportunities for remote jobs are out there, you just need to know where to look. Computer tech jobs continue to be the most common opportunities, as are marketing, accounting, HR/recruiting and customer service.

REMOTE WORK RED FLAGS

When searching for work-from-home opportunities, it's important to avoid pitfalls. If the job sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Be wary if:

- The ad says things like, "unlimited earning potential," "investment opportunities and seminars" or "quick money."

- The job requires upfront expenses from you.
- You're asked for personal information — Social Security number, birthdate, banking account numbers, etc. — early in the interview process or as part of your initial application.
- You are offered a job without an interview or anyone contacting or asking for references. 🗨️



Pros of working from home

- Better work-life balance
- More freedom
- Improved employee mindset
- Decreased wardrobe budget
- Comforts of home
- No commute, less wear and tear on vehicle
- Self-regulated hours
- Flexible schedule

Unlock your perfect break

A dream vacation is a click away

Are you ready for a vacation? Summer travel season is about to ramp up, and many Americans will be hitting the highway or heading to the airport. Whether it's a short trip or a multiday excursion, I think about all the ways MRTC's services can help you plan your perfect break.



SHAYNE ISON
General Manager

Before we chat about how we can help you find your next adventure, however, I'd like you to keep in mind the opportunities our area provides. While we consider this place home, others are discovering that our region is a perfect destination for their own vacations.

That's the beauty of rural communities like ours. Often there's so much to do, and it's easy to take the places you see every day for granted. But our woods, trails, parks and more offer great opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts.

Similarly, we have plenty of history shaped by the small businesses, people and events that help establish who we are. While you may know the tales of our past, many history buffs and others find these nuggets of bygone days endlessly fascinating.

That's only the beginning, because there are plenty of interesting places to stay in our area, too. Thanks to internet-based resources, there is a range of vacation rentals with online listings managed by sites like Airbnb and Vrbo. Yes, right here at home.


It's never been easier to plan a vacation and find our nation's gems. Have you visited all the local spots? If you're not sure, I encourage you to venture online. Explore what others say about our region, and you just might find a new adventure right here at home.

But if you're ready for that summer trip away from home, those same tools come into play. Travel agents very much have a place, and they're available to help you. But if you have a do-it-yourself mindset, going online opens the door to a wealth of resources.

Many travel sites offer day-by-day itineraries. Are you going to be in a city for two days? A plan is likely available. Considering a weeklong driving trip with some ocean views? Those plans are out there, too — all just a few clicks away.

If you're wired into social media like Facebook or Reddit, you can tap into another powerful resource — people. Most cities, destinations or hobbies have online groups dedicated to them, and these are often surprisingly helpful. Planning a fishing trip out of state? Are you a hiker? Or, perhaps you want to explore all the best kid-friendly spots of a specific town or city. There's an online resource for you. Make no mistake, this type of resource exists for places in our area, too.

Even when we're contemplating unplugging, the online world can help connect us. We're proud to provide internet service that allows you to unlock your next adventure.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you. 

The Mountain Telephone Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative, © 2024. 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:



Neil Kendrick recently passed down his guitar and stringed-instrument repair shop to his son. *See story Page 8.*



WORLD OF WI-FI

Live TV event offers prizes and info on World Wi-Fi Day

MRTC is excited to present an hourlong live broadcast on its local TV Channel 2 celebrating World Wi-Fi Day on June 20. The interactive event will offer amazing deals, a trivia contest with wireless-related prizes and helpful tech tips — all to recognize the life-changing role Wi-Fi plays in the world, especially in rural areas.

Not only will viewers learn more about the technology, but MRTC employees will offer a local perspective by showing all the places Wi-Fi has been used in our region, including special events like the Sorghum Festival. The program will also offer Wi-Fi history lessons, practical tips on devices that use Wi-Fi in the home and a primer on MRTC's new SpreeTV app that lets you stream traditional cable television.

