



JULY/AUGUST 2023

CONNECTION

Flavorful fun

Chaney's Dairy Barn

AT HOME IN
LAFAYETTE

SWASHBUCKLING
DESTINATIONS



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Take a BOLD step

A new toolkit opens doors

Summer is finally here! That means barbecues, days at the pool and, if you have kids, reminding them to tackle their dreaded summer reading list before it is too late.

As they are doing their homework, I have an assignment for you. But don't worry, it's only a dozen pages.

The past few years have shown the world that broadband access is a necessity, not a luxury. As the demand and investment in broadband increases across rural America, so does the need for a skilled workforce to build and maintain these broadband networks.

NTCA's Smart Communities program recently teamed up with the National Rural Education Association to create the Broadband Opportunities and Leadership Development (BOLD) K-12 Career Awareness Toolkit, which is chock-full of new and creative ways to engage students and get them excited about careers in the broadband industry. Whether your student is interested in computer science, engineering and even accounting or marketing, there are opportunities for everyone in the broadband industry.

From guidance on organizing hands-on internships and site visits, to working with schools to develop curricula, or even ways to get involved with local esports and robotics teams, this toolkit is a wonderful resource for parents, educators and community-based broadband providers alike.

Summer may be in full swing, but back-to-school season will be here before you know it. Make sure you add the Smart Rural Community K-12 Career Awareness Toolkit to your summer reading list today! Read it here: ntca.org/BOLDToolkit.



Avoid QR mischief

Scammers co-opt this handy code

QR codes — it stands for Quick Response — pop up frequently. TV ads, restaurant menus and much more rely on these little squares of blocky lines to quickly link a smartphone user to handy information, a download or as a way to digitally send money to someone.

The FBI, however, has warned that cybercriminals may tamper with the codes. The FBI offers a few tips so you can take advantage of QR codes while staying safe and secure:

- After scanning a QR code, check the URL to make sure it is the site you want. A malicious domain name may be similar to the intended URL but with typos or a misplaced letter.
- Be cautious when entering login, personal or financial information.
- If scanning a physical QR code, ensure the code shows no signs of tampering, such as a sticker placed over the original.
- Do not download an app from a QR code.
- If you receive an email asking you to complete a payment through a QR code, call the requesting company to verify. Look up the company's number on a trusted site — don't use a number from the email.
- Do not download a QR code scanner app — the built-in phone camera is a safer option.
- If you receive a QR code you believe to be from someone you know, contact them through a known number or address to verify.
- Avoid making payments through a site navigated to from a QR code. Instead, manually enter a known and trusted URL to complete the payment.



Seeding the future

THE CLOUD UPLIFTS EDUCATION

The arrival of fast, reliable internet service in rural areas sparked innovation across businesses, health care providers and government resources, leading to more options and richer services. When it comes to education, how students interact now with schools and each other has evolved at a similarly blistering pace.

First, there was the growth of cloud-based services — multiple remote networked computers that handle storage and processing of information. Then, since the cloud was doing the heavy computing work, an entire class of low-power, lower-cost devices sprang up.

Together, this combo — low-cost Chromebooks, as well as similar devices, and cloud-based tools — have changed how many students learn.

Collaboration: The cloud allows students to work together on group projects after school or other times they're not physically in the same room. Cloud-based storage systems, such as Google Drive, Microsoft's OneDrive and others, allow the creation and sharing of documents, spreadsheets and presentations in real time — you can see the work of other members of your team as they're making changes.

Collaboration and brainstorming are easier than ever.

Accessibility: With their Chromebooks or similar devices students can access their work from any location, at any time. All their work is saved on the cloud, making it easily accessible and organized.

Efficiency: In many school systems, teachers use the cloud to grade assignments more efficiently and even easily share the results with parents. Students might receive immediate feedback, allowing them to improve their work and better understand the material.

