

# CONNECTION



## CO-WORKING SPACE

RIO offers connectivity opportunities

**NO LONGER FORGOTTEN**  
Keeping Dunlap Coke Ovens' history alive

**SCREEN TEST**  
Online tools help filmmakers break boundaries



By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

## Broadband is critical for working from home

Nearly all of us have spent at least some time this past year working from home. And while remote work surged during the pandemic, it certainly isn't a new idea. Between 2005 and 2017, according to Statista, there was a 159% increase in remote work. Today 11.2% of Americans are working from home, up from 5.7% in 2019. And many are growing to prefer it — 22% of workers say they'd like to work from home permanently. I believe full-time remote work makes it difficult to create and maintain a collaborative work culture, but I do think that work is likely to have a new face when we get back to "normal."

The Foundation for Rural Service recently published a white paper entitled "Rural America's Critical Connections." (You can download it for free at [www.frs.org](http://www.frs.org).) The report cites a Global Workplace Analytics report that states, "Our best estimate is that 25-30% of the workforce will be working from home multiple days a week by the end of 2021."

What does this mean for broadband, that critical connection that helps us work remotely? It certainly means our country needs to continue the work to get broadband to everyone — and that in doing so we must build robust networks using technology proven to support the speeds and synchronous connections that working from home requires. Regardless of the work patterns and flexibility we see in the coming year, one thing is for certain: NTCA members such as your provider will continue to be at the forefront of connecting rural America. 



A free online resource helps female entrepreneurs

About 45% of businesses are owned or co-owned by women. Spanning a range of industries, most of these businesses are small with potential for growth. The federal Small Business Association wants to provide support.

The free, information-packed online Ascent program offers a range of helpful resources.

### TAKE A JOURNEY

Experts in women's entrepreneurship created informational Journeys. Participants can choose any Journey, opting out of sessions with information they already know. Each Journey includes Excursions filled with resources needed to master a topic.



Exercises and tools



Fireside chats



Infographics



Success stories



Discussion guides



Videos



Key insights



Self-assessments

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH YOUR BUSINESS?

Visit [ascent.sba.gov](http://ascent.sba.gov)

# Secure your Internet of Things

The Instant Pot, a pressure cooker, is one of the most popular small kitchen appliances of recent years. Naturally, there's a model capable of connecting to the internet via Wi-Fi — an example of the Internet of Things, or IoT.

Smart thermostats, door locks and security cameras are just a few devices on the IoT spectrum. Refrigerators, toys and a range of whimsical gadgets are all on the bandwagon. And businesses and industry, including agriculture, manufacturing and medicine, take advantage of connected devices.

Like the connected Instant Pot, which lets a cook control it via a smartphone app, IoT devices provide convenience, useful data and new ways of using technology. Cisco, a leader in networking systems, estimates that more than 75 billion such devices will be in use by 2025.

The utility of what is sometimes described as the fourth industrial revolution is balanced by the need for mindful caution. These devices offer people with bad intent potential doorways into private homes and businesses that use the internet-dependent gadgets.

Meanwhile, companies are finding new ways of leveraging these systems. One example is Amazon Sidewalk, which rolled out earlier this year. Here's how Amazon described the innovation: "Amazon Sidewalk is a shared network that helps devices like Amazon Echo, Ring security cameras, outdoor lights and motion sensors work better at home and beyond the front door."

Essentially, Sidewalk links your Amazon devices to those of your neighbors through a specialized network. Why? Well, imagine your internet goes down while you're out of town, making your security-focused Ring Doorbell useless. With Sidewalk, however, your internet-connected doorbell would keep right on working, relying on the internet connections of your neighbors to power the system. Everyone on the Sidewalk

system gives up a little bit of their internet bandwidth to this network. Instead of a smart home, Sidewalk can create a smart neighborhood.

Amazon released a detailed white paper outlining the system's security features. And while security experts have been quoted praising the company's efforts, others have expressed concern about privacy and the potential for hackers to target the system. Amazon Sidewalk can be turned off in the settings section of the company's smartphone app.

As IoT devices proliferate and offer new, practical ways to leverage the power of the internet, knowledge and a few practical security steps can offset possible risks. In the past, the FBI noted the need for IoT caution. "Unsecured devices can allow hackers a path into your router, giving the bad guy access to everything else on your home network that you thought was secure," Beth Anne Steele wrote for the Portland FBI office. [🔗](#)

## Security tips for IoT devices

- Change the device's default password. Consider a different device if instructions for changing the password aren't readily available.
- Long passwords — as long as possible — work best. Make them unique to each IoT device.
- Many IoT devices connect to smartphone apps. Take a few minutes to understand the permissions granted to these apps. An internet search will help here, too.
- If possible, have a separate network for devices, such as an internet-connected refrigerator and a laptop containing sensitive information.
- Regularly update the devices, and turn off automatic updates.



# A legacy of service

Together, we've created a foundation for the future

Connecting a rural community such as ours to the world has never been easy. Decades ago, crews first strung telephone lines across a landscape that large nationwide companies chose to ignore, deeming the places we call home too rural and unworthy of the effort.