Visit Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative's Facebook page for more information and times.



Have you captured a breathtaking snapshot that shows the beauty of Bath, Elliott, Menifee, Morgan or Wolfe counties? If so, we want to hear from you. And this time, we want you to submit your photos via the Mountain Telephone website!

MRTC is accepting photos for its 2025 directory and calendar. We are no longer accepting printed photos. Each submission can include up to two photos, which must be digital high-quality JPEG images. Photos will now be submitted via mrtc.com. Simply click on Photo Contest at the top of the home page, fill out the entry form and submit your photos! Note: Each photo must be submitted separately with its own entry form. Limit two entries per person.

Deadline for submission is June 1. Winners will be announced on or before Sept. 30. All entries must be submitted by the original photographer who has sole ownership of any copyright. By entering the contest, you agree to have your photograph displayed on the MRTC directory or annual calendar without any fee or other forms of compensation.

For more information on the photo contest, please visit mrtc.com.



Some gave all

Thank you to those who served and sacrificed for our country. Mountain offices will be closed on Monday, May 27, in recognition of Memorial Day.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Civil Rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior credible activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](https://www.usda.gov/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint) and at any USDA office. Or, write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1) mail: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2) fax: 202-690-7442; or 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

OLD FRIENDS, NEW LIVES

THOROUGHBREDS FIND REFUGE AFTER RACING

Story by KATHY DENES

Two former star athletes — fierce rivals in their youth, when they raced neck and neck to world renown — enjoyed the spotlight together recently during an unbridled celebration of their 30th birthdays. There was no sign of the competitive spirit that once drove them. Instead, they displayed the calm that comes with finding greener pastures on the sprawling Kentucky farm where they both live.

Retired racehorses Silver Charm and Touch Gold are the very definition of Old Friends — which is the name of the group that houses them and more than 250 other thoroughbreds. Visitors to Old Friends' 236-acre Dream Chase Farm in Georgetown, Kentucky, get to meet these majestic retirees. Since its founding in 2003 by Michael Blowen, a former Boston Globe film critic, Old Friends has welcomed about 15,000 visitors for guided tours each year.

Silver Charm, who won the first two legs of the 1997 Triple Crown, enjoys retirement at Old Friends' Georgetown, Kentucky, farm.



Photos by Laura Battles



ABOVE AND LEFT: Guests meet Touch Gold at the Belmont champion's 30th birthday party.

FAR LEFT: Old Friends founder Michael Blowen addresses guests at the birthday celebration for former rival racehorses Touch Gold and Silver Charm.

MEET THE CHAMPIONS

- Go to oldfriendsequine.org/visit to schedule a tour.
- Walking tours, 90 minutes:
 - » General — \$30 per person, up to 20 people, no children younger than 10
 - » Founder's — \$100 per person, up to 15 people, led by Old Friends founder Michael Blowen, no children under 10
 - » Private — By appointment, \$75 per person with volunteer tour guide, \$200 per person with Blowen as tour guide, up to 10 people, no charge for children 11 and under
- Driving option, three hours:
 - » Every Horse on the Farm — \$150 per person, up to five people meet all the equine residents of Dream Chase Farm, led by Old Friends photographer Laura Battles, no children
 - » Buses and groups of more than 10 people, call 502-863-1775 for tour options.

SANCTUARY

The distance between Louisville's Churchill Downs and the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation Sanctuary Farm at Chestnut Hall in Prospect is only 15 miles. But for the thoroughbreds who call the farm home, it's a very long journey.

This sanctuary and event venue was created in 2021 by the TRF, a national group working to save thoroughbred horses from neglect, abuse and slaughter and providing lifelong sanctuary after their racing days are done. The farm is not open to the public, but tours can be booked through private appointment.