Personalization: These cloud-based systems create the option for personalized learning experiences. Students can access online resources and tools that cater to their specific needs and learning styles. For families that home-school, online communities with similar educational interests and other resources also become more accessible.

Productivity: Thanks to the cloud and low-cost computing devices, students can be more productive, organized and collaborative. And because the tools are far less expensive than traditional computers, more people can affordably access them. 🗨️

Looking ahead to a new school year?

Make sure you're prepared.

- **The essential computer:** If your student needs a basic laptop to do homework and access online learning platforms, try the Lenovo Flex 5i Chromebook. "It's comparatively inexpensive, and it offers fast performance plus an excellent keyboard and trackpad. The Flex 5i is also compact and light, and its 1080p touchscreen is vivid and bright," according to a review by Wirecutter, a website operated by The New York Times offering reviews of a range of devices. Prices vary, but expect to pay about \$350.
- **Quality web cam:** From education to work, video calls are common. If your computer isn't already equipped, consider adding a camera. The Logitech C270 HD, often available for less than \$30, is a good choice for students required to attend lessons online. It delivers quality and clarity.

100% fiber

There for you when needed most

Every year it seems the importance of the internet in our lives only grows, whether that's connecting to family through social media or allowing local businesses to use digital tools to compete in the national, or even global, economy. A fast, reliable connection is critical for health care, education, government services and so much more.



**JOHNNY
MCCLANAHAN**
President/CEO

NCTC is not only proud to bring you the industry-leading internet services needed to connect you to this rich online world, but we're also celebrating a milestone in the 16-year journey that made it possible. NCTC's internet network is now 100% fiber — something even national providers would love to claim but can't.

Why does fiber matter? An internet network reliant on these tiny light-transmitting cables is reliable and practical. It can move data at speeds needed for today's world and can meet the demands of tomorrow.


We recognized the importance of this system in 2007, when NCTC was one of the first rural telecommunication cooperatives in the United States to begin construction of a fiber optic network.

Now, NCTC has completed fiber construction and deployment to 100% of its members — every home and business can opt to use this cutting-edge network. One day, there may be better technology, but now there's no better way than fiber to offer gigabit-speed internet services. Soon, we'll even offer multi-Gig service to clients with the highest demand for bandwidth.

Sixteen years sounds like a long time to work on a project, but providing the kind of network NCTC offers is neither cheap nor easy. Also, we've had help along the way. Without funding and support from the USDA Rural Utilities Service through various loans and grants, we could not have built the network we have today.

Earlier, I described this as a journey, and it truly has been. Many miles were covered. It all began in 2007 in the Winklers community on the border of Clay and Macon counties. By the time construction wrapped up earlier this year in the city of Scottsville, Kentucky, we had deployed more than 4,300 miles of fiber, as well as all the electronics needed to support the network. Was it a big job? Certainly, and it was worth the time and investment.

The expertise we developed during these efforts continues to pay dividends. Our proven ability to not only build a broadband network but also to support users is the reason why Warren Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation reached out to NCTC for help bringing fast internet to its members in unserved areas of Kentucky.

Originally, NCTC was created to bring telephone services to our area. As technologies changed, we also changed. But we've remained consistently committed to providing you with the best service possible, and not just for a rural area. We're competitive with any community in the nation. 

The North Central Connection is a bimonthly newsletter published by NCTC, © 2023. It is distributed without charge to all member/owners of the cooperative.



North Central is a member-owned corporation dedicated to delivering advanced telecommunications technology to the people of Northern Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky, including Macon County, Tennessee, Allen County and Warren County, Kentucky. NCTC also serves portions of Sumner, Trousdale, Smith and Clay counties in Tennessee.

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Photo by Joe Imel

Chaney's Dairy Barn in Bowling Green offers more than just some of the best ice cream around. With its gift shop, cafe and playground, the farm has become a well-loved destination.

See story Page 12.



Capital credits are coming!

NCTC's Board of Directors recently announced that eligible members who were in service in 1990 will receive a capital credits reimbursement in August, a total distribution of **\$1,185,979**.