**CHARLIE BORING**  
General Manager

Naturally, we never felt that way. After all, no one understands the importance of our home and places like it better than we do. The countless hours of work to create that first telephone system proved invaluable, opening new doors for businesses and individuals. All of that effort gave us a foundation for the future.

As new technologies appeared, we continued that original commitment to serving you by bringing you those innovations. Today, our internet services rival — and often greatly exceed — those found in metropolitan areas. Just as those first crews did when they engineered a telephone system, we've built and maintained a robust internet network.

The depth of my appreciation for the men and women who make these essential services possible only increases from year to year. No matter the challenge, they adapt and overcome. I'd like to, humbly, suggest that you benefit daily from those efforts.

Can you imagine not having an option to link a computer or mobile device to the internet? Work, entertainment, medical care, education and more rely on rock-solid service. In just a few decades, we've gone from marveling at the idea of being able to speak one-on-one to someone miles away via phone to having a world of information at our fingertips. We've never been so connected. In fact, internet services are as essential for many of us as water and electricity.

Despite our best efforts, though, no communications and technology company such as ours avoids adversity. It's how you overcome adversity that matters most. After all, no one escapes the power of nature. Across the nation, we've seen tornadoes, hurricanes, fires and more leave communities without the utilities many of us take for granted.

Every season of the calendar brings the possibility of an event capable of disrupting our systems. But our team maintains detailed plans to both avoid disruptions and to respond quickly if they do occur. Often, long hours of work are required to restore services after an outage. The environment in the field after an event like a severe storm may be dangerous. Yet, our crews always answer the call. Our office staff willingly puts in long hours to support the efforts. Everyone helps. And they do it gladly, because we understand how much you rely on the services we provide. They're essential, as is our commitment to you.

Our investment in not only expanding our services but also in maintaining existing infrastructure is significant and ongoing. The mission that began with construction of the first telephone lines continues. We believe in you, and our community. We prosper together. Regardless of the challenges, we embrace our commitment to serving you.

Everyone at BTC Fiber is proud of our heritage, a sentiment we wish to carry over to future generations that will continue to provide you the communication tools needed to thrive. Thank you for letting us be part of this community. 

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is a member-owned cooperative dedicated to delivering advanced telecommunications technology to the people of Bledsoe and Sequatchie counties and portions of Van Buren, Cumberland and Hamilton counties.

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**On the Cover:**



Pikeville-Bledsoe County Chamber of Commerce's new flexible co-working and conference space, Rural Interconnect Outpost, now available. See story Page 8.



REMEMBER AND HONOR

# MEMORIAL DAY

— ★ ★ ★ —

In remembrance and reflection for the military who paid the ultimate sacrifice, BTC Fiber will close on Monday, May 31, for Memorial Day.

## CONGRATS GRADUATES

# 2021

*class of*

### Sequatchie County High School



**Valedictorian**  
Sidney Johnson



**Salutatorian**  
Sara Brown

**Graduation ceremonies are scheduled for May 14 on the football field at 7067 State Route 28, Dunlap**

### Bledsoe County High School



**Valedictorian**  
Madelynn Dodson



**Salutatorian**  
Brooklyn Miller

**Graduation ceremonies are scheduled for May 21 at 8 p.m. on the football field, 877 S. Main St., Pikeville**



## BTC Fiber awarded grant to extend fiber in Bledsoe and Cumberland counties

BTC Fiber will expand their fiber-optic network with assistance from a grant awarded in March from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

The highly-competitive grants for \$727,955 — BTC Fiber will make a 50% match for a total investment of \$1.4 million — will provide access to fiber at 402 households and four businesses. The project will extend fiber starting at the intersection of Highways 101 and 30, and follow Highway 101 through the Mt. Crest and Winesap communities in Bledsoe and Cumberland counties, says Matt Boynton, BTC Fiber engineering manager. Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and Bob Rolfe, commissioner of the TNECD, announced \$14.9 million in broadband accessibility grants in March. BTC Fiber is one of 13 grant recipients from across the state. "Every Tennessean should have access to the same high-speed broadband, no matter what zip code they live in," Lee says. "Our continued investment in internet connectivity will help level the playing field for rural communities across our state, and I thank these 13 providers for partnering with us to help nearly 18,000 more Tennesseans get connected."

# Marvelous vistas

## Rhododendron make summertimes scenic

Story by ANNE P. BRALY

Climb to the top of Roan Mountain, a 5-mile ridgetop along the Appalachian Trail, in the month of June, and something magical happens. The view, normally green with vegetation, turns into a blanket of crimson as the rhododendron opens in full bloom.

“The views are spectacular — and that’s an understatement,” says Keith Kelley, ranger for the Cherokee National Forest, Watauga District.

It’s this view that people have been traveling to experience for generations, according to Jennifer Bauer. She is the author of three books about Roan Mountain. The most recent is “Roan Mountain: A Passage of Time.”

As early as the 1700s, botanists made their way up the mountain range to study

the flora and fauna. In 1794, Andre Micheaux discovered alpine species rarely found outside of the New England and Canadian latitudes. Five years later, John Fraser hiked up the mountain, collecting specimens of rhododendron and noting the existence of the fir tree we now know as the Fraser fir. And yet another early explorer was Elisha Mitchell, for whom Mount Mitchell is named.