Visit trfinc.org for details about tours and any planned events, like the May Front Porch Summer Concert Series outside the historic Chestnut Hall farmhouse. 📩

RETRAIN, REHOME

Other groups are also hard at work for these animals, rescuing, retraining and rehoming them after their exit from racing. For the past decade, the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance has helped fund the efforts of 86 such groups across the United States, including some based in Lexington, Kentucky.

One of those Lexington organizations, New Vocations, has placed more than 8,000 rehabilitated and retrained retired racehorses in adoptive homes since 1992. Another, the all-volunteer CANTER USA, has transitioned more than 25,000 horses. And for 20 years, the thoroughbreds served by the Secretariat Center at Kentucky Horse Park have been placed in new homes and in a range of new jobs, from therapeutic riding programs to mounted police units.

Providing a safe and secure retirement for thoroughbreds past their racing prime is an expensive endeavor, and most organizations doing this kind of work rely heavily, or sometimes exclusively, on donations. Horse sponsorships, monetary gifts, working as a volunteer, shopping at their online stores, fundraiser participation and buying "wish list" items are a few ways to help. Scheduling tours is another way, and it's the most fun!

ALL IN THE FAMILY

FRENCHBURG FATHER-SON TEAM CONTINUE A LEGACY

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Photography by WILLIAM LEMASTER



It's a story you don't hear much these days — a father passing on his small business to his son. But then again, almost everything Neil and Josh Kendrick do is of another time. From making brand-new guitars to repairing old ones at Kendrick Guitars in Frenchburg, both men find satisfaction in creation and repair. They want to make things that can't be duplicated by a machine, sold by the dozen and tossed away. They want to do something that matters.

Neil, a retired engineer, started the shop in his spare time in 1994. Recently, he handed over the business to his 28-year-old son, Josh. Neil continues to work at the shop and teach Josh what he knows, but he's proud his son took an interest in a profession that requires time, patience and passion. "It was smiles all over," Neil says. "I was thrilled he wanted to do it."

ON TO SOMETHING GOOD

Neil began building and repairing guitars after a trip to a bluegrass festival with his wife in the early 1990s. During a chance discussion with a Martin Guitar representative, Neil learned the brand sold a guitar-making kit that used solid wood. "I'd told him I never had a good, quality, solid-wood guitar," he says. "Most are made from laminated material, basically plywood."

Once he built a guitar from the kit, Neil was hooked. "The instrument turned out real well, and I even had a band borrow it to do some playing with it," he says. "I decided I wanted to build them fresh, so in 1994 I started the business."

Around the same time, Neil realized there weren't many people repairing Martins, which are known for their exceptional craftsmanship, sound and playability. The closest was Homer Ledford, who lived in Winchester and was phasing out his business at the time. With Homer's blessing — and plenty of guidance from Martin Guitar — Neil became one of the state's few authorized service centers for the brand.

Since then, Neil has repaired and created custom instruments for all kinds of bluegrass and country musicians, including Josh Williams and Scotty Sparks. He also built a 1,100-square-foot log home and turned it into a retail store. "We closed it in 2004, because the economy had gotten really rough on retail music stores — even the chains were shutting down."

◀ Neil Kendrick, left, and his son, Josh, stand in front of their custom-guitar-making and stringed-instrument repair shop, Kendrick Guitars. The shop is one of the few authorized Martin Guitar service centers in the state.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Josh grew up in and out of his dad's shop, going to bluegrass festivals with his parents and learning a few repair basics. But becoming a luthier — or stringed-instrument maker — wasn't originally on his to-do list.

In college, he studied computer science but quickly realized it wasn't for him. Then, in his mid-20s, Josh took a deeper interest in his dad's craft. "As I've gotten older, I've developed more appreciation for handmade things and those kinds of skills," Josh says. "I've been able to observe what he's been doing for years and how much other people enjoy it."

Neil saw himself in his son, too. "Josh has very much got a personality like mine," he says. "We're happier out in the woods by ourselves than around people. We like old things — old, authentic things that were made by somebody. I even had a great-grandfather who built violins, but I never got to see one that he made."