Notice to North Central Telephone customers

If you receive your home phone service through our state-of-the-art fiber optic network, it requires electric power to operate. To avoid a disruption of home voice service during a power outage — and to maintain the ability to connect to 911 emergency services — we at NCTC offer you a battery backup for an additional fee. A standard corded phone is required. Our battery backups are expected to last eight hours on standby power. That means the backup battery should give you about six hours of talk time. If you feel this is not enough time, you may extend your standby power by purchasing a 24-hour battery or additional eight-hour batteries. Our battery backup does not provide power to any services other than voice. Home security systems, medical monitoring devices, routers and other equipment will not run on a phone backup battery. Unless you are otherwise notified in advance or in cases of abuse to our equipment, NCTC will maintain the power unit for three years from the date of installation.

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 http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html 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.



Tired of robocalls?

It's easy to add your number to the **Do Not Call Registry**.

Register online at donotcall.gov

or call 888-382-1222.

For TTY, call 866-290-4236.

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

Need help paying for services?

Lifeline assistance may be an option for you!

To find out whether you qualify for Lifeline assistance, please visit checklifeline.org or call **800-234-9473**.



SHIVER ME TIMBERS!

Family fun sets sail at pirate-themed attractions



The American Star pirate ship sets sail from Orange Beach, Alabama.

Photo courtesy of Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism

Story by ANNE BRALY

For generations, kids and adults alike have been captivated by legendary tales of pirates' treasure-hunting and swashbuckling adventures. If your family loves the story of Peter Pan and the misadventures of Captain Kidd, you're in luck! There's a bounty of places around the South where your crew can get its pirate on.

PARADISE LAGOON

Lexington, Kentucky

Woodland Aquatic Center's brand-new Paradise Lagoon, which opened in May,

is a pirate ship and water attraction that brings high seas adventures to Kentucky.

While the Paradise Lagoon pirate ship is new, it replaces the USS Woodland that generations of people grew up with. That ship sailed the waters of Woodland's pool for decades before being decommissioned when it was no longer seaworthy. The folks from Lexington's Parks and Recreation Department let the public vote on what they wanted to see replace the old vessel.

"Those results clearly indicated that the public wanted to keep the theme of

a pirate ship," says Michelle Kosieniak, parks and recreation superintendent of planning and design.

The new USS Woodland reimagines pirate life by letting kids and adults climb aboard — they can try to find a hidden periscope. They can also use a waterslide to make a quick getaway into the pool while sea creatures look on. The design offers fun sprayers and water cannons, too. But, Michelle says, "It has more gentle play features than the old USS Woodland, so that our youngest visitors can also interact without being overwhelmed."

- ▶ Admission: \$6 for adults, \$4 for kids 15 and under
- ▶ Information: lexingtonky.gov/neighborhood-pools

BLACK DAGGER PIRATE CRUISE

Hilton Head, South Carolina

Board the Black Dagger and set sail for a memorable day of adventure. Get your own pirate name, learn some pirate lingo, find sunken treasures, get a temporary tattoo and defeat Stinky Pete in a water cannon battle. It's an action-packed experience that lets kids live their pirate fantasies on the water while using their imaginations.



Visitors have a chance to play pirate aboard the American Star's pirate cruise in Orange Beach, Alabama.

The pirate ship cruises the calm waters of Calibogue Sound, so seasickness is rare. Wear comfortable clothes — bathing suits are not needed, but sunblock is wise. Reservations are strongly recommended.

- ▶ Admission: \$39 for adults and children, infants 11 months and younger are free
- ▶ Information: piratesofhiltonhead.com

CANOE THE CANEY

Silver Point, Tennessee

It's said treasure abounds on the banks of the Caney, a river that flows deep in the mountains of East Tennessee. There's a legend about a crew of pirates who stole a cursed treasure belonging to dastardly Captain JaBez and fled, spreading his ill-gotten gains across the water as they went.

