



MARCH/APRIL 2025

CO **CTION**

**Art
for all**

Scottsville Arts Council

**BUILDING
DREAMS**

**ROLLER
COASTERS**

Be a DIY VIP

Online resources and communities can help conquer many projects

Even though it doesn't always feel like it, spring is replacing winter, and I can't wait. It's time to get outside for fun and maybe a little bit of work, too. This is the time of year when many of us plan to spruce up the yard, plant a garden or tackle overdue home chores.



**JOHNNY
MCCLANAHAN**
President/CEO

Whatever task you need to get done or hobby you enjoy, there are likely internet-based resources that can help. At NCTC, we see first-hand examples of how access to high-speed broadband empowers you to learn, plan and confidently execute projects.

Consider gardeners, for example. It doesn't matter if someone is a beginner or a seasoned green thumb, they can use the internet to research plant varieties suited to their climate, find layout ideas for vegetable gardens and even order seeds and supplies online. YouTube tutorials provide step-by-step guides for building trellises, creating compost bins and improving soil quality. Websites like the Farmer's Almanac and our fantastic state extension offices are also great resources that can provide planting calendars and pest management tips.

Even better, online communities let gardeners share advice and troubleshoot problems in real time. From identifying mysterious weeds to diagnosing yellowing leaves, having access to expert advice—or a crowd of helpful fellow gardeners—can make all the difference.

Or perhaps you struggle with keeping a lush, green lawn. Those never happen by accident. Fortunately, you don't need to be a landscaping expert to achieve one. Go online to find lawn care schedules tailored to your region and learn about the right fertilizers, grass seed mixes and weed treatments. Online video tutorials show how to aerate your soil, reseed patchy areas and properly mow for healthy growth.

Tech-savvy homeowners can even use smart irrigation systems connected to Wi-Fi to control watering systems from a smartphone. These tools improve water usage and keep your lawn looking great, even during hot, dry spells.

There are plenty of other ways modern digital tools can make life a little easier. From fixing leaky faucets to repairing drywall, the internet has become a go-to resource for home repair solutions. With access to instructional videos, product reviews and downloadable manuals, you can tackle many common repairs.

While the internet can help you dream big about your spring projects, it's important to make safety a priority—especially if your plans involve digging. Before you break ground for a new garden bed, fence or deck, call 811 to have underground utilities marked. It's free. It's easy. And it could save you from costly repairs—or worse, a dangerous accident.

Broadband internet has made it easier than ever to plan and execute DIY projects, but some tasks still require a little extra preparation. As you gear up for a productive spring, let the web be your guide—but don't forget to make that crucial call before you dig.

Here at NCTC, we're proud to keep our community connected and equipped for success, whether you're planting tomatoes or building a new patio. Happy spring—and safe digging! 🌱

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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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On the Cover:



The Allen County-Scottsville Arts Council organizes the annual music festival, NorroFest. See story Page 8.

Photo courtesy of Allen County-Scottsville Arts

CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS

Send us your high-quality vacation and staycation pics.

Submit your photos now for the annual NCTC photo contest, and your image could be featured in our next NCTC calendar! NCTC is looking for the very best photos from local shutterbugs, whether you're a novice or an expert. It's the quality that counts.



This year, we're looking for your best outdoor vacation and staycation photos, whether you've jetted off to an island or stayed home to enjoy our beautiful region. We want to see gorgeous landscapes, wildlife and other great shots for our calendar. The deadline for submission is July 31. Please email your photos to amy.phelps@nctcstaff.com. Be sure to include your name, your phone number—or address if you don't have a home phone—and where the photo was taken.

Remember these tips to make your photos shine:

- Lighting is important! Oftentimes, early mornings and overcast days can make for a great picture.
- Pick a focal point for best results.
- Keep the framing of the shot in mind.
- Make sure the background behind your focal point isn't too cluttered, especially when taking portraits.

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. 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.



HAPPY EASTER!

The NCTC Board of Directors and staff wish you a joyful Easter. Our business offices will be closed for Good Friday on April 18. As always, our help desk is available 24/7/365 at 270-622-2056.

TIRED OF ROBOCALLS?

Here are a few tips for dealing with dreaded robocalls:

- Add your number to the National Do Not Call Registry.
- Let calls from unknown numbers go to voicemail.
- If you accidentally answer a robocall, just hang up. Pushing other numbers or answering yes can cause an unauthorized charge.
- If the caller asks for anything involving a gift card, it's very likely a scam.
- Report any scam calls to the FCC Consumer Complaint Center.

MUSIC

Destination

Allen County-Scottsville
Arts Council draws
visitors

Story by JEN CALHOUN



A band plays at the amphitheater in Dugas Park during NorroFest, the arts council's annual fall music festival.

Around the time John Buchanan was growing up in Scottsville, The Lyric Theater housed a discount store. But his mother's generation knew the 1930s-era building as the town's movie theater.