Josh also took an interest in his Appalachian heritage. He wanted to know and understand the people who came before him. Making and repairing stringed instruments gave him a sense of purpose that he didn't feel in the world of computer science. "It's really satisfying immersing myself in it and learning all the intricacies of what my dad does," Josh says. "The end result is something you can admire and that other people can admire. When I work to get something sounding like it should and the owner is happy, that's really fulfilling."

Neil grins knowing his son is going to keep up a tradition that was forged in their very roots. "He is carrying on the kind of care and desire to keep the old craftsmanship going," he says. "We still try to do every instrument as if it were our own. We don't want to work too fast and lose the quality. We want it to be right." 🗨️



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Josh, left, and Neil work on a guitar in their shop.

Josh works on a guitar.

Neil, a retired engineer for Nestle, picked up guitar making and repair over the years. He is passing on the shop to his son, Josh.

Josh and Neil Kendrick build and repair a variety of stringed instruments at their shop, including this mandolin.



QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP

Looking for a custom guitar, or need to repair an existing guitar, mandolin or other stringed instrument, except a piano? Kendrick Guitars can help. The shop is one of the few authorized Martin Guitar service centers in the state. Call 606-782-5850. For more information on Martin guitars, visit martinguitar.com.



Living the HIGH LIFE

Hot Air Balloon Rides Make for a Magical Experience

Story by JEN CALHOUN

As a child growing up in California, Kim McCourt scrambled up hills, cliffs and trees to see the land below. “I had this need to see all those things I never even knew were there,” he says.

But when his family moved to the flatlands of Florida, he had to find a new way to see the world. In 1998, he took his first flight in a hot air balloon. “I learned that ballooning is, well, kind of magical,” says Kim, who is now a licensed hot air balloon pilot in the Orlando region. “There’s the exploration part of it, and you’ve got Mother Nature all around you.”

ULTIMATE ADVENTURE

These days, Kim often travels the skies with tourists who want to experience a ride they can’t find at the region’s theme parks. For many, it’s a way to fly without being contained in the metal tube of an airplane. “In the balloon, you can see so much more, and you can actually feel everything,” Kim says. “You can breathe the air.”

There’s a spiritual component, too, says Mark West, vice president of the Balloon Federation of America. West, a former Navy pilot, also served as president and chief engineer of Aerostar International, which was once the largest hot air balloon manufacturer in the country.

“Ballooning has an incredible amount of magic to it,” Mark says. “Virtually everyone who sees one is enamored with them. I suppose they’re kind of representative of breaking free of the bonds of Earth and floating away.”

UP AND AWAY

Across the country, hot air balloon rides are a popular pastime for families celebrating a special occasion or tourists looking for a new experience. Some passengers want to make memories with their families, while others go to commemorate important events, like marriage proposals, bucket lists and to spread the ashes of loved ones into the sky. “There are all kinds of stories,” Kim says. “The only things that stay the same are the sun coming up and people smiling.”

Photos by Kim McCourt



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Balloons get ready for a flight.

Most hot air balloons are operated by gas.

Hot air balloons take off during an event.



But as wide-open spaces dwindle, so do the balloon rides. Pilots simply don't have enough space to land. Weather's also been a factor, because unreliable winds can ground a pilot. Kim says he's seen this firsthand. "Over the last 15 years, the weather went from 275 days we could fly to probably 100 days," he says.

He worries other factors could cause ballooning to take a hit, too. "Fabric, wicker, propane, repairs and parts are way more expensive these days, so it takes more money to maintain them," Kim says.

HOPE FLOATS

Despite the challenges, Kim still grins like a kid after an early-morning

flight. "There's nothing like it," he says. "When we lift off and the sun starts to rise, we might rest at the top of a tree and stare clear down to the bottom of a pond. Then we'll take off again and maybe rest right on top of the water where the mist is coming off the surface. It's up and down, up and down — gently. One person said it was like flying in the hand of God while getting a brain massage."