Now, boaters — wearing pirate hats and carrying swords — can travel the river in canoes, searching for JaBez's gold coins and sparkling jewels, while keeping their eyes peeled for the captain and his crew who may be disguised as local fishermen.

The Pirate Adventure is one of two pirate-themed trips offered by Canoe the Caney. The Pirate's Dinner and Sunset River Cruise is new this season. The youngest allowed in a canoe or kayak solo is 8 years old, depending on experience. The youngest age for a child with a parent on board is 3 years old.

- ▶ Admission: Starts at \$29
- ▶ Information: canoethecaney.com

Pirates battle on ship at the Pirate's Voyage Dinner and Show in Pigeon Forge.



Photo courtesy of Hollywood Company

PIRATE VOYAGE DINNER SHOW

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

You'll have a four-course feast that even the pickiest of pirates will enjoy. The menu includes Cracklin' Pan-Fried Chicken, Swashbucklin' Sugar-Cured Ham, Cob-O' Butter Corn, Pirate Herb-Basted Potato, Walk the Plank dessert and unlimited Coca-Cola, tea or coffee. And just to make sure all pirates are satisfied, gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian meals are available.

While you dine, Blackbeard and his quartermaster, Calico Jack, will lead the Crimson and Sapphire crews in a battle on land and sea in full-size pirate ships.

- ▶ Admission: \$29.99 for kids, \$49.99 for adults and free for children under 3
- ▶ Information: piratesvoyage.com

PIRATE SHIP CRUISE

Orange Beach, Alabama

Bring your buccaneers aboard the American Star for a Pirate Adventure on Terry Cove, where they can get their faces painted, learn a little pirate lingo and even sing a sea shanty or two. Visitors get to help defend the ship in a "gun" battle, hear true stories of pirate and privateer attacks in the legendary Pirate's Cove and hunt for the captain's lost gold and treasure chest while keeping their eyes out for any surprise attacks! As an added bonus, you may see some dolphins, too.

- ▶ Admission: Starts at \$29, free for children 1 and under
- ▶ Information: hudsonmarina.net/Pirate-Adventure.htm



Pirates circle the treasure map aboard the American Star's pirate cruise in Orange Beach, Alabama.

Photos courtesy of Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism



HERITAGE MEETS HIGH-TECH

Family moves to Lafayette for its connections

Story by JEN CALHOUN



Photos by Tony Young

Ric Eller, a computer network architect and engineer, moved from Nashville to Lafayette for a one-level home and Gig-speed internet service.

Nashville had always been home to Ric Eller, whose family life and work as a computer network architect and cloud engineer kept him tied to the city. But when he and his wife, Nita, started looking for a one-level home to replace their three-story house, they realized they needed to widen their search area.

“We had talked about downsizing, but we have kids and grandkids who come to visit,” Ric says. “We were just getting tired of all the steps more than anything.”

There were specific requirements for moving, however. Anywhere Ric and Nita moved needed two things — the perfect house and the perfect internet service. They found both in Lafayette.

TECH CONNECTIONS

Today, their one-story home sits on 4 acres with plenty of room for the grandchildren to play, and their NCTC internet service provides a full Gig that enables Ric to

work from home. This means he can upload and download data at a rate of 1,000 megabits per second — a speed that’s about 100 times faster than many places in the U.S.

“For me to be able to do my job, I needed that kind of fiber internet service,” Ric says. “I run a lot of bandwidth. I do video chats all day long, and I’m always logged into different accounts for the businesses I work for. Some of the people I work with have to get a second internet provider, so if one is down the other is always there. But I haven’t needed to do that.”

In addition, Ric uses the high-speed internet for all his voice calls. He also runs about a dozen home security cameras and manages different networks, routers and other computer equipment.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

While the home and NCTC’s internet service sealed the deal on the Ellers’ move to Lafayette, a family connection also helped draw the couple to Macon County. “My grandfather, Ted Eller, grew up here,” Ric says.