But it wasn’t until the magnificent Cloudland Hotel opened high atop Roan Mountain that it became known to the general public and word of its rhododendron — the largest proliferation of wild rhododendron in the world — spread across the South and beyond. Today, little remains of the Cloudland other than a forest service marker providing information

about the hotel’s glorious heyday. But people continue to come to see the magnificent gardens tended by Mother Nature. Sometimes too many people, Kelley adds, so he offers a suggestion should you go.

“South of Carver’s Gap is an area known as the Rhododendron Gardens, which you can drive to, park and hike from there,” he says. “There is a small user fee you have to pay to enter the area, but it is well worth it. That area is accessed by turning south at Carver’s Gap.”

Bauer’s attachment to “The Roan,” as she calls it, began in college when she was a student at East Tennessee State University. Her botany professor introduced her to The Roan, and the rest, as they say, is history. She’s now been with Tennessee State Parks for 38 years, the first 21 of which were spent working as an interpretive ranger at Roan Mountain State Park. The position enabled her to conduct research in an effort to learn more about the natural history of The Roan and its people. Bauer is now the park ranger at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park in Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Roan’s highlands, which reach up to 6,285 feet at its peak, is where you’ll find the Rhododendron Gardens — toward the west end of the highlands at the end of a U.S. Forest Service road that turns off from Carver’s Gap at the North Carolina/Tennessee state line.

“When they are in full bloom, you see a sea of crimson flowers in areas where there are not many spruce and fir trees popping up among them,” Bauer says. “But even with the trees, it’s a beautiful sight. In other areas of the mountain, you’ll walk through areas that are in different stages of transition between balds to forests. In these areas the rhododendron reaches for the sun and blooms among the spruce and firs. All of these unique habitats present a feeling of great beauty and a sense of visiting an enchanted forest.”

Any time of year is worth visiting, Kelley notes. “But in June, the rhododendron are in bloom, along with some of the other vegetation, which offers incredible, breathtaking scenery.” 

### *Where does Roan Mountain get its name?*

Some say the name refers to the reddish color of the mountain when rhododendron comes into bloom in early summer or when the mountain ash berries appear in autumn. But, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, there’s another theory. Some say it comes from Daniel Boone’s roan-colored horse, because the man and his horse were frequent visitors to the area.





## Grow it yourself

Rhododendron grows best in cooler climates and acidic soil — definitely not the hard-packed red clay found throughout the South. There are hybrid varieties, though, that have been developed for the southern garden. But that's no guarantee they will survive. Rhododendrons do not like high heat and wet soil. However, if you're willing to try, here are some tips from Southern Living.

- **Start with heat-tolerant plants.**
- **Pay attention to the soil and have it tested for acidity. Also, plant your rhododendron in an area that drains quickly and contains lots of organic matter, such as chopped dead leaves, cow manure and ground bark. Again, no clay.**
- **If your ground is flat, plant the rhododendron in a raised bed.**
- **Finally, choose a location that is lightly shaded in the afternoon and shielded from strong winds.**

## Balding

The Appalachian Trail travels along the highest ridges of the Roan Mountain range, which separates Tennessee and North Carolina. A portion of the highlands is a red spruce and Fraser fir forest. Other areas of The Roan are described as "bald" communities. Just as the name implies, balds are areas on mountaintops where the forest ends and thick vegetation of native grasses and/or shrubs begins. One of the most popular areas along the entire Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia is the portion that crosses the balds of Roan Mountain, says Jennifer Bauer, former ranger at Roan Mountain State Park and a board member of Friends of Roan Mountain.

How the balds developed is anyone's guess, but scientists now believe they may have formed during the last ice age when constant winds and freezing temperatures caused trees to make a hasty retreat down the mountaintop. Mammoths and other beasts acted as Mother Nature's personal weed eaters, keeping the balds grazed. Now that the woolly beasts are gone and temperatures have warmed, balds are beginning to grow some "hair." But Roan Mountain's balds still shine. Among the most popular are the balds starting at Carver's Gap and going north.

### They are, in order:

- **Round Bald**
- **Jane Bald**
- **Grassy Ridge**
- **Yellow Mountain**
- **Little Hump Mountain**
- **Hump Mountain**



# Rural Interconnect Outpost

## Creating workspace with connectivity in Bledsoe County

Story by LISA SAVAGE

**L**ocal farmer Sam Rainey learned a lot during a February meeting about the new Aviagen feed mill project coming to Pikeville.

About 60 others joined the meeting, which took place in Pikeville, but Rainey was among only a dozen or so in the room. Representatives from Aviagen, state officials and a host of other farmers joined in via Zoom videoconferencing from across the country.

It's the first time a group utilized Pikeville-Bledsoe County Chamber of Commerce's new flexible co-working and conference space, Rural Interconnect Outpost. "The room was really nice and worked well for what we used it for," Rainey says. "There must have been a lot of thought and effort put towards it, and I appreciate being able to use it."

The membership-based space includes private offices, co-working and conference spaces, gigabit internet, a coffee bar, printing and copying services, and a full array of media services like sound and projection.