Balloonists enjoy attempting to describe the sensation of floating on — and with — the air, Mark says. "One of my good friends said it was 'having a destiny without a destination.' I think it attracts people who want to enjoy the beauty of the Earth and want to experience that kind of freedom." 🗨️

To catch a ride with Kim McCourt, visit greaterorlandoballoonrides.com. For more information on hot air ballooning and the people who are passionate about it, visit the Balloon Federation of America's Facebook page, or find the group at bfa.net.



1783

THE BIRTH OF THE HOT AIR BALLOON

▶ June 1783 — First unmanned flight

After a year or two of experimentation and invention, brothers Joseph Michel and Jacques Etienne Montgolfier publicly launch their version of a hot air balloon. It held no passengers. The balloon landed in the middle of a vineyard a little over a mile from where it had taken off.

▶ September 1783 — Confused farm animals

The first balloon flight with passengers launches in Versailles carrying a duck, a rooster and a sheep. The animals made it out alive. However, sources say the sheep kicked the duck and damaged its wing. King Louis XVI of France was pleased to learn that animals could breathe so high up.

▶ November 1783 — First human flight

Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier and another passenger take the first untethered, human-occupied flight. The flight, which launched in France, lasted about 25 minutes and reached an altitude of about 500 feet. Less than two years later, de Rozier and his passenger would become the first people to die in a hot air balloon crash during a flight from France to England.

▶ December 1783 — Hydrogen balloon

Jacques Charles, a French physicist who had been experimenting with hydrogen balloons, boards one with a few colleagues. They traveled 25 miles in less than two hours. They also carried a barometer and a thermometer. Afterward, gas balloons became the preferred method of ballooning.

Sources: DragonFly Balloon Adventures, Virgin Balloon Flights, National Balloon Museum



Bath County residents Bill and Teresa Judd finally got reliable internet and phone service when MRTC became available in their area.

Landing on top

Bath County man praises Mountain's service

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by WILLIAM LEMASTER

Bill Judd waved goodbye to the rat race about 35 years ago when he left Ohio and bought land in Bath County. “The rats had won,” says Bill, a former musician who once ran a motorcycle shop. “You can’t get out of the rat race while you’re still living in town, so I figured I’d just go to the country and try something I’d never done.”

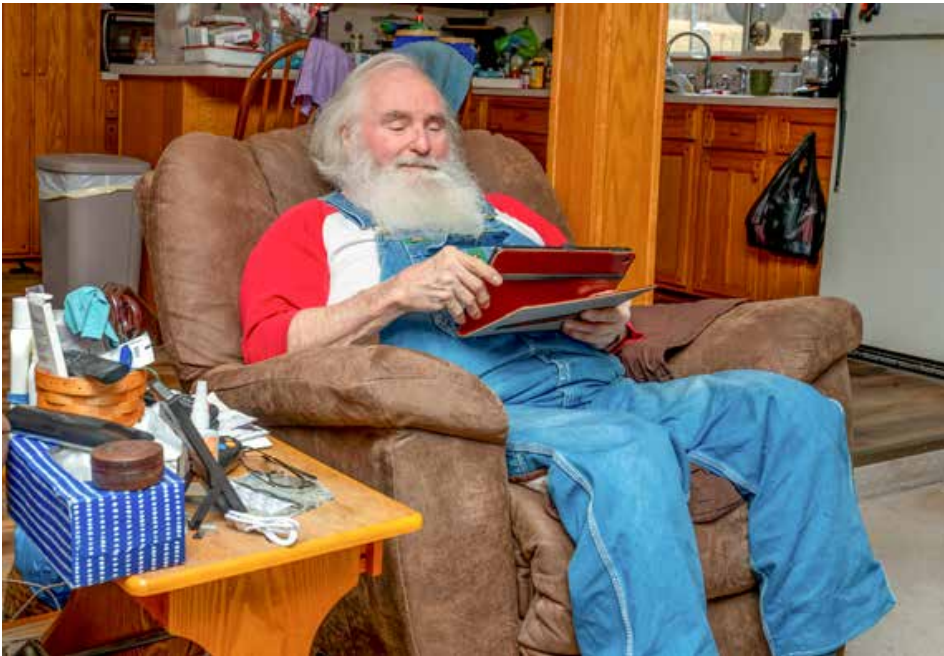
In Kentucky, he imagined a slower pace of life surrounded by beautiful scenery and people who weren’t consumed by gaining wealth and power. “I started off buying 8 acres, then I bought another 118,” he says. “I decided I liked it pretty good.”