Ted was the youngest child of a family that ran a roller mill in Hillsdale. When he got older, he moved out of town and eventually became a bus driver and president of the union for the Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority.

“Papa was a very Christian man and a hard worker,” Ric says. “To me, he was my dad. We moved in with him when I was a kid, and he’d take me out to throw the football and encouraged me and went to every single event that I did — every football game, every baseball game. I watched the very first Super Bowl ever sitting in his lap. He was everything to me.”

Ric and Nita had already grown interested in the Eller family’s history in Macon County when Ric received his grandfather’s old desk from a family member. The 1920s-era chest of drawers with a fold-down desk on top was fairly simple and didn’t hold much value as an antique. But it meant the world to Ric.

“That desk sat in my room when I was a kid,” he says. “It was where my



TOP: Ric likes to relax by playing the guitar.



LEFT: Ric Eller shows a photo of his grandfather, Ted Eller, as a child in front of the family’s mill in Hillsdale. Underneath the photos is the mill’s ledger.

grandfather paid the bills and did his accounting. I had pleasant memories of him being there with me, doing his work.”

While going through the desk, Ric and Nita found old family documents, including a picture of his grandfather sitting on the porch of the mill building as a child. They also found the old mill’s ledger, which showed all the transactions from every family that bought or traded for goods there. It helped spur Ric’s growing interest in his family’s history. “Despite all my connections here, I didn’t discover Lafayette until I was an adult,” he says. “But I feel like I’m at home here. A lot of that goes back to my grandfather and the stories he told.”

These days, Ric says he likes building on the connections he’s found in Macon County. He also enjoys sharing them with his own family. “My whole thing is to be as good a grandfather as Papa was to me,” he says. 🗨️

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Many businesses today are attracting employees by offering remote and hybrid-remote work opportunities. At the same time, some workers are leaving bigger cities and choosing to work from homes all over the country, including Middle Tennessee and Southern Kentucky.

NCTC’s fiber broadband network, superior customer service and Gig-capable speed rivals — and often surpasses — internet providers in cities with much larger populations. This allows our customers to live in a beautiful setting free from the traffic, expense and hassle of big-city life. To find out more about NCTC’s products and services, visit nctc.com, or call us at the following locations:

- » Lafayette, 615-666-2151
- » Westmoreland, 615-644-6282
- » Scottsville, Kentucky, 270-622-7500
- » Bowling Green, Kentucky, 270-936-7444



FELLOW TRAVELERS

Digital communities keep travelers connected on the go

Story by DREW WOOLLEY



The internet was a much different place when Peter Daams started Travellerspoint.com with his brother, Samuel, in 2002. Back then, they were looking at sites like FriendsReunited and classmates.com for inspiration — places for people who had lost touch to reconnect.

“We wanted to make something similar for travelers who had lost track of people they met on trips,” Peter says. “Our tagline was ‘Travel Friends Reunited.’ Our initial launch included a service to help with that, as well as a very basic trip log and a basic travel diary feature.”

The site attracted some attention, but it soon became apparent that Travellerspoint wasn’t giving visitors many reasons to hang around after they had searched for or found their missing travel buddies. The next year, the brothers added travel forums to the site, with a little extra help from a Geocities project that was about to be shuttered.

“That really kick-started the community side of the site and has set the tone for how it’s grown since then,” Peter says. “The owner of that project agreed to let us take it over, so we instantly were able to kick-start our forums with a great group of users who were experts on many travel destinations.”

Today, the site has grown into one of the largest and most active travel communities on the internet with more than 1 million users sharing photos, blog posts and mapping trips. Travellerspoint and other online travel communities like it are also the perfect hubs for the growing number of travelers looking to share their adventures with other enthusiasts.

NEW DESTINATIONS

Since the end of travel restrictions around the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans have been eager to get out and see more than their backyards. Data from the U.S. Travel Association showed that travel spending in March 2023 was up nearly 10% over the previous year and 5% over spending in 2019.