When Buchanan got involved with the Allen County-Scottsville Arts Council a few years ago, he liked the idea of the majestic old theater building returning to its roots as a home for the arts. "So, we negotiated rent for it, and now we've turned it into a music venue slash art exhibit hall—it's a multipurpose facility," he says.

Today, the arts council produces Live at the Lyric, a monthly show featuring musical acts of all genres, including bluegrass, blues, country, jazz and gospel.

But it's far from the arts council's only accomplishment. The 40-year-old non-profit has long been enriching the community with creative opportunities by

offering scholarships, summer arts events and various artistic outlets for children, including a children's choir, an annual creative writing contest, the Summer Soundz concert series and its annual Arts Day Camp at the Core.

NORROFEST

One of the group's most popular events is NorroFest, an annual music festival that takes place in the fall at Dugas Park. Buchanan says the event was inspired by the late Norro Wilson, a Scottsville native and member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, who wrote the song "The Grand Tour" for George Jones.

He also wrote or co-wrote songs for other country singers, including Tammy Wynette, Charlie Rich and Charley Pride. In addition, he produced or co-produced songs for Reba McEntire, Kenny Chesney and Shania Twain. Before that, Wilson was a singer with three Top 40 country hits of his own, including "Do It to Someone You Love," which reached No. 20 in 1970.

NorroFest, which will celebrate its fifth year in October, is a full-on music festival. Buchanan, a Scottsville native, is the CEO and president of Bigscreen LLC, a Nashville-based company that helps produce and stream various events including national awards shows.

Dugas Park's amphitheater is a hidden gem and the perfect venue for concerts and festivals, Buchanan says. He likens it to Nashville's Ascend Amphitheater, which hosts large outdoor events like the CMA Music Festival.

"With NorroFest, we do full concert lighting and sound, food trucks and even adult beverages," he says. "It's a professional concert, and we hope we can make it a multiday event at some point."

'WHY NOT SCOTTSVILLE?'

NorroFest is the beginning part of a plan to make Scottsville a musical destination.

"Scottsville's in a renaissance period, and I truly believe that," Buchanan says. "When I was growing up here, I knew I would have to leave town. I had to go to Nashville to have a career. But now, the world has gotten so much smaller. You don't have to move anymore because of fiber internet. People can work from anywhere. So, our thing is, why not Scottsville?"

Buchanan returned to Scottsville in 2019, after living and working in



Nashville for more than 30 years. “I was able to do that because of NCTC’s fiber business class internet,” he says. “Concerts are a big part of my career, and during COVID-19, I was doing all these concerts with no one in the crowd.

“The first one I did was Garth Brooks, and he staged this whole concert with no one there. They filmed it, and we edited it. He sold it to drive-in theaters during the pandemic.”

His company, Bigscreen, has also done editing and other work on the CMA Music Festival for several years. “I worked on that right here in Scottsville using NCTC’s fiber,” he says.

One of the first things Buchanan did when he joined the arts council was tape a community concert for Christmas in 2020. “Everything was shut down, but we were able to film a concert that we called ‘A Very Socially Distanced Christmas.’ We put it up on YouTube and Facebook, and I think about 4,000 people saw it.”

The number of viewers astounded the council. Usually only a fraction of that would get to see the group’s events. “Now, people from all over the country who have a connection with Scottsville and Allen County can watch these things,” Buchanan says. 🗨️



ABOVE: NorroFest got its name from Norro Wilson, a Scottsville native and member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. Wilson wrote “The Grand Tour” for George Jones.

TOP LEFT: Dugas Park’s amphitheater and stage set the scene for NorroFest.

TOP RIGHT: John Buchanan, executive director of the Allen County-Scottsville Arts Council, is the president and CEO of Bigscreen, a company that produces and streams various events, including the CMA Music Festival.

ENJOY MORE ARTS THIS YEAR

To find out more about the Allen County-Scottsville Arts Council, its events, its scholarships and much more, visit the website at acsarts.org or like the group's Facebook page. Check out past concerts and events on the group's YouTube channel.

For more information on NorroFest, the council's annual music festival in Dugas Park, visit norrofest.com. The site offers a lineup of acts, information on the festival itself and a link to buy tickets.

Photos courtesy of Allen County-Scottsville Arts

GROWING STRONG



Local builders group helps homebuyers

Story by JEN CALHOUN

Over the last few years, Tony Swift has seen a steady uptick in the number of out-of-towners buying homes built by Red Ladder Construction, his Bowling Green-based company. Whether the draw is the small-town atmosphere or the relatively inexpensive cost of living, he's not entirely sure. What is clear, however, is that the trend shows no signs of slowing.

"The last five houses I've sold have been to people from out of state," says Tony, who also owns Mr. Rooter Plumbing of Bowling Green. "They've been from Colorado and California. Then there was one from Knoxville. Also, there are people who

work in Nashville and come here to live. A couple of the people bought homes before they even saw them in person."

BUILDING BETTER

It's an exciting time for builders like Tony, and it brings a boost to the region and its economy. But boom times can also create openings for scam artists and grifters posing as reputable contractors. That's why it's more important than ever to hire quality builders and contractors, says Tony, the newest president of the Builders Association of South Central Kentucky.