STORMY WEATHER

But as much as he loved the land and the space, Bill couldn’t afford to completely give up a connection to the outside world. He had to make a living. For years, he worked as a cabinet and furniture maker for local businesses that built high-end homes. It required — at the very least — a working phone line and, eventually, a solid internet connection.

At the time, however, he had only one option — a nationwide, for-profit corporation with headquarters hundreds of miles away and little interest in taking care of its equipment or its customers. “When I had a business here with my woodshop, it would rain and the telephone didn’t work,” Bill says. “And here I am, trying to take care of my customers. They weren’t big-name celebrities, of course, but my customers were just as important. And here I don’t even have a telephone that works.”

The company, which came into the area after AT&T left, started off well enough, he says. But it soon left the infrastructure to deteriorate, especially for people in outlying areas of the county, like Bill. “They were just absolutely terrible,” he says. “I was constantly talking to people from their corporate headquarters and all over the country. I got to know the repair people. The repair people were good at their job, because they had to be. I felt sorry for them. Everybody was always chewing on them. It wasn’t their fault.”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Bill struggled for years to even check an email when his internet provider was a corporate telecom in a faraway state.

Bill moved from Ohio to Kentucky more than 35 years ago to live a quieter, more peaceful life.

Teresa enjoys spending time on her tablet — something that was hard to do before Mountain Telephone came to the area.

ON THE LINE

As the internet age evolved, so did Bill's phone provider. Bill didn't hold much hope for the future, however. "I figured if they couldn't keep a telephone working, they darn sure couldn't handle the internet," he says. "I was right."

Bill struggled to get his internet service to perform the simplest tasks. "I'm not talking about playing games or streaming movies," he says. "I'm talking about checking my email, just basic stuff."

His service calls became so frequent that a repairman warned he might be cut off entirely. "He told me they were starting to do that, now," Bill says. "He said, 'Don't be surprised if they cut you off because you're ripping into their profits with all these service calls.'"

The whole system seemed like a racket to Bill. The company was taking his money without offering reliable service in return. "I felt like they were just here to fleece the flock," he says.

Desperate for other options, he also tried a satellite internet service and a couple of smaller providers, looking for a viable alternative. But they, too, offered disappointing functions and service.

ENTER MRTC

It wasn't until Mountain Rural Telephone Cooperative started offering services in Bill's area that things finally changed. Last October, he was able to sign up for the



cooperative's high-speed fiber optic internet. "I have no complaints," Bill says. "I got rid of my satellite, and I've even been streaming stuff, which I couldn't do much of before. I think it's great."

Bill, who is retired now, serves as president of Bath County Memorial Library's board. He knows the importance of a strong and reliable internet connection for education, business and entertainment. Many students rely on hot spots in the library parking lot for homework, and he knows residents can't get far without internet connection these days. It's a critical part of any community's infrastructure.

With MRTC, he not only sees a change in the internet service, but in the way local, member-owned cooperatives treat their customers. If he does have to call, MRTC is on it. "That's how business is supposed to be," he says. 📞



How well do you know Wi-Fi?