That enthusiasm shows no sign of slowing down as more than half of Americans say they plan to make travel a priority this year. But how they travel is starting to change. More travelers are putting an emphasis on finding destinations that are off the beaten path, family-friendly and environmentally responsible.

Online communities provide the perfect place for travelers to research these new adventures and get recommendations from others who have tried them. Many of these communities have migrated to social media platforms like Facebook, where they can cater to the specific needs of different groups.

Communities like Wanderful and Girls Love Travel, for example, provide a network of women who can support and even join other women in their travels. The TravelAwaits community offers stories, deals and advice geared toward travelers ages 50 and up. Digital Nomads Around the World, on the other hand, offers inspiration and advice for younger travelers living and working on the go.

While many of these groups rely on social media to maintain their communities, Peter still sees sites like his playing an important role for dedicated travelers. The rise of Facebook initially saw some of the more off-topic banter on Travellerspoint forums shift to the social media channel. But as other communities have shut down, Travellerspoint has become a haven for hardcore travelers looking for a place to discuss their passion.

“Many of those members are now very active on Travellerspoint,” Peter says. “We became something of a refuge for the people who lost their previous online communities.” 🗨️



TRAVEL TROUPES

Whether you never stop traveling or you're planning each course for your next foodcation, you can find a community that has the same passions.

Digital Nomads Around the World — Digital nomads are people who travel freely while using the internet to work remotely. They tend to travel light and live out of temporary housing while they're on the move. It isn't a lifestyle for everyone, but if it piques your interest this group can answer your questions.

TravelAwaits — Traveling in your 50s and beyond often comes with the benefit of more time and resources to explore your interests. But it can also present unique challenges. TravelAwaits is a community by and for older travelers, so you can trust that every deal, recommendation and discussion keeps your needs in mind.

Wanderful — Whether you're a woman eager to explore solo or looking for a supportive group of fellow travelers, Wanderful has everything you need. Learn about safe travel practices, pick up inspiration for your next excursion or connect with other adventurous women at online and offline events.

Food Travelist — Everyone loves a great meal on vacation. But for some travelers, the food is the point. If that's you, Food Travelist has your back with tasty recommendations and mouth-watering photos. When your wanderlust kicks in back home, you can even find recipe ideas to take your taste buds on a trip instead.



DELIGHTFUL DESTINATION

Chaney's Dairy Barn saves the day

Story by JEN CALHOUN

In 2003, Carl and Debra Chaney faced a monumental decision about their Warren County, Kentucky, dairy farm. Milk prices were dropping, and the number of dairy farmers was dwindling as the supply of milk far outweighed demand.

"We knew we were going to have to do something if we wanted to still be a dairy farm," Carl says. "All dairy farmers struggled to make a living — then and now. To give you an idea, there were 2,100 dairy farms in Kentucky in 2000. Today, there are fewer than 400."

Figuring out the next steps, however, was more than a hard choice for the Chaney's — it was downright heart-wrenching. The farmland had been in Carl's family since 1888, and his late father, James Chaney, started the dairy operation with two milk cows in 1940. Dairy farming was what they knew. It was who they were.

Besides, Carl felt a responsibility as the primary steward of the land. "I'm fourth generation," he says. "The way I look at it is this: My great-grandfather started it and got it going. My grandfather and my dad got it through the Depression. I didn't want to be the one to screw it up and lose it."

SMOOTH MOOVES

After some research, Carl and Debra came up with a plan. To start with, they'd begin processing and selling their own milk. They also visited other dairy farms that had found success making ice cream. "We said, 'That's surely got to be something fun to do,'" Carl says. "And those farmers really made us feel like it was something we could do. So, in 2003, we started Chaney's Dairy Barn."