"Connectivity equals opportunity — that's what RIO is all about," says John Cranwell, executive director of the chamber. "The first of its kind in Sequatchie Valley, RIO will also offer networking and educational opportunities for the entrepreneurs of the future."

It would have been almost impossible to gather all the meeting participants in one room without access to videoconferencing, says J.C. Rains, University of Tennessee Extension agent and Bledsoe County director. But via Zoom, they learned of Aviagen's plan to complete construction on a feed mill in Pikeville and to partner with local farmers for the needed corn production. Aviagen will invest \$35.3 million in a new state-of-the-art feed mill, a key part of the company's larger expansion plans in the area.

The UT Center for Profitable Agriculture organized the meeting with Aviagen officials, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, UT Extension agents, lending agencies and others. Some farmers went to the RIO for the meeting, but others joined via Zoom. "This provided a way for everyone who needed to be in the meeting to learn the details of the project without having to travel a long distance," Rains says. "Several of the farmers most likely wouldn't have had a chance to be in the meeting without this technology."

### PLANNING RIO

RIO would never have happened without the support of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, BTC Fiber, City Mayor Philip Cagle and County Mayor Gregg Ridley, Cranwell says. Bledsoe County, which earned designation for the ThreeStar grant program through the TNECD, had a \$50,000 grant with no plans to use it.



Technology available at the area's new flexible co-working space, RIO, brought farmers and others together for a virtual meeting.

“I didn’t feel like we had a project the grant could be used for, so I called the chamber, and they came up with a plan that established the space,” which is also ideal for home-based businesses that need to host a meeting or need access to high-speed internet, Ridley says.

Once the chamber established plans, it needed a location. The newly renovated Pikeville Municipal Building had the ideal space.

The city had renovated the old Pikeville Elementary School and moved city offices there three years ago, and one wing of the building remained vacant. “When we first got the building, it had been vacant awhile and was grown up,” Cagle says. “But that old building was solid as a rock.” Upgrades were made, including new windows, a new roof and updated plumbing and electrical. During that renovation, BTC Fiber added fiber optic internet access.

Now, the building serves an additional purpose as the space for the RIO project, now housed in a room in the vacant wing. “This is an ideal use for this space,” Cagle says. “It brings something unique to the community. It was a no-brainer to be involved in this project.”

## BENEFITS OF BROADBAND

The space can serve several purposes for entrepreneurs, work-at-home individuals, students and small businesses, and it has gigabit internet service. Matt Boynton, BTC Fiber engineering manager, serves as the RIO committee chairman for the chamber and worked with others to create the co-working space.

The unique design incorporates an industrial-modern workspace, created from the vision of Roberta Smith, administrative manager at BTC Fiber.

“This wouldn’t have been possible without the dedication of the committee and Roberta’s vision for the design, and what this service could mean for our community,” Boynton says.

The Pikeville-Bledsoe County Chamber of Commerce handles reservations and oversight of the facility. “With that, a log of usage will be recorded detailing the effectiveness of this facility,” Boynton says. “Motivation for this facility is to support talent that exists throughout this community by coupling inviting workspace with gigabit internet capacity.”

The project also focuses on workforce development, an initiative that aligns with the governor’s goals to provide broadband services to more rural residents, businesses and institutions in distressed counties in Tennessee, Boynton says.

It’s an ideal way for BTC Fiber to promote what it means to live in a Smart Rural Community, a designation that helps rural broadband networks leverage innovative economic development, education, health care and other vital services, Smith says.

“A Smart Rural Community designation starts with collaboration between rural broadband providers and forward-thinking community members,” Smith says. “This is a good example of the power of broadband to keep small-town America connected to the rest of the world.”

The project also fits perfectly with Pikeville-Bledsoe County Chamber of Commerce’s mission statement: Create. Inspire. Connect. “RIO is the embodiment of our mission,” Cranwell says. “We’re excited about the many opportunities that RIO will provide for current and future businesses in Bledsoe County.”



The Rural Interconnect Outpost, called RIO, provides a flexible work space for meetings and other business.



## About RIO

25 Municipal Drive, Pikeville, just off Main Street.

For more information, call 423-447-1249, email [connecting@rioutpost.com](mailto:connecting@rioutpost.com) or visit [rioutpost.com](http://rioutpost.com).

# Final cut

## How the freedom of the internet is transforming filmmaking

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Some filmmakers learn their craft by making home movies in the backyard. Others go to film school. Madelaine Turner likes to say she got her education on YouTube.

“That’s essentially where I got my film degree,” she says. “Movies were my first love, but filmmaking wasn’t something I pursued for a long time. Until quarantine started.”