Here are a few things you might not have known about a technology you use daily:

1. The name Wi-Fi doesn't actually mean anything. If you thought it meant "wireless fidelity," or something along those lines, you — and many, many, many others — were wrong. It's just a catchier term than IEEE 802.11.
2. Wi-Fi isn't perfect. Wait, you knew that? Wi-Fi is quite susceptible to interference. In fact, many things can get in its way, including microwave ovens, fish tanks, metal barriers, water and human beings.
3. Wi-Fi is more important to hotel travelers than breakfast, according to a survey conducted by the U.S. hotel chain Red Roof Inn.

Source: Airtame.com

OLDIES

but goodies

Classic recipes create timeless tastes

Although we love creating new recipes in keeping with today's tastes and trends, there's something sweet about a vintage recipe that can still hold its own. Get ready for a trip down memory lane with these old-fashioned recipes we still love.

From classic chicken tetrazzini to a delightful lemon icebox pie, these vintage recipes are worth holding onto. They may have been gone from our culinary repertoire for a decade or two, but they certainly are not forgotten.

Ready for some nostalgia and satisfied smiles at your table? Give these retro recipes a try, and they're sure to stir up good memories.



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

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



CHICKEN TETRAZZINI

No roundup of retro recipes is complete without a classic chicken tetrazzini.

- 16 ounces linguini or spaghetti, cooked
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 4 chicken breasts, cooked and diced
- 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 cups mozzarella cheese shredded

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and set aside.

Cook noodles to al dente, according to the box instructions. Drain and set aside. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine chicken, soup, sour cream, butter, chicken broth, garlic salt, parsley and pepper. Mix well, then stir in cooked noodles. Pour mixture into prepared baking dish. Sprinkle both cheeses on top and bake, uncovered, for 36-42 minutes, until cheeses are melted and casserole is bubbling.

CREAMED CORN

If you can't wait until summer to take advantage of sweet Silver Queen corn, use the sweetest corn you can find.

- 13 ears of fresh corn, husks and silks removed
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Remove silks from corn. Cream the corn by cutting the kernels from the cobs, then scrape the

corn cobs with the back of the knife to get all the "milk" and pulp. Transfer creamed corn to a large skillet. Add milk, butter and salt. Cook over low heat, stirring often, for 30 minutes. If corn becomes too thick, add more milk for desired consistency. Sprinkle with pepper. Makes 6-8 servings.



CLASSIC SOUTHERN CORNBREAD SALAD

- 1 skillet of your favorite cornbread
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 green or red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 cup diced tomato
- 1 15-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 pound bacon, cooked until crisp and crumbled
- 2-3 cups mayonnaise
- 1 package ranch dressing mix

Crumble cooled cornbread into a large bowl. Add onions, bell pepper, diced tomatoes, corn and bacon. Stir until well combined. In a separate bowl, stir together mayonnaise and ranch mix until well-blended. Add mayonnaise dressing mixture to salad and stir until fully mixed. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving.



LEMON ICEBOX PIE

Finish your retro meal with a slice of this much-loved pie.

Crust:

- 1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 7 tablespoons butter, melted

Filling:

- 2 14-ounce cans sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- 5 large egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

For the crust: Preheat the oven to 350 F. Combine the cracker crumbs, sugar and butter in a medium bowl. Mix with a fork until the crumbs are well coated and stick together when pinched. Press the mixture into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate. Bake until set, about 10 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly, about 10 minutes.

For the filling: Whisk together the condensed milk, lemon juice, egg yolks and lemon zest in a medium bowl until combined. Pour the filling into the crust and bake until the center is set but still slightly jiggly, about 15 minutes. Let cool for 30 minutes, then refrigerate until chilled, about 2 hours.

Once pie is chilled, beat the heavy cream, powdered sugar and vanilla in a large bowl with a mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form. Spoon onto the center of the pie and serve.

Alternatively: Buy a premade graham cracker crust as a timesaver. 📌



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

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED



Appalachian
WIRELESS
An **East Kentucky Network** Company

www.appalachianwireless.com

1-800-438-2355