Chaney's Dairy Barn is on the family's 54-acre working farm in Bowling Green

where they produce, process and sell their ice creams and milks. The site includes a playground and a cafe/gift shop that sells fresh-made ice cream, lunch and dinner foods, souvenirs and specialty items. They also offer self-guided and guided tours of the dairy and its facilities. They even throw special events, including movie nights in the summer and a corn maze in the fall.

The shop uses NCTC's fiber broadband to process orders and keep the website and social media outlets running. "We've got 41,000 likes on Facebook, which is a pretty big audience," Carl says. "We also sell items online, so we're excited to partner with NCTC. Their service makes sales seamless for our customers."

UDDERLY AMAZING

As a child-friendly destination, Chaney's has long been a favorite for the region's

Photos by Joe Imel



Chaney's Dairy Barn in Bowling Green is known for its outstanding ice cream, playground and more.



Dairy cows at Chaney's come in the barn whenever they want to be milked by a robot.



The jumping pillow on Chaney's playground is a highlight for its younger customers.



The commercial playground at Chaney's brings visitors from around the region.



Chaney's makes its ice cream on the farm with high quality ingredients and a higher butter fat content than most ice creams.

families. But the ice-cream side of the business has surpassed all expectations. Over the past 20 years, the farm has gone from making about 3,500 gallons of ice cream annually to making more than 30,000 gallons a year.

"The whole operation has grown exponentially," Carl says. "Most is sold on our farm, but our wholesale accounts continue to grow, too."

It's not your average frozen treat, either. Chaney's uses a higher butter fat mix than most companies to create its ice cream, making it tastier and way more memorable. "We decided if we were going to do this and go to all this trouble, we were going to go all the way," Carl says. "We wanted to be unique. We wanted to be better than everybody else. We wanted it to be top of the line."


FAMILY TRADITION

Much of the success grew out of careful planning, strategic investment in infrastructure and hard work by nearly every

member of the family. Carl's niece, Dore Baker, works alongside him, after having taken over as farm manager in 2016. Carl and Debra's daughter, Elizabeth Lunsford, who also works for a nutrition company, oversees milk processing. She helped spearhead the development of a new processing facility that allows them to maximize production.

Their other daughter, Jessica Steele, was instrumental in designing a viewing area where visitors can watch the robots milk the cows. Their son, James Chaney, owner of Wrought Iron Concepts, also pitches in for important work.

"We had a family meeting one day a few years back," Carl says. "We talked to the kids, and we said, 'We've got to either get out, or really invest a lot of money into this for the future.' The kids were like, 'We've got to continue.'"

He wasn't surprised by their answer. "Farming is a way of life," Carl says. "It becomes a part of you. You want to keep it going for your own kids. It's how they want to raise their families, too." 

ICE CREAM WONDERLAND

Visit Chaney's Dairy Barn in person at 9191 Nashville Road in Bowling Green, Kentucky, or check out their website at chaneysdairybarn.com. Online ordering is available. For the latest news and information on special events and operating hours, find them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. To book special tours, call 270-843-5567 or email chaneyinfo@yahoo.com.



FAR LEFT: In recent years, Chaney's has added special attractions, like its popular corn maze.

Chaney's holds special events year-round, including Ice Cream & a Moovie nights during the summer.

Time-saving devices

Gourmet gadgets can make meals manageable

Instant pots became a “thing” in the 2010s, and people fell instantly in love with them. Combining an electric pressure cooker, slow cooker, rice cooker and yogurt maker in one, multicookers save space and cook meals quickly. What better time to hop on the bandwagon than now, when summer produce is at its height?

If you’re old enough to remember your grandmother’s pressure cooker, you may know horror stories of it blowing up and causing injuries. But don’t worry! Today’s electric pressure cookers have a slew of safety features, including sensors to monitor temperature and pressure.

The price of multicookers has come



down from north of \$500 to under \$65, an excellent price for beginners. If you want more functions or higher wattage, expect to spend upward of \$100. Here are some recipes to get you started.