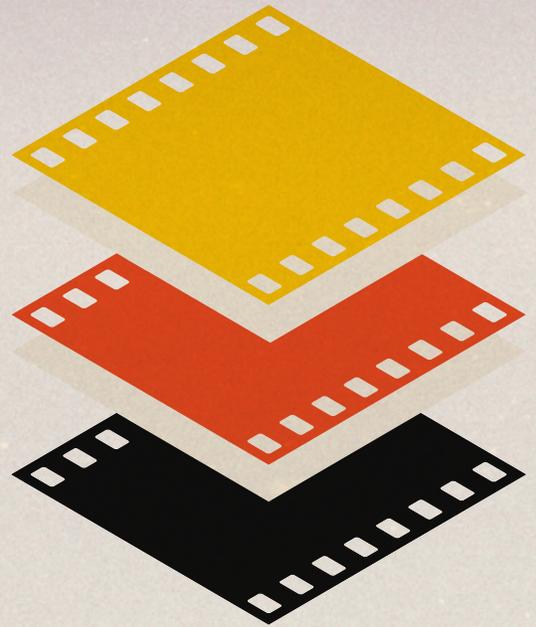
At 27 years old, the California native considers herself a senior by the standard of apps like TikTok. Of the app’s 500 million active users, nearly half are estimated to be in their teens and early 20s.

Originally, Turner’s quick videos were just a way to stay connected with her younger siblings. But she began to view the platform as a way to genuinely flex her creative muscle after a positive response to her Wes Anderson tribute video, “The Anderson Guide to Surviving a Global Pandemic,” filmed using only objects she had in her apartment.

“It gives you really specific boundaries with the content you’re allowed to create, which is 59 seconds,” she says. “So the challenge and excitement as a storyteller, director and creator is getting your point across and making those 59 seconds really enjoyable for your audience.”

Within those confines, Turner has explored her wide-ranging creative interests, from short films paying homage to Jane Austen costume dramas and French heist movies to abstract dream sequences and a cyberpunk take on “The Wizard of Oz.” Each new style gives her a chance to learn more about the filmmaking process both during and after filming.

“I’d never really used a green screen or After Effects before,” she says. “Now, taking on a new genre is really exciting because it allows me to push the boundaries of what I know how to do and challenges me to figure out how I can convey this effectively without having a whole production crew.”



Her growth as a filmmaker hasn’t gone unnoticed. As a freelance screenwriter, Turner has been able to point to her online portfolio and hundreds of thousands of followers to build connections within the movie industry. And thanks to the algorithms of apps like TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, more people are discovering her work every day.

“It allows you to come across content from someone with virtually no following,” Turner says. “And from my perspective, I was putting my stuff out there and very quickly engaging an audience that gave me the permission to go bigger, further and more creative.”

That audience is one of the reasons Turner doesn’t expect she’ll ever stop making short-form videos online, even as she pursues her larger filmmaking dreams. The real-time feedback she receives on those platforms has already shaped her as a filmmaker and may come to shape the industry itself.

“A traditional filmmaker might go years in between films, whereas on TikTok you get this microenvironment of trying new things and getting that quick feedback,” she says.

“So I think I’ve been lucky to hyper-develop my style as a filmmaker because of that feedback loop. Hopefully I can be part of a generation of filmmakers that is able to bridge that gap between the internet and the mainstream.”



Madelaine Turner puts her spin on genres ranging from French heist movies to cyberpunk.



## Long distance

For every film festival that was able to pivot to digital in 2020, there were many more that had to be canceled altogether. With so much of the industry on hold, a team of five cinephiles in Brooklyn started the entirely online Long Distance Film Festival, harnessing the power of broadband to give rural and urban filmmakers around the world an outlet for their creativity.

"There was a certain freedom to starting an all-online festival," says Festival Director Elias ZX. "It was much cheaper than doing it in person. We didn't sell tickets and had unlimited capacity so friends, family and fans of the filmmakers were able to join from around the globe and watch the festival in its entirety."

To pull it off, the team partnered with the independent Spectacle Theater and Kinoscope to stream its 15 selected short films to hundreds of viewers around the world. Plans for a second edition of the festival are already underway, with submissions open for 2021.



## Industry standard



Oxford Film Festival Executive Director Melanie Addington was making last-minute arrangements for the Mississippi-based event when the state's governor banned gatherings of more than 100 people. Using Eventive's brand-new online festival platform, she quickly pivoted to take the event virtual.

"We were one of the first virtual festivals with Eventive and had to learn a lot very quickly, mostly that a lot of our community doesn't have good internet access," she says. "That was restricting in some ways, but it also expanded who could see them to a new audience."

Moving forward, Addington anticipates OFF will have a hybrid format, combining the accessibility of a virtual festival with the in-person experience of a live event.

"This will be what we do from here on out," she says. "Not everyone can travel to Oxford, but they can still take part in the experience. It makes absolute sense for this to become a standard in our industry."



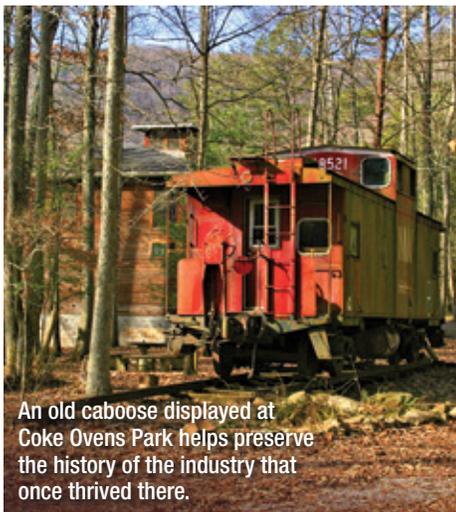
# Preserving the past

## Coke Ovens play role in Dunlap's history

Story by LISA SAVAGE



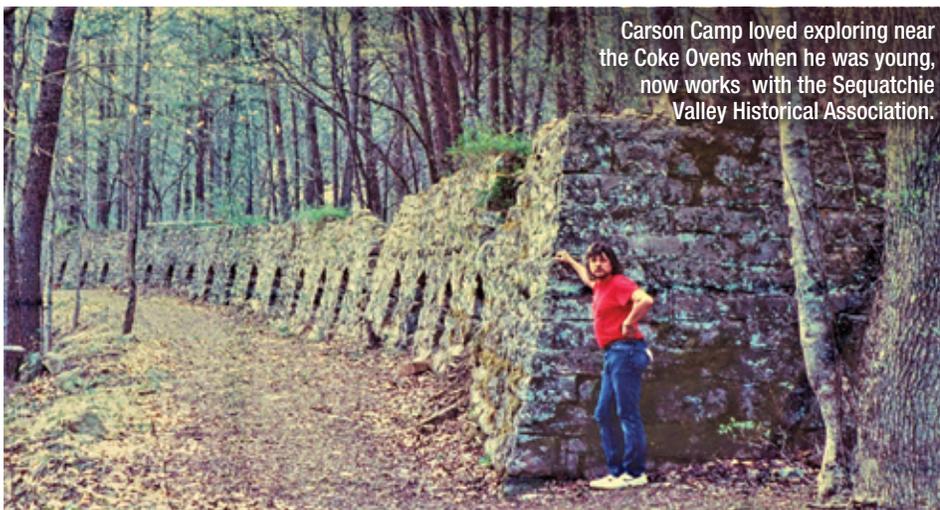
The Coke Ovens Park provides visitors a glimpse into the industry that once thrived in Sequatchie County.



An old caboose displayed at Coke Ovens Park helps preserve the history of the industry that once thrived there.



The park's Bluegrass Festival serves as the only annual fundraiser for Dunlap Coke Ovens.



Carson Camp loved exploring near the Coke Ovens when he was young, now works with the Sequatchie Valley Historical Association.

As a young boy, Carson Camp saw the old, abandoned brick structures that were once part of a thriving mining community when he walked in the woods near his home. He heard stories about the coal mining operation and coke ovens. Both his grandfathers had worked in the mines, and one died young from black lung at age 33.

"I had always seen the ruins and chimneys out in the woods," Camp says. "It's like it was forgotten."

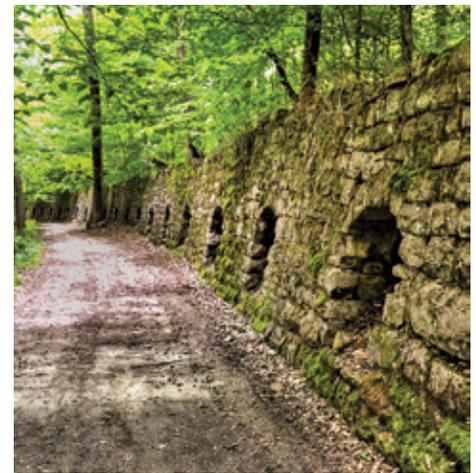
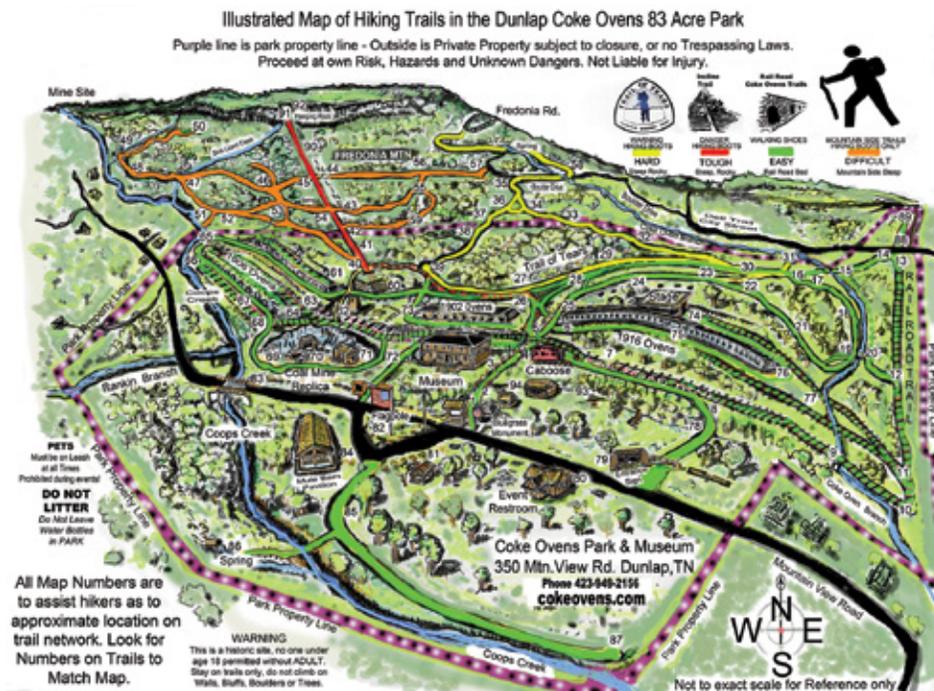
As Camp got older, he was determined to learn everything he could about the history in his community and to preserve it. "This was an important part of the industrial revolution in the United States, and I realized there wasn't anything about it in history books," Camp says.

Camp and others organized the Sequatchie Valley Historical Association in 1984 and set out to shed light on the historic mining operation that thrived between 1899 and 1927 in Dunlap. The mining company went bankrupt in 1927, never to reopen, and the area became a dumping ground for years. Volunteers with the historical association removed a thousand tons of garbage to make way for a park, and the nonprofit group now works to preserve the history of the area's once-thriving industrial complex and of all the Sequatchie Valley.

### THE HISTORY

Historic Dunlap Coke Ovens Park, 88 tree-shaded acres in the heart of Sequatchie County, provides a glimpse into the industry that once thrived there. Visitors can explore the remains of 268 beehive coke ovens the mining industry used in the early 1900s to convert mountain coal into industrial coke, a product used to smelt iron ore, Camp says.

Workers mined the ore atop Fredonia Mountain and used a gravity incline to get the product to the bottom of the mountain, where workers washed the coal. The coal lumps easily sold, but the coal dust and fine granules remained. "That's where the coke ovens came in," Camp says. Workers put the remnants in and used mud to seal the oven doorways made from stacked



## More About Dunlap Coke Ovens Park

An amphitheater at the park provides an ideal location for its only fundraiser, the annual Dunlap Coke Ovens-Bluegrass Jam Band/Festival, along with other events throughout the year.

There's a fee for the festival, and it's the only time there's a charge for entrance at the park. There's no fee for the museum and parking. However, the association accepts donations.

The park is open during daylight hours, year-round. There's no paid staff. Between 15 and 20 association members volunteer their time, working in the museum, picking up limbs, mowing or doing general cleanup about once a week. The group plans the annual Dunlap Coke Ovens-Bluegrass Jam Band/Festival, which takes place the first weekend in June. This year's event is scheduled for June 5 and 6. For details about the festival, visit [www.cokeovens.com](http://www.cokeovens.com) or the Dunlap Coke Ovens Park Facebook page.

### Dunlap Coke Ovens Park

350 Mountain View Road, Dunlap  
423-949-2156  
[www.cokeovens.com](http://www.cokeovens.com)

loose fire brick. The mud sealed the joints, allowing the dust to slowly convert to coke. The dust burned for 72 hours, and then the workers unsealed the ovens.

About 6 tons of coal dust converted to 3 tons of coke, Camp says. Steel foundries in Chattanooga and Birmingham purchased the coke and used it in steel production.

During the week, workers loaded the mined coal onto the incline railcars to move it down the mountain. On weekends when the mines weren't running, workers would fit homemade wooden bicycle-type seats with steel rollers — called incline horses — to grip the incline's rails at the top of the mountain and ride them down.

"They'd slide from the top to the bottom, with some speeds up to 60 mph," Camp says. "On the weekend, they'd have races."

At their peak in 1920, the mining operation and coke ovens employed about 350 people. Records show only two deaths from accidents at the mines, although Camp figures there were more. Of the original 200 wood-framed company buildings and homes, only three survive today, outside park grounds.

The miners were not employees of the company, but served as contract workers. They even provided their own tools, which

they purchased at the company store, known as The Commissary.

The association set a goal to build an exact, full-size replica of the original Commissary, which went up in 1902. Construction began in 1987 with groundbreaking ceremonies, and a 92-by-46-foot, two-story replica of the store and offices now serves as the Coke Ovens Museum. It contains photos and artifacts from the coke ovens, as well as other Sequatchie Valley history.

### HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Members of the historical association strive to preserve the history of the Sequatchie Valley and provide an educational resource for the area. The group successfully worked to have Coke Ovens Park placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and they continue to expand their collection of artifacts that reflect the area's history.

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail also goes through the park.

"It's one of the few actual pristine trails not buried underneath asphalt of today's highways," Camp says. "People can actually walk on the trail here in the park."

BTC Fiber sometimes uses the park to film Channel 18's "Ed Brown Show" featuring local bluegrass musicians. "It's

a great opportunity for the park," Camp says. "It's a nice backdrop, and it lets people see some of what we have here. We want as many people as possible to learn about this important part of history in our area. We want to preserve it so that future generations can enjoy it." 📷



## Perfectly pleasing peas

### Enjoy a surprisingly flexible legume

If you're denying yourself the simple beauty of peas, it's time to rethink your weekly menu. Full of healthy benefits and flavor, they should be a part of everyone's diet.

Peas' nutrition profile includes manganese, protein, fiber, vitamin A and folate, with lots of lesser vitamins to boot. And their neutral flavor allows them to go from smoothies at breakfast to salads for lunch and pot pies for dinner. They're inexpensive and add a lot of texture and color to any plate.