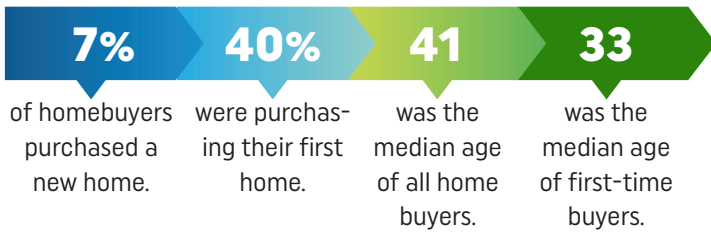
The association represents about 375 companies in the building industry in Warren, Allen, Barren, Edmonson and Simpson counties. This can include anyone from builders and contractors to electricians, designers and bankers.

One of the organization's official acts is to register builders and remodelers based on several rigorous experience- and ethics-based requirements. The registry, available for free on the association's website, offers a search function that lets users narrow down contractors by categories. Categories include residential builders, commercial and industrial builders, remodelers and fire restoration companies and developers. Not only are these registered members reputable and experienced, but they're also required to commit to a code of ethics.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To find out more about the Builders Association of South Central Kentucky and to access the resources it offers for anyone buying, building or remodeling a home, visit bascky.com. The 2025 board of directors' officers are: President Tony Swift; 1st Vice President Barrett Hammer; 2nd Vice President Colby Henon; and Secretary/Treasurer Jeff Peebles; Past President Cody Poston and CEO Anita Napier.

In 2021, the National Association of Home Builders' American Housing Survey found that:



The construction of 100 single-family homes creates more than 300 full-time jobs and generates \$8.9 million in federal, state and local tax revenues.

Source: National Association of Home Builders

“Unfortunately, in construction, there are some bad people out there,” Tony says. “But if you choose someone from the builders association to work for you, then you know they’ve already been checked out. They’re not going to scam you or take your deposit and disappear.”

In addition, BASCKY offers a listing for companies that provide all the services important to home building and renovating, including designers, decorators, carpenters, architects, painters and utility workers. The list also includes accountants, real estate agents, lawyers, insurance and title services and more.

HELPING MEMBERS

The association is good for its members, too, Tony says. For one thing, members can easily connect with one another to form reliable networks of service providers. They also have access to hundreds of years’ worth of experience.

“If there are people who’ve been in the workforce for a while and want to go out on their own, they can become a member and get vetted by the association,” Tony says. “As long as they maintain the standards, it can only benefit them. It gives them a network of people to fall back on.”

The organization, affiliated with the Home Builders Association of Kentucky and the National Association of Home Builders, offers various training opportunities and continuing education for people in the industry. It also works with state, local and national governments on housing codes.

“From a builder’s standpoint, it helps our group make sure we’re maintaining codes that are important to us as a community, so we can put a quality product out,” Tony says. 🗨️

RURAL TRENDS

Kevin Park, an economist with Economic & Strategic Research Group, outlined some of the reasons behind the increasing demand for homes in rural areas in a November 2024 blog post he wrote for Fannie Mae’s website.

“The confluence of increased demand for space, opportunities to work remotely and historically low interest rates during the COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial effect on the geography of housing demand,” he wrote. He cited these key trends:

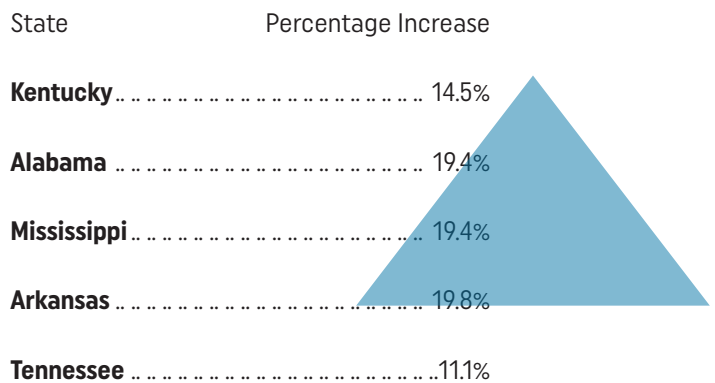
Mortgage applications in rural communities surged during the pandemic and remain above prepandemic averages, despite the relatively high-interest-rate environment slowing demand in more urban areas.

Homebuyers from outside the region are driving the rise in rural housing demand—with second home and investment purchasers making up a large share early in the pandemic, followed by buyers planning to move in from outside the region.

Demand has increased across all types of rural communities, with resort communities seeing early spikes that have since tapered, and institution-rich hubs seeing sustained demand.

Source: [fanniemae.com](https://www.fanniemae.com)

According to a May 14, 2024, article in Newsweek, many Southern states are seeing a rise in demand for housing.



Source: Newsweek, “Housing Market Map Shows States with Fastest Growing Demand”



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