

life IN OUR FOOTHILLS

July 2020

Taking Model Trains to a Grand Level



JULY 2020



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of 20 acres, of which 8 acres are within three fenced pastures. There is a 2-stall barn with tack, feed, wash rack and half bath. Walnut Creek Preserve is a gated equestrian community close to the Lake Lure Resort. The Preserve is a planned community with only 25 home sites that share access to over 50 miles of riding and hiking trails that meander throughout the 1500 acres of forested land that is protected in perpetuity by conservation easements under the auspices of Conserving Carolina.

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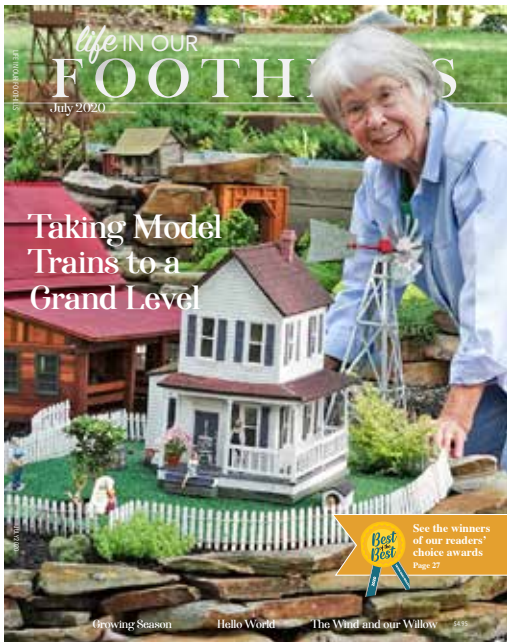
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Kevin Powell
General Manager

ON THE COVER



The Piedmont Garden Railway Society

(Story on page 18)

Photo by Mark Levin

FROM THE EDITOR



It gives me great pleasure to announce the 3rd Annual Best Of winner edition of Life in Our Foothills magazine!

For three weeks in May, we opened up the polls asking you, our loyal readers, to let us know which restaurants were your favorite, where the best place to get french fries is, who your favorite realtor is and which is your favorite hair salon, to name a few. And you let us know.

We received hundreds of ballots, both in the form of printed ballots that published in the Tryon Daily Bulletin and online at tryondailybulletin.com. At one point, we had four people counting them. This goes to show how wonderful the community support is for the Bulletin. For that, I sincerely thank you!

But that's not all in this issue. This issue is jam packed with a several great features as well.

To start with, we have the story of how Avery's Creek Nursery came into fruition.

Next, keeping with the garden theme, we ride the rails with The Piedmont Garden Railway Society. These are not the same "HO" scale trains you had as a kid.

Lastly, have you ever wondered how people used to communicate over long distances before phones? Flip the pages to learn as it is still be done locally.

In closing, I would like to thank each and every one of you for participating in this year's Best Of voting. Some of the results might just surprise you. Who are they? Read on to find out. Hope you enjoy!

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life IN OUR FOOTHILLS

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Mark is retired from a career in education. In addition to the classroom he has had a lifetime of experiences earning a buck as a photographer, videographer, author, musician and camp director. You can follow his blog about people & places in the foothills at www.FoothillsFaces.com or check out his new podcast he enjoys with a friend of 50 years at www.garyandmark.com.



Vincent Verrecchio, Writer and Photographer

When not working in advertising as a copywriter, art director, photographer, creative director, and finally agency owner, Vince was on a horse with a camera on hand somewhere in North America, Europe, or Africa. Now lightly retired from advertising more than 40 years, he writes about whatever strikes his fancy, looks for interesting photos everywhere and wanders in the Foothills on a horse



Macy Cochran, Writer and Photographer

Macy Cochran is an English Writing student at North Greenville University. She is a lover of books, coffee and binge watching sitcoms from the 90's. As a creative writer, she often spends her time working on her novels, poetry and short stories.



Jimmi Buell, Writer

Jimmi is an extension agent for the Polk County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. She teaches cooking and nutrition classes with a focus on improving health with better food choices. She can be reached at jimmi_buell@ncsu.edu or 828-894-8218.



Pebbles, Writer

Pebbles is the “spokespony” for HERD, or Helping Equines Regain Dignity, a local nonprofit that saves equines from dire conditions and in many cases slaughter. She dictates her monthly columns about her adventures and what a rescue organization does to Heather Freeman. Pebbles and Heather can be reached through HerdRescue.org



Jullia Zeleskey, Photographer and Graphic Designer

Jullia has always had an passion for art and design. These two interests have blossomed into a career she can enjoy on a daily basis. As a photographer, her keen eye for that unique shot are showcased in the Tryon Daily Bulletin, Life in Our Foothills and Visitors Bulletin magazines. Most weekends, she can be found spending time outdoors hiking or mountain biking a trail off the beaten path or sipping a vanilla latte.

our agents are ready to help you enjoy a...

Foothills Lifestyle



Our agency consists of agents who either grew up in the area and elected to stay here or agents who grew up somewhere else and selected to move here. Whether by election or selection, it is their love for this area that makes our agents excited about helping buyers or sellers experience that same feeling and enjoy a foothills lifestyle.



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BROKER/OWNER

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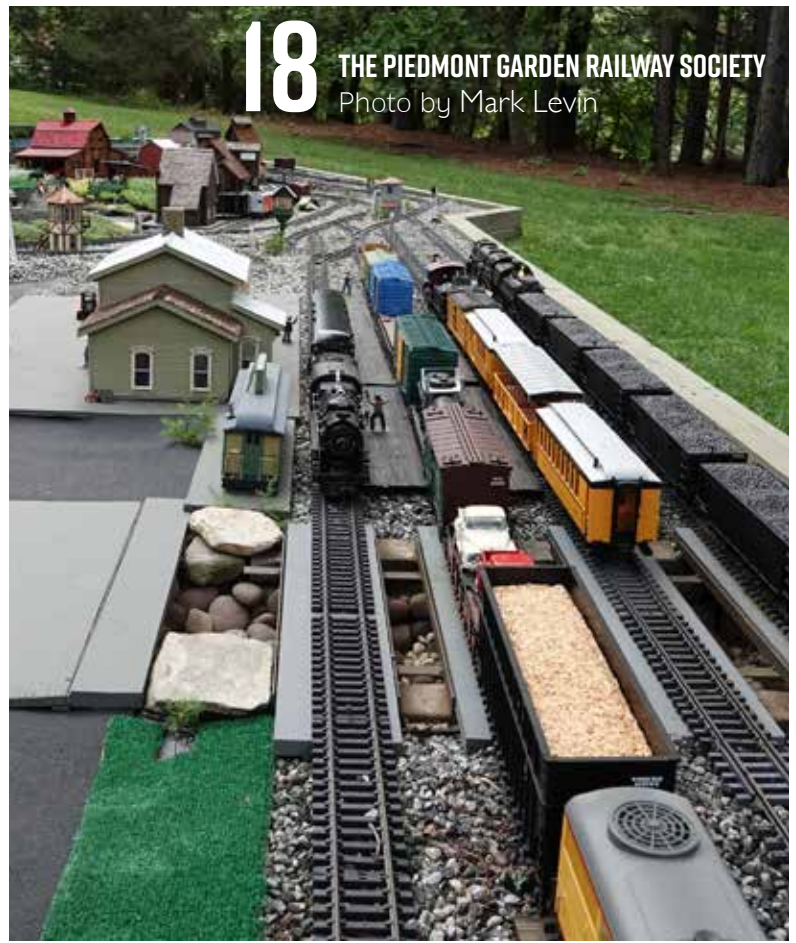




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EVERY CREEK NURSERY

Photo by Macy Cochran



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THE PIEDMONT GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

Photo by Mark Levin

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Growing Season at Avery Creek Nursery



Writer & Photographer Macy Cochran

Both Jay and Jennifer Harden have lived in the Carolinas their entire lives, Jennifer even being born at St. Luke's hospital. With Jay's thriving landscaping business and Jennifer's childhood of gardening with her grandmother, this couple knows better than anybody how to keep a tree sturdy, a flower alive and a garden blooming. With the constant planning, care-taking and maintenance, Avery Creek Nursery is like their second home.

The Harden's are planted in Columbus where Jay calls his one and only home.

"I've been all around the country, and even to Honduras, but this is home. I wouldn't change anything here for the world."

After over a decade of landscaping, Jay said to his wife, "I would love to have a nursery."





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So, in 2014,

they purchased the property they'd had their eyes on for several years prior. Before the nursery was in the hands of Jennifer and Jay, the greenhouses were closed and the cabin was empty. But by March of 2015, the run-down piece of land was transformed into Avery Creek Nursery, named after their eldest son (and their only child at the time).

For Jay, it was about fulfilling a dream. For Jennifer, it was about learning the business and growing alongside of her husband. Now, she can answer any question customers have, whether how it's getting a succulent to flourish or when the right time is to plant a garden. No matter the time of year, Jay and Jennifer's priority is to spring forth with any help they can offer their customers.

"Gardening wasn't naturally my thing," says Jennifer. "The only experience I had was having gardened with my grandmother. Avery Creek was Jay's dream. I just had to learn a ton about this stuff. But I love getting to talk to people every day and work with people I love. I also love seeing the result of what our customers did with our plants."

Jay, on the other hand, got his experience as a young child working with his dad. "I grew up working outside a lot. My dad was a framer, so he built a lot of things, and he taught me everything I know. It takes a lot of hard work, but I give it all to God. It's all Him."

Avery Creek Nursery sells almost everything green under the sun, excluding aquatic plants. Fruit trees, succulents, annuals, perennials, evergreens, grass, seeds—it's all available at the nursery, and the best part is that a lot of these plants come from local areas.



Everywhere you turn, flower blossoms are springing from every corner of the nursery.



A fine selection of roses upon entering the first greenhouse welcomes all plant lovers as they walk inside.



At Avery Creek Nursery, you can find a large variety of shrubbery and trees, all magnificently green and lively.



The cabin's nicely landscaped lawn is thanks to Jay's landscaping business.



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“We appreciate all the support from our community”

Because spring and autumn are their busiest time of year at the nursery, the hot summer month of July is Jay and Jennifer’s time to take things easy and slow down, preparing for their next rush in the Fall. They use July to begin planning for Christmas at Avery Creek.

Each Christmas season, Avery Creek hosts pictures with Santa, workshops and the overall joy that Christmastime brings to our community. But it’s after the holidays when the nursery begins to get quiet, giving the Hardin’s a few brief months to have time to prepare for their big, annual enhancement. Though they remain open for the winter, all the fun happens around March and April after the couple finishes their deep cleaning of the nursery and refocuses on the upcoming warm months.

This year, the annual Avery Creek improvement is all about the outdoors. Coming up is the expansion of the cabin gift shop that carries seasonal goodies made from creative locals of the Foothills. In addition, Avery Creek will shortly begin selling outdoor patio furniture.

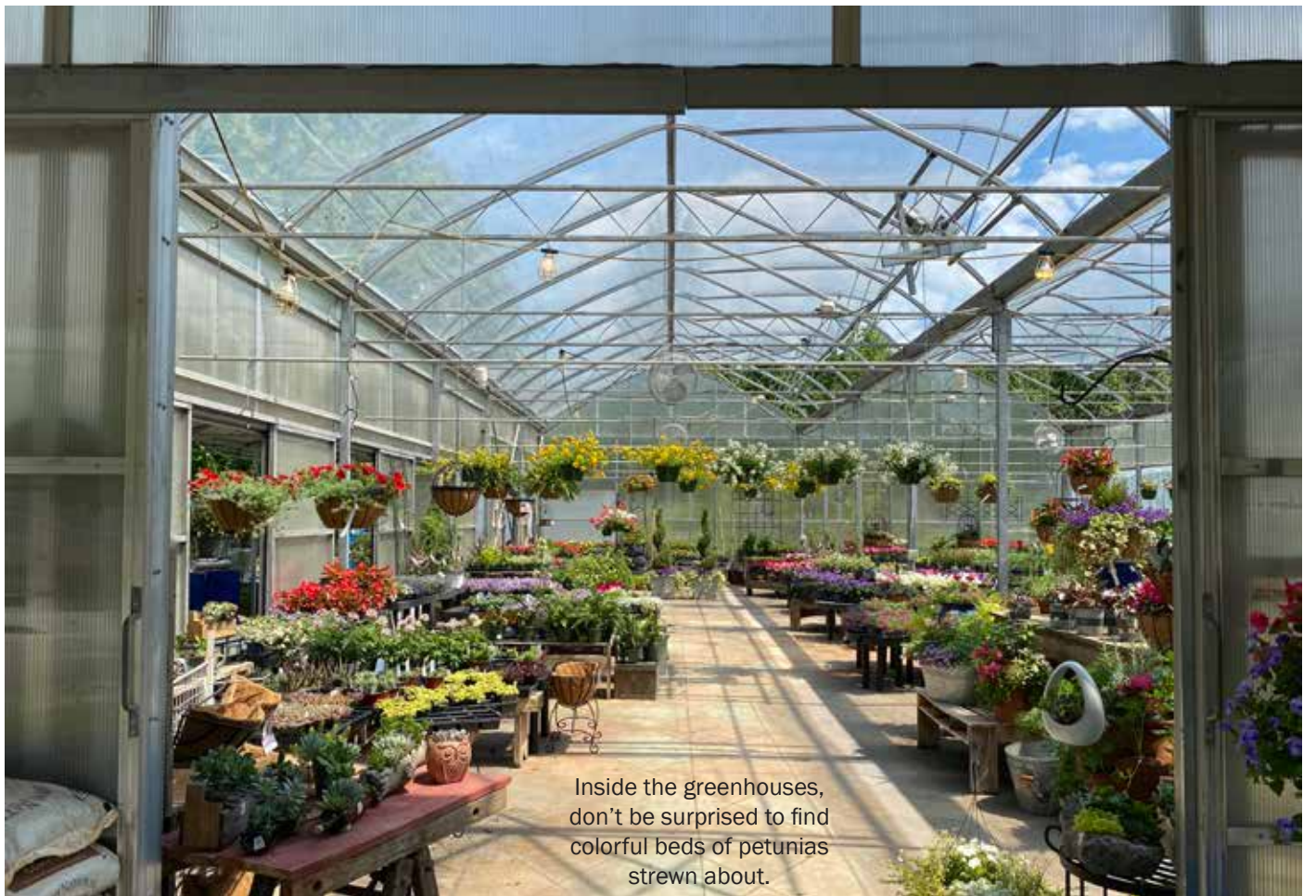
The day-to-day routine of owning the nursery keeps Jennifer and Jay quite busy, but it’s their employees who truly make those at Avery Creek Nursery a full team, including Faith, their trusty gardener who does most of the maintaining of flowers and other plants.

“We couldn’t do anything without her,” says Jennifer, considering Faith just as much a part of Avery Creek Nursery as her and Jay. “She’s amazing.”

Jay adds, “We have a lot of good people here. We have an awesome team, but our biggest help is God. Relationships are really important, and we have good ones.”

“We appreciate all the support from our community,” Jennifer adds.

The Foothills are where the Harden’s are meant to be. “My favorite part about living here is just the area in general,” says Jennifer. “It’s the views, the small-town vibes, the southern hospitality that I love so much. Everywhere we go, we can connect with people because at some point, we’ve had something to do with them. I



Inside the greenhouses, don't be surprised to find colorful beds of petunias strewn about.

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Greens, yellows, pinks,

and the rest of the rainbow can be found among the flowers throughout the greenhouses.



Though it is covered with greenery and summertime goodies, by November, this place transforms into a winter wonderland just in time for the Christmas season.

know that if I'm ever in trouble, my neighbor will help.”

Connection is the very key to Avery Creek's success. Jay claims that it's about treating people the way you want to be treated, especially within a community as close as ours.

When they aren't at work six days a week, the business, Jennifer states, is nonetheless, part of their lives. Once they're home and settled in, though, life with their three sons bustles through the door. Sports and church take up most of their time at home, but in between the chaos of baseball, golf and soccer, the Harden's do everything they can to support the local agriculture program at Polk High School, helping sprout the young green thumbs of the Foothills.

When riding by Avery Creek Nursery, the first thing you notice is the cabin and the three greenhouses stocked full of lush green plants, but driving in, you'll see that there are plants in all corners and all available spaces on the property.

“When learning how to garden,” Jennifer advises for beginners, “have a plan. Research where to plant your flowers and seek out your local gardening center for guidance.”

Jay says, “Know what you want, and know where to plant.” But it's his number one rule that overshadows all others:

“Don't ever over water.”



Inside the cabin, shoppers can find house plants, locally made aprons, or seeds for vegetable gardens!



A Hibiscus from Avery Creek's lovely selection of tropical plants.

Avery Creek Nursery

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Taking Model Trains to a Grand Level

The Piedmont Garden Railway Society

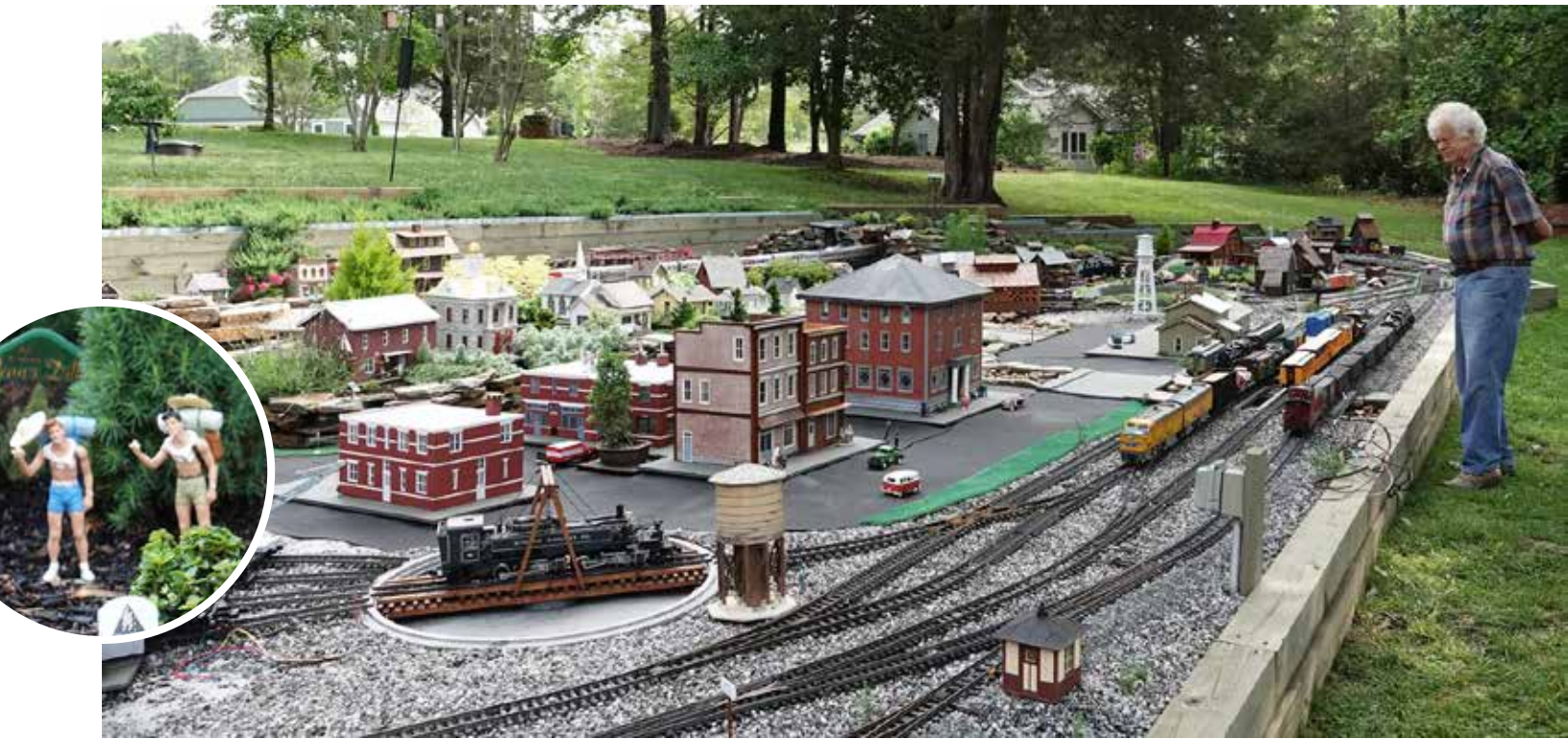


Writer & Photographer Mark Levin

*M*ost people have had a train set in their lives at some time or other. For some, it's a fun toy for two or three years. Eventually the locomotives, cars and tracks become dusty and forgotten. And then there are members of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society. To these folks, trains are a passion. It might be a hobby they've only recently acquired in retirement, but for others, it has been a hobby for decades. If members weren't born with railroading in their blood, it's there now. And where else but in the shadows of the famed Saluda Grade, tucked away in a quiet neighborhood, is a train layout that defines what a garden railway is

all about.

Garden railways are "G" scale trains with track being standard at 1 ¾ inches distance between the rails. Different scale trains can run on the same track. Most kids who get a train set as a gift have the "HO" scale or slightly larger "O" scale made by Lionel. It is almost a rite of passage to have owned a small layout with HO scale equipment. Now, supersize that many times over and you have the "G" scale version. These locomotives and accompanying cars are large. A locomotive can be two feet long and weigh several pounds.



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For the most part, the train layouts are placed outdoors – hence the “garden” as part of the name. When you see one locomotive and a few cars hooked up, you can see that even a modest train set-up would take a sizeable amount of space just to lay enough track to make one circuitous route.

However, for many of these enthusiasts, they don't stop with one locomotive and a few cars and a single route. The layouts have a way of expanding, and entire backyards can be taken up with miniature cities, small villages, vast farmlands, mountainous grades and everything in-between.

Jon and Ruthe Bole brought their love of model railroading to Polk County when they moved here in 2002. Prior to their move, the retired couple were two of the first members of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society (PGRS) and today, Jon serves on the board.

The club has “train lover's lunches” on a monthly basis at various locations throughout their club's reach. Locally, the group meets at Rural Seed Restaurant (322 E. Mills Street in Columbus) on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. The lunches are open to anyone who loves trains and wants to learn more.

Meetings have been on hold for the past few months because of situations beyond their control. Jon can't wait to get back to being able to chat about his passion with fellow members as soon as they've been given the wave of the green signal lantern.

Model railroading is Jon's only hobby. With a smile, Jon says, “You don't need another hobby when you have this one.” It is all-encompassing. Ruthie, an accomplished artist, agrees. Ruthie spends a tremendous amount of time helping Jon out in the railyard, but she still fits in some time for her art interests.



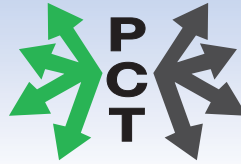


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Their home is filled with Ruthé's art, but the garden railway is another example of art in motion. She says she loves working outside. Their railroad allows her to do all of this. Ruthé enjoys working side-by-side with Jon on all their layouts since they first learned about the hobby. While on a train excursion, Jon and Ruthé met a couple who talked about their model railroad. That conversation ignited their interest. Ruthie said they were hooked just hearing about it and could sense the excitement from that couple. It wasn't long before they bought their first locomotive and section of track.

Jon cautions that G scale locomotives and cars are frightfully expensive, partly because the demand isn't there for this gauge. It's not a hobby to rush into. He advises would-be engineers to attend shows and buy used equipment and track. He says, "You might occasionally kiss a frog, but the savings will be worth it."



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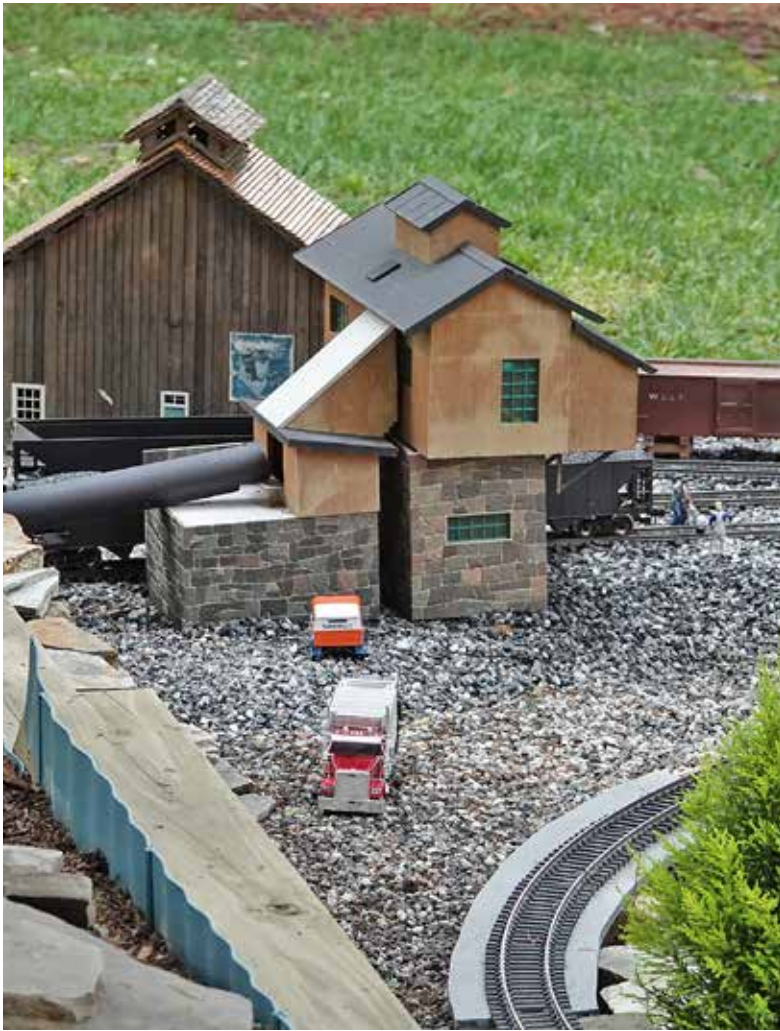
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What Jon and Ruthe really love about their hobby is that there's no wrong way to do something. You do what you want, design your course the way you want it, pick out the cars and locomotives you like and imagine, and build the landscape in a way that works for you.

Some model train hobbyists buy ready-made buildings. Jon and Ruthe might start with a factory supplied building...but when they're finished, it's hardly recognizable. Jon reworks buildings to reflect his skills including adding thousands of shingles by hand. He might repaint a building, add his own signage, engineer an addition all to make it his own. But Jon doesn't stop there. He constructs many buildings from scratch, including adding amazing amounts of detail. These buildings and layout are truly a work of art and love.

Club members are always willing to chip in and help when a fellow hobbyist needs it. In fact, they occasionally have "Gandy Dancer" Days where several members show up to help a railroader in need. Members might help by laying track or troubleshooting an electrical or mechanical problem. The term Gandy Dancer was the name given to the workers of yesteryear that laid track and drove spikes by hand.

Club President Bill Huntman, from Waynesville, says the Piedmont Garden Railway Society was incorporated as a non-profit group in 1993 and currently has over 50 members from across Western North Carolina and Upstate South Carolina. The members range in experience from just starting in garden model railroads to extensive experience with that gauge. Bill has been involved in model railroads for over 60 years. He specializes in models of early 1900s logging railroads. Jon likes to concentrate on locomotives for the period of the mid-1930s through early 50s as diesel was starting to replace steam power.

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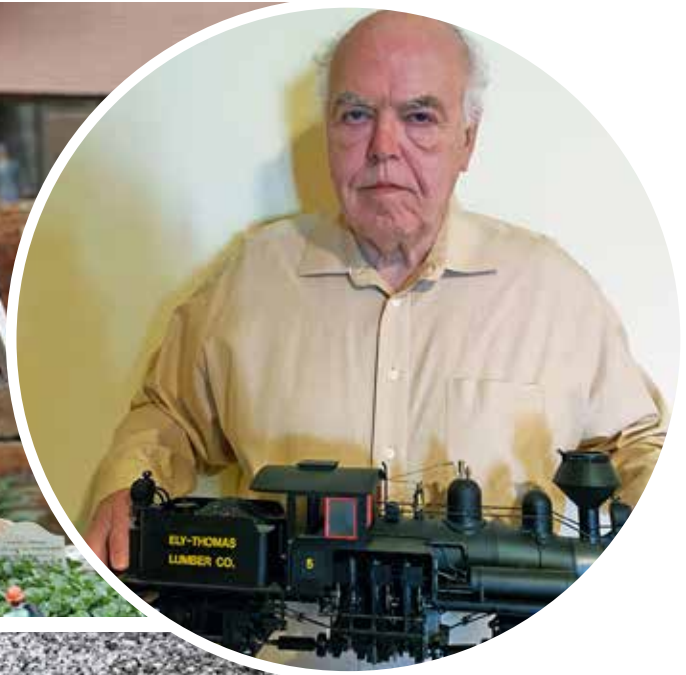
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Interested in Joining?

New rail enthusiasts are welcome to join the club, attend events and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow model train enthusiasts. Membership information and the club calendar can be found at the club's website: <https://piedmontgardenrailway.org>.

PGRS members participate in a number of events. Open Houses are events where members host club meetings to share their garden railroad. Other events include TrainFests, where presentations on the history of railroads in the Carolinas are shared and club members conduct clinics on all aspects of building and operating an outdoor railroad. The clinics cover the basics in addition to the more advanced topics, such as wiring a railroad and constructing model buildings. The clinics also allow members to learn from the experts, as well as, share their successes and mistakes.

True devotees might be interested in regional and national meetings of model train enthusiasts held throughout the country. Jon looks forward to serving

as a docent in the new rail museum when it opens in Landrum. He has certainly spent time at the train museum in Saluda. He mentions that the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer is one of the best in the country.

It doesn't take long to see the pleasure Jon and Ruthe Bole receive from their hobby. Ruthe says part of her joy is just seeing the enjoyment it gives Jon, and she's happy when he's happy. Jon reflects that he loves this. He's a true railroad fan and, "It makes me think. There's engineering, there's electronics, there's construction including brick and mortar and rock and dirt moving... and it's all in miniature that I can do. You're never finished."

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Best**

2020

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BEST RESTAURANT IN COLUMBUS: THE RURAL SEED

The Rural Seed is everything but rural. With its first win as Best of the 2020 Best Restaurant in Columbus, the friendly staff has very much deserved it.

Throughout the year, The Rural Seed hosts community events, live music and more. By helping out local farmers, this restaurant provides the freshest produce to its customers, also serving handmade pastries and other baked goods.

BEST RESTAURANT IN LANDRUM: THE HARE AND HOUND

Sitting on the corner in downtown Landrum, The Hare and Hound Restaurant is an iconic building that draws in many customers. This Irish-themed pub is perfect for an elegant patio date or a fun family gathering. Customers come from all over the upstate to dine at this vintage setting and order their much-loved baby-back ribs or crispy fish and chips. Their finger-licking good lunches and savory dinners are what keeps people coming back again and again.



BEST RESTAURANT IN SALUDA: THE PURPLE ONION

Snuggled into the line of lovely, eclectic buildings on Main Street, The Purple Onion has remained the fun, eccentric gathering place that the community has grown to adore. This historic Saluda restaurant offers a Mediterranean emphasis on their dishes, though they also offer pizza, seafood and many other options that include local trout and locally grown produce. Thursday and Saturday nights are what draws in the big crowds for the live music!





BEST RESTAURANT IN TRYON: SIDE STREET PIZZA

This iconic restaurant has done nothing less than earn first place as the Best of the Best Restaurant in Tryon year after year. Having started out on a literal side street of Tryon, this place has grown to be loved by locals as well as people who are not from the area. Though it carries the nickname “hole in the wall” from its past location, Side Street Pizza is one of the finest dine-in eateries in the Foothills that continues to draw in people who love fine Italian cuisine.

Congratulations to



Leann Wilson
at Polk Central Elementary
Best Teacher



Dr. Brandon Schweitzer
at Polk County High School
Best Principal



We are very proud of all our teachers, principals, and staff for making Polk County Schools so Amazing!

Adress: 125 E. Mills St., Columbus, NC 28722 | Phone: 828-894-3051 | Fax: 828-894-8153



POLK COUNTY SCHOOLS
Doing What's Right for Students



BEST PLACE TO GET SEAFOOD: SOUTHSIDE SMOKEHOUSE

Southside Smokehouse is known for its North Carolina barbeque, but it definitely deserves the title of Best Place to get Seafood in the Foothills. Known for their delicious seafood dishes that include shrimp tacos and shrimp n'grits, they specialize in comfort food, many with a Louisiana Cajun flare. Southside Smokehouse supports many local farmers as they serve locally grown vegetables from all across the Foothills.



BEST PLACE FOR FINE DINING: NEWMAN'S AT ORCHARD INN

Owned by two of the nicest people you will meet, Marc and Marianne Blazer are the Innkeepers of one of the loveliest, most elegant inns in the Appalachian Mountains as well as one of the classiest restaurants around. This is why Newman's Restaurant has again been named the Best Place for Fine Dining for the second year in a row.

After traveling the world and experiencing some of the most sophisticated eateries in dozens of various countries, Marc and Marianne followed their dream all the way to Saluda to open Newman's at their Orchard Inn where they host exclusive New Year's Eve parties, weddings and other events for the community and visitors.

BEST PLACE TO GET COFFEE: OPENROAD COFFEE AND TEA

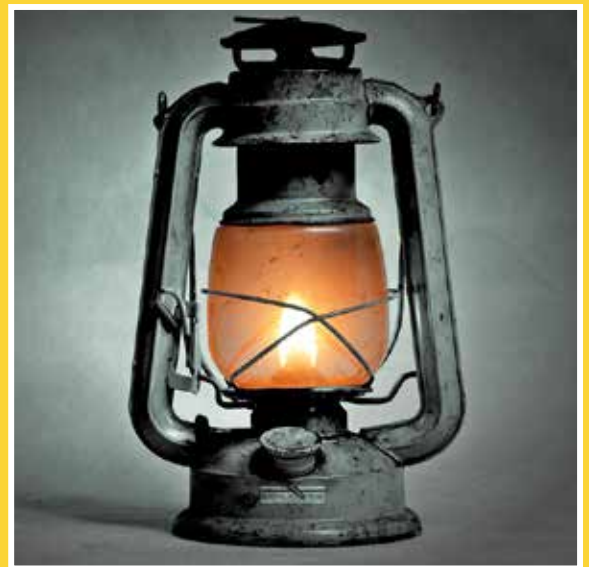
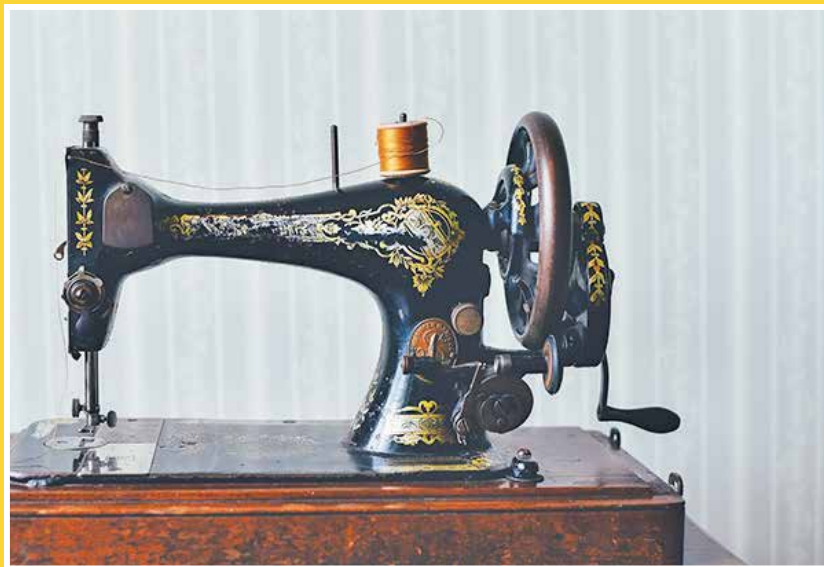
Tucked into a cozy wooded area, Openroad is the ideal little nook for a hot summer day when you're in need for a fruit smoothie, or for a cup of their locally famous coffee on a cold afternoon Openroad brews their own coffee, as well as their delicious muffins, scones and other pastries all from scratch, so you can guarantee freshness no matter the time of day.

Openroad Coffee and Tea certainly works hard every day to provide wonderful beverages and snacks for our community, and, has without question, earned first place in the Best of the Best category for best coffee!





We are
thrilled and honored
to be recognized as the
2020 Best Antique Mall
in our area!



To all of the voters, we are eternally grateful. We are so thankful for our incredible staff and dealers for their help in making our business worthy of such an award.

The 1st of April marked our fifth year in business. This recognition shows those five years of hard work have been recognized by our community.

We have been blessed beyond measure by our loyal customers and are looking forward to many more years of serving our community.



TRYON ANTIQUE MALL & MARKETPLACE

1005 South Trade Street, Tryon, NC
828-859-2756

BEST ADMINISTRATOR

Aaron Greene *Polk County Schools*

I am humbled and honored to receive the 2020 Tryon Daily Bulletin Readers Choice Award for “Best Administrator.”

It is always nice to be recognized for the work you do, especially when that recognition comes from the community members you serve. I am extremely fortunate to work with all the amazing folks in our Polk County Schools family. Any accolades I receive are a direct reflection of their effort, commitment and success.

From our Board of Education and school staff members to our young people and their families, everyone is dedicated to working together to provide the best educational experiences possible for our students. I am lucky to have the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful collective.

I truly believe in the power of education and its ability to change life trajectories. The vast majority of adults can name a school teacher, a coach, bus driver or receptionist that made an impact on them or in their lives.

So, when I am asked about my motivation for working in education, my answer is the young people we serve.

It’s always been about the kids for me. Each day, we get to help students learn more about themselves, their world and the possibilities that lie ahead.

This calling is about more than just content and skill delivery, or curriculum standards and pedagogy. We help young people discover, dream and develop. We teach them civility, foster compassion and build resilience. Most importantly, we make sure our students know that we believe in them, love them and want the best for them.

This profession is definitely challenging, but immensely rewarding. We get to watch children grow up before our very eyes, to play a part in that incredible journey and hopefully make a positive impact on their lives.

There is merit in the traditional goals of schooling like creating an educated populace and preparing young people for their roles in the workplace and society. Now, our mission has broadened and extends to addressing the needs of the whole child.

What an awesome responsibility, and what a meaningful endeavor.

Polk County’s educators are at our schools changing lives every day. As a district administrator, it is an honor to serve them as they serve our students and families. I am certainly proud of what we are able to achieve and accomplish as educators here in Polk County.

It is also humbling to witness the significant support we are given by those in our community and local government. The old cliché of “it takes a village” is truer here than anywhere else I’ve seen.

Thank you, Polk County for your support of our schools and students, and for the opportunity you have given me to serve this role.



BEST PRINCIPAL

Dr. Brandon Schweitzer
Polk County High School



There are a lot of fantastic Principals in this area that I truly respect and admire for the work they are doing with students and families in their community. To even be considered as doing a good job among them is truly humbling.

The real award goes to the amazing faculty, staff, and students of Polk County High School. I am privileged to work with amazing people who genuinely love their students and are exceptional at their jobs. In addition, the students of Polk County High School are second to none. I couldn't be more proud to be a Wolverine.



POLK COUNTY FARM BUREAU TEAM

Jesse Navarro, FSCP, Agency Manager
Shirley Odel, LUTCF, Agent
Kamron Kerr, Agent
Harry Forsha, Associate Agent
Carmon Collie, CSR
Daniel Smith, CSR



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BEST TEACHER

Leann Wilson

Polk Central Elementary

I am shocked that I was voted best teacher, because there are many, many wonderful teachers at Polk Central Elementary. I'm pleased that people recognized my work and my connections with my students. This makes me feel valued and appreciated, because I love kids and I love spending my time building their trust and becoming friends with them.

When I started at Polk Central, I was interviewed by my childhood elementary school principal, because I actually attended this school. After college, I taught for a year before I came back home to teach. I love teaching, and I love the small town feel in Polk, and I love having known for years the families of the children I teach.

This August marks my sixteenth year of being a school teacher. I had a lot of positive role models throughout my education, so when choosing a career for myself, my teachers made a huge difference, and they made me want to make that same difference in people's lives.

I began my career wanting to teach first grade, which I really enjoyed, but once I transferred to Polk Central, they moved me to fourth grade. Now, teaching fourth graders is my passion. At their age, they just want people to listen to them and understand who they are, and I do.

Being a teacher isn't just about academic content, but about building relationships with students. I respect these kids, so they respect me which is important. Connections matter in our community, and it's humbling to know that I'm seen as who I am for that and for how I treat my students.



BEST PRICE BETTER SERVICE



*Best
of the
Best*

2020

TRYON DAILY BULLETIN

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to receive this award. Our community has been a huge support to our company and we wouldn't be where we are today without your support.

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BEST FIREFIGHTER

Tank Waters

Tryon Fire Department

Tank Waters, I was presented YOUR award for Best of the Best Firefighter 2020!

You deserve this honor a million times over! You gave the fire service 110% of yourself as well as the Town of Tryon.

You have left a major void for us to fill! It was an honor for me to accept this on your behalf and as always, I couldn't be more proud of you!

I love you and please keep watching over us from above!

Tracy Waters on behalf of her late husband, Tank





{EST. 2011}

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TO FRESH HANDCRAFTED
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WITHOUT CHEMICALS
OR ARTIFICIAL FERTILIZERS**



BEST GOLF COURSE TRYON COUNTRY CLUB

Established in 1916, Tryon Country Club is one of the oldest private golf clubs in North Carolina. It is home to a unique course nestled in a picturesque valley away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and is one of the jewels of life in the Foothills of Western North Carolina, where the temperate climate is ideally suited for year-round golf.



Gerald Weathers, Magan Etheridge and Moose Penfold

Best of the Best
2020

Southern Manners
BREAKFAST • LUNCH
DELI

BREAKFAST & LUNCH
6:30 am - 2:00 pm

2019 **Best of the BEST**
Tryon Daily Bulletin

192 E. Mills Street, Columbus, NC 28722
(828) 894-0406



It's Selfie Season!

Strike that pose in the Foothills!

The Foothills of Western North Carolina and the Upstate of South Carolina provide the backdrop of countless selfie opportunities to share with family and friends. We want to see what you think are the best places in our unique area to take pictures like this. So, strike that pose, snap it and send it to us at news@tryondailybulletin.com with **STRIKE A POSE** as the tagline. We will publish the best ones in the Summer issue of Visitors Bulletin.

NEWS@TRYONDAILYBULLETIN.COM | **STRIKE A POSE**



Pastor Timothy & Michelle Fortune are deeply grateful for the support of the community and most of all, grateful to God for His faithfulness.

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Best
of the
Best

2020

TRYON DAILY BULLETIN



El Campesino

First, thanks to God for everything. For all the blessings every single day.
And thank you so much to our community for making this happen.
God bless you. We are blessed to be part of this community. Thank you so much
to Polk County for all the support to our restaurant. God is good all the time.

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Thank You for Voting Us Best Contractor

2021 will be our 35th year building in the Polk County and Landrum area. We have been fortunate to have built for some great people over this time who have become our friends.

This recognition is the reward of a group effort by the men and women that have helped build these beautiful projects. I appreciate them all. We will continue to work hard and be the best we can be.

Please visit our website
edneyconstruction.com or our Facebook page.

Thank You, John Edney

**Edney Construction
Company**

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I am honored to be selected by the Tryon Daily Bulletins readers as “Best Law Enforcement Officer” for the second year in a row. While I am appreciative and humbled by this honor, I am also aware of the many dedicated and professional men and women who work with me every day to keep Polk County safe who share in the accomplishments leading to this award.



I am proud of the dedication and commitment shown by the staff at the Polk County Sheriff's Office. It has been my mission since being elected sheriff to provide the best services and protections possible to our residents and our communities. I would like to accept this award on behalf of the entire staff of the Polk County Sheriff's Office because it takes our entire team of dedicated employees to keep Polk County safe.

Thank you for this recognition and the opportunity to serve our county as your Sheriff.





WINNERS

BEST RESTAURANT IN COLUMBUS

WINNER:
The Rural Seed
RUNNER-UP:
Southern Manners
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Calvert's Kitchen

BEST RESTAURANT IN LANDRUM

WINNER:
Hare and Hound
RUNNER-UP:
Southside Smokehouse
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Soulisa's

BEST RESTAURANT IN SALUDA

WINNER:
Purple Onion
RUNNER-UP:
Green River BBQ
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Ward's Grill

BEST RESTAURANT IN TRYON

WINNER:
Side Street Pizza
RUNNER-UP:
Harper Eatery & Pub
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Cafe La Gaule

BEST BAKERY / SWEET SHOP

WINNER:
All Good Things Bakery
RUNNER-UP:
The Ice Cream Barn
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Martha's Amish Bakery

BEST PLACE TO GET A BURGER

WINNER:
Calvert's Kitchen
RUNNER-UP:
McGourty's Pub
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Hare and Hound

BEST PLACE TO GET FRENCH FRIES

WINNER:
McDonald's
RUNNER-UP:
Southern Manners
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
McGourty's Pub

BEST PLACE TO GET A STEAK

WINNER:
The Rural Seed
RUNNER-UP:
Harper Eatery & Pub
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Hare and Hound



All Good Things Bakery
Photo By Macy Cochran



The Rural Seed
Photo from Facebook page

BEST PLACE TO GET SEAFOOD

- WINNER:** Southside Smokehouse
- RUNNER-UP:** Calvert's Kitchen
- SECOND RUNNER-UP:** The Rural Seed



Mountain View BBQ
Photo from Facebook page

BEST PLACE TO GET WINGS

- WINNER:** Mountain View BBQ
- RUNNER-UP:** Side Street Pizza
- SECOND RUNNER-UP:** McGourty's



Side Street Pizza
Photo from Facebook page

BEST PLACE TO GET PIZZA

- WINNER:** Side Street Pizza
- RUNNER-UP:** Bucks Pizza
- SECOND RUNNER-UP:** The Brick

BEST PLACE TO GET MEXICAN FOOD

- WINNER:** El Campesino
- RUNNER-UP:** El Sureno
- SECOND RUNNER-UP:** Cocula Mexican Grill



Southern Manners
Photo from Facebook page

BEST PLACE TO GET BREAKFAST

- WINNER:** Southern Manners
- RUNNER-UP:** Waffle House
- SECOND RUNNER-UP:** Katie D's

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2020 TRYON DAILY BULLETIN

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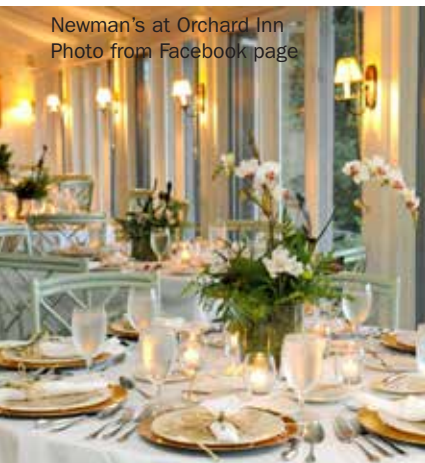
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Best of the Best
2020 TRYON DAILY BULLETIN

Newman's at Orchard Inn
Photo from Facebook page



BEST PLACE TO GET LUNCH

WINNER:
Southern Manners
RUNNER-UP:
The Rural Seed
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Katie D's

BEST PLACE FOR FINE DINNING

WINNER:
Newman's at Orchard Inn
RUNNER-UP:
Lavender Bistro
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Cafe La Gaule

BEST VINEYARD / WINERY

WINNER:
Parker Binns Vineyard
RUNNER-UP:
Overmountain Vineyards
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Mountain Brook Vineyards

BEST PLACE TO GET COFFEE

WINNER:
Open Road Coffee
RUNNER-UP:
Tryon Coffeehouse Co-op
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Mocha's Mug

BEST LOCAL FESTIVAL OR EVENT

WINNER:
Columbus 4th of July
RUNNER-UP:
Tryon Beer Fest
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Tryon International Flim Festival

BEST PLACE TO HEAR LIVE MUSIC

WINNER:
Roger's Park
RUNNER-UP:
McGreery Park
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Tryon Fine Arts Center

BEST GROCERY STORE

WINNER:
Tryon IGA
RUNNER-UP:
Ingles
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Food Lion

BEST CONSIGNMENT / THRIFT SHOP

WINNER:
Second Chance Thrift Store
RUNNER-UP:
Hospice Thrift Barn
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Good Neighbor Store

BEST FURNITURE / HOME DECOR STORE

WINNER:
Carruths Furniture
RUNNER-UP:
Foothills Amish Furniture
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Wastson's

BEST GARDEN CENTER / NURSERY

WINNER:
Avery's Creek Nursery
RUNNER-UP:
Down to Earth
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
The Garden Patch



Second Chance Thrift Store
Photo from Facebook page



Open Road Coffee
Photo from Facebook page



Avery's Creek Nursery
Photo from Facebook page

BEST FLORIST SHOP

WINNER:

The Flower Cottage

RUNNER-UP:

Four Winds Florist

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Brett Austin

BEST ANTIQUE STORE

WINNER:

Tryon Anitque Mall

RUNNER-UP:

Landrum Eclectics

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Architectural Warehouse

BEST PLACE TO GO FISHING

WINNER:

Green River

RUNNER-UP:

Lake Adger

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Laughter Pond

BEST FARMERS MARKET

WINNER:

Columbus Farmer's Market

RUNNER-UP:

Landrum Farmer's Market

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Saluda Tailgate Market

BEST PLACE TO WORSHIP

WINNER:

Columbus Baptist Church

RUNNER-UP:

Midway Baptist

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Columbus Presbyterian

BEST GOLF COURSE

WINNER:

Tryon Country Club

RUNNER-UP:

Meadowbrook

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Links O Tryon



Columbus Farmer's Market
Photo from Facebook page

SECOND CHANCE THRIFT STORE - LIFE IN OUR FOOTHILLS 'BEST OF THE BEST'



We here at Second Chance Thrift Store and Steps to HOPE are honored to have been chosen as one of the Best in the Foothills. We devote ourselves to serving this community, and it's incredible to see the support from you all that we receive in return.

Second Chance Thrift Store is a vital part of Steps to HOPE's work to break and end the generational cycle of domestic and sexual abuse in our community, as Second Chance is the main source of the organization's operating income. Every purchase made at the store directly supports the mission to provide safe shelter and resources to victims of abusive relationships in Western N.C. and Upstate S.C.

None of our work would be possible without the generosity of this community. Your valuable donations and loyal patronage are the fuel that keeps our shelter doors open and our programs running.

Do you want to help us make a difference? Come join our volunteer staff! They are what truly makes Second Chance "the Best of the Best."

Contact office manager Jessica Cashwell at (828)-894-2340 for more information.



BEST PLACE TO TAKE A HIKE

WINNER:
Pearson's Falls
RUNNER-UP:
FENCE
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Big Bradley Falls

BEST CAMPGROUND

WINNER:
Orchard Lake
Campground
RUNNER-UP:
Emberglow
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Silver Creek Campground

BEST PLACE TO WORK

WINNER:
St. Luke's Hospital
RUNNER-UP:
Home
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Price Services HVAC

BEST TEACHER

WINNER:
Leann Wilson
RUNNER-UP:
Jessica Wilkins
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Dr. McCormick

BEST PRINCIPAL

WINNER:
Brandon Schweitzer
RUNNER-UP:
Todd Murphy
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Jan Crump

BEST SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

WINNER:
Aaron Greene
RUNNER-UP:
Gordon Lee
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Kim Eckmann

BEST LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

WINNER:
Tim Wright
RUNNER-UP:
Randall Hodge
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Jeff Arrowood

BEST FIREFIGHTER

WINNER:
Tank Waters
RUNNER-UP:
Marshall Lipscomb
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Brad Gordon



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- Best Doctor
- Best Medical Facility
- Best Place to Work



Dr. Jeffrey Viar
Foothills Medical Associates
Best Doctor

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Primary Care Providers
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St. Luke's Hospital Pain Center

Pain Management
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St. Luke's Hospital Cancer & Infusion Center

Oncology, Hematology and
Infusion Services
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828.894.0111

St. Luke's Urology Associates

Urology Services
Columbus, NC
828.894.3230

Community Alternatives Program

Home Assistance for the Disabled
or Elderly
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Tryon, N.C.

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BEST LAWYER 2020
Tryon Daily Bulletin

Estate Planning and
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2019 Inductee to N.C.
Bar Association
Legal Practice Hall of Fame

**"THANK YOU FOR
THIS HONOR AND
A HALF-CENTURY
OF SUPPORT"**

**BEST EMT /
PARAMEDIC**

WINNER:

Darrin Cronan

RUNNER-UP:

Jennifer Wilson

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Marshall Lipscomb

**BEST MEDICAL
FACILITY**

WINNER:

St. Luke's Hospital

RUNNER-UP:

Foothills Medical
Associates

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Advanced Wellness
Institute

BEST PHARMACY

WINNER:

Landrum Drug

RUNNER-UP:

CVS Columbus

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

CVS Landrum

BEST DENTIST

WINNER:

**MAHEC Dental Health
Center**

RUNNER-UP:

Wood Creek Dental

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Dr. David Wagner

BEST DOCTOR

WINNER:

Dr. Jeffrey Viar

RUNNER-UP:

Dr. Sandra McCormack

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Dr. Todd Walters

**BEST RETIREMENT /
ASSISTED LIVING**

WINNER:

Tryon Estates

RUNNER-UP:

White Oak

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

LauralHurst /
LaurelWoods

BEST HAIR SALON

WINNER:

Karma

RUNNER-UP:

Dale James Salon

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Smith's Barbershop

**BEST PLACE TO
WORK OUT**

WINNER:

PRO Fitness

RUNNER-UP:

My Gym

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Burn 31

**BEST BANK / CREDIT
UNION**

WINNER:

**State Employees
Credit Union**

RUNNER-UP:

Home Trust Bank

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Entegra Bank

**BEST PLACE FOR AN
OIL CHANGE**

WINNER:

Stott's Ford

RUNNER-UP:

Searcy's Auto

SECOND RUNNER-UP:

Landrum Lube

*Thank you for your vote to win
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JEAN SKELCY Owner, Broker

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BEST HVAC COMPANY

WINNER:
Price Services HVAC
RUNNER-UP:
All Seasons Heating & Air
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Barton Brothers

BEST PLUMBER

WINNER:
Billy Staley
RUNNER-UP:
Pete Inman
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Hyder Plumbing

BEST REALTOR

WINNER:
Jean Skelcy, REMAX
RUNNER-UP:
Jeremy Wood, SC NC Realty
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Kathy Toomey, New View

BEST LANDSCAPING SERVICE

WINNER:
Jays Lawn Service
RUNNER-UP:
Holbert's Landscaping
SECOND RUNNER-UP:
Aoki Landscaping

BEST INSURANCE AGENCY

WINNER:
Farm Bureau
RUNNER-UP:
Penny Insurance
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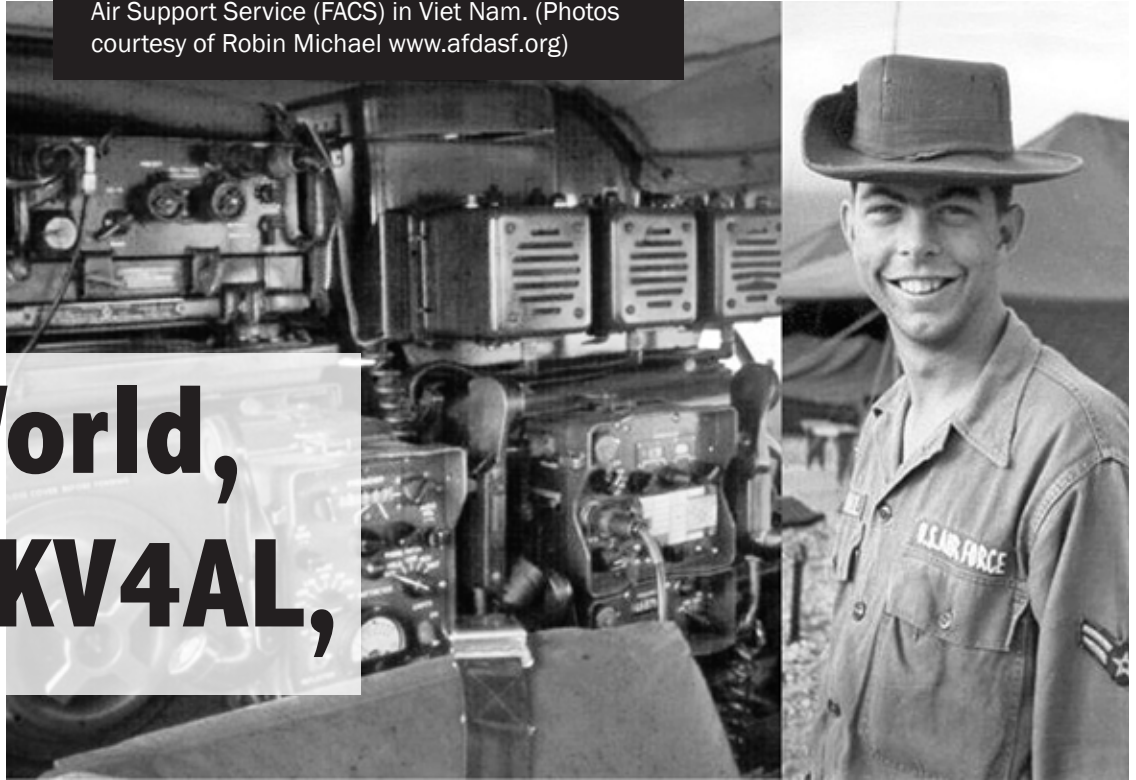
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As an Air Force radio operator in a jeep full of equipment, Airman Robin Michael wore with pride the Air Commando Bush Hat of the ground Forward Air Support Service (FACS) in Viet Nam. (Photos courtesy of Robin Michael www.afdasf.org)



Robin Michael

Hello World, This Is KV4AL, Tryon



Writer & Photographer Vincent Verrecchio

The Thermal Belt Amateur Radio Club (TBARC) is active in ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) for Polk County.

Close to the peak of Piney Mountain, in one of many possible scenarios in his home “radio shack,” Robin Michael hears a voice from the receiver speaking in Q Code, “QTH?” The accent is French, a language that Robin recognizes but doesn’t speak.

“I am in Tryon, North Carolina, USA,” responds Robin. He then adds “QTH?” which is Q Code for “What is your location?”

“Je suis ‘a Brantome,” answers an older sounding man.

“QTR?” Robin questions, wanting to know the local time of the caller.

“L’heure exacte est 15h.” the Frenchman answers, adding, “I speak English,” facilitating a much easier conversation.

“90% of the amateur radio world speaks English,” Robin explains as we talk in the lower level of his home, sitting in front of his amateur radio equipment for station KV4AL. To our left and

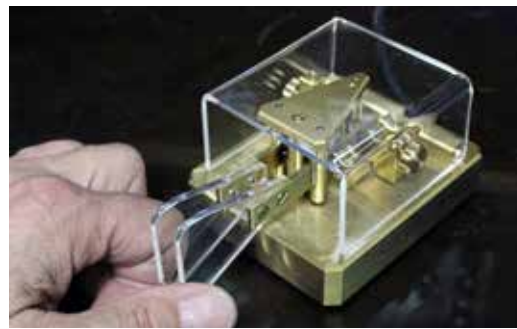
behind us, electronic memorabilia from his 50 years operating Robin’s Electronics on Depot Street fill shelves and cover the wall space.

“Amateur radio is heavily censored in China and forbidden in North Korea. Otherwise, I’ve talked readily with operators ranging from Italy to Iceland, Germany to Mexico, England to three-fourths of the United States. Accents can be a problem. Saudi Arabia, for example, and west Texas. I was trying to talk with this overjoyed Texan about his wife just giving him a new daughter, and barely got the gist of the story through his drawl.”