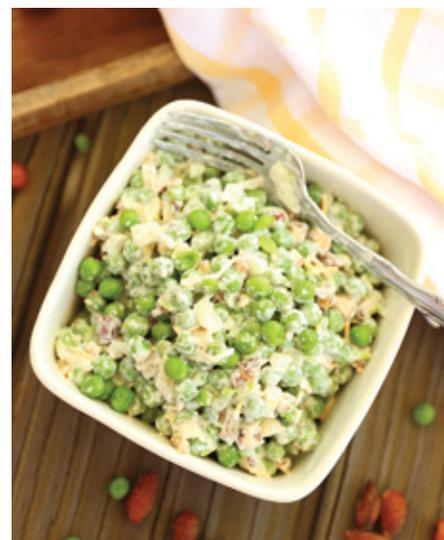
Try tossing them with pasta and a creamy Alfredo sauce. Or use peas as a topping for a baked potato with cheese and sour cream. You can also make an incredible pesto sauce for buttery rounds of crusty bread. Simply add a bag of

frozen peas to a handful of mint leaves and a half cup of Parmesan cheese, blend them together in a food processor and add olive oil as the machine is running until you get a smooth, thick consistency.

If you're lucky enough to have a garden full of the green pods filled with fresh peas, you've done yourself a favor. Just go outside and grab a handful of taste and nutrition. If not, grab a bag of frozen peas — they're just as good for you.



FOOD EDITOR  
**ANNE P. BRALY**  
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CHATTANOOGA,  
TENNESSEE.



### PEA SALAD WITH SMOKED ALMONDS

- 2 (16-ounce) packages frozen peas
- 6 ounces smoke-flavored almonds, finely chopped
- 1/2 a sweet onion or more, to taste, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise (reduced fat OK)
- 1/2 cup sour cream (light OK)
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Place frozen peas in a colander and rinse them under cold water until thawed. Drain and transfer them to a large bowl. Add the almonds and onions. Mix well. Fold mayonnaise, sour cream and black pepper into the pea mixture until evenly coated. Transfer to a serving container and top with shredded cheese. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Before serving, you may want to blend cheese into the mixture, or leave it on top for a prettier presentation.





## GREEN PEA BANANA SMOOTHIE

- 1/2 cup frozen green peas
- 1 frozen banana
- 1 cup spinach
- 4 mint leaves or more, to taste
- 1 1/2 cups almond milk
- 1 tablespoon almond butter, optional

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth, about 1 minute. Add more almond milk if needed to achieve your desired consistency.

## CREAMY CHICKEN POT PIE

Peas add taste, color and texture to this creamy dish.

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 1/2 cup cold buttermilk
- 1 or 2 tablespoons cold water
- 1 large egg, beaten, for the egg wash

### For the pot pie filling:

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup diced onion
- 2 medium carrots sliced (about 1 cup)
- 1 stalk celery sliced (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh Italian parsley
- 1 3/4 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 3 cups shredded chicken or turkey
- 1 cup frozen peas

First, make the pie dough. Combine the flour, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Add the cubed butter and toss to coat.

Dump the mixture out onto a clean surface and use a rolling pin to roll the butter into thin sheets, combining it with the flour. Use a bench scraper to scrape the rolling pin and to bring the mixture back into a pile as necessary. Continue until all of the butter is incorporated into the flour. The mixture will be very flaky. Return the mixture to the bowl and place it in the freezer for 15 minutes to chill the butter.

Remove from the freezer and add the buttermilk. Use a spoon, and then your hands, to stir the mixture until it comes together into a ball. If the mixture is too dry, add the water a tablespoon at a time. Divide the dough into 2 parts and flatten them into disks. Wrap each disk in plastic wrap and chill in the fridge while you make the filling.

To make the filling, heat the butter over medium-high heat in a large skillet. Add the onions, carrots, celery and garlic and cook until tender, stirring occasionally. Whisk in the flour, salt, black pepper, thyme, parsley, chicken broth and heavy cream. Whisk until there are no flour lumps, then simmer over medium-low heat for 10 minutes or until the sauce has thickened. Stir in the shredded chicken or turkey and frozen peas. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Remove the pie dough from the refrigerator. On a lightly floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll out the dough into a 12-inch circle. Dough should be about 1/4 inch thick. Transfer the dough to a 9-inch pie pan. Pat with your fingers, making sure it is smooth. Trim the extra overhang of dough with a knife and discard.

Pour the filling into the dough-lined pie pan. Roll out the second disk of dough and carefully cover the pie. Trim the extra overhang off the sides. Seal the edges by crimping with a fork or your fingers. With a sharp knife, slice a few small slits in the center of the top crust. Using a pastry brush, brush the crust and edges with a beaten egg.

Bake for 45 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes, allowing the filling to settle and thicken a bit. Cut into slices and serve.



BTC Fiber is proud to serve as the main sponsor for this year's festival!

# BTC FIBER VALLEY FEST

Don't miss the best outdoor, hometown musical festival ever!!

## ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

### Saturday

10 a.m. — Jill's Kids

Opening Ceremony

2 p.m. — Sequatchie River Band

3:30 p.m. — Billie McCallie and In Cahoots

5 p.m. — Bill Hatfield and the Wild Wind Band

6:30 p.m. — The Beaters

8 p.m. — Shenandoah

### Sunday

12:15 p.m. — Track 145

1:30 p.m. — Stars and Bars Band

2:45 p.m. — Cody McCarver

3:30 p.m. — John Schneider