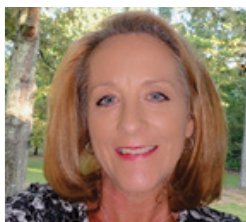
SUMMER VEGETABLE SOUP

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 teaspoons minced garlic
- 3 medium ears fresh corn, kernels removed (or 2 1/4 cups frozen corn)
- 2 pounds tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 1 sweet bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 cup fresh or frozen lima beans
- 8 ounces sliced mushrooms
- 1 small eggplant, peeled and diced
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon vinegar (red wine, balsamic or white)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- Ground black pepper, to taste

Press the saute button. Add olive oil to the stainless steel insert. Wait 2 minutes for it to preheat.

Add onion and garlic. Saute, stirring frequently, just until onion is tender (about 5 minutes). Press off/stop button. Add remaining ingredients. Place lid on the cooker and make sure the valve is set to sealing. Press soup and set the timer for 12 minutes.

The cooker will beep and start cooking. It may take about 20 minutes for it to come to pressure before the timer starts. When the cooking is done, allow the pressure to naturally release for about 5 minutes, then quick release any remaining pressure by switching the valve to venting. Carefully remove the lid, away from your face, and set aside. Stir and season with salt and pepper. Let cool a bit before serving.



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VEGGIE TOMATO SAUCE

Using canned tomatoes rather than fresh in this recipe from Instant Pot makes this recipe a breeze.

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 small to medium carrots, diced
- 2 celery sticks, diced
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon thyme leaves
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 small beets (canned or fresh), diced
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- 5 mushrooms, diced
- 1/2 of a medium zucchini, diced
- 2 cups fresh spinach leaves
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 jalapeno red chili (Use half or less if you don't like some heat.)
- 3 cans whole tomatoes in juice
- 1/2 cup water

Turn the multicooker on and press the saute key. Once hot, add the olive oil, onions, carrots and celery and cook for 5 minutes, stirring a few times.

Add the rest of the ingredients. Press cancel to stop the saute process. Stir the contents and pop the lid on top.

Lock the lid, making sure the top valve points to sealing. Set to manual/pressure cook on high pressure for 10 minutes. The cooker will take 5-10 minutes to build up the pressure and the timer will begin.

Once finished, allow the pressure to release naturally for 10 minutes and then move the top valve to venting to quickly release of the remaining pressure.



Open the lid and stir. Using an immersion blender, puree into a thick sauce. You can also do this in a blender or a food processor, but make sure to cool the sauce down slightly and do this in batches. Pour the sauce into containers or mason jars for storage or use right away as a sauce for pasta, pizza, enchiladas, meatballs and more.

INSTANT POT ROAST

This recipe from Instapot is a cooker full of comfort.

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 (4-4 1/2-pound) boneless chuck roast, excess fat trimmed and cut into 6 pieces
- 1 cup beef stock
- 6-8 jarred pepperoncini salad peppers, plus 1/4 cup liquid from jar
- 1 (1-ounce) package dry onion soup mix
- 2 tablespoons dried parsley flakes
- 1 tablespoon dried chives
- 2 teaspoons dried dill
- 1 1/2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch

Set a 6-quart cooker to the high saute setting. Heat oil then add beef and cook until evenly browned, about 2-3 minutes per side. Set aside.

Stir in beef stock, scraping any browned bits from the bottom. Stir in pepperoncini and liquid, onion soup mix, parsley flakes, chives, dill, onion powder, garlic powder and pepper. Return beef to the pot.

Select manual setting, adjust pressure to high, and set timer for 45 minutes. When finished cooking, naturally release pressure according to manufacturer's directions, 20-30 minutes.

Remove beef from the pot, then shred, using two forks.

In a small bowl, whisk together cornstarch and 3 tablespoons cold water and set aside.

Select high saute setting. Bring to a boil, stir in cornstarch mixture and cook, stirring frequently until slightly thickened, about 3-5 minutes. If the mixture is too thick, add more beef stock as needed until desired consistency is reached. Serve immediately. 🍴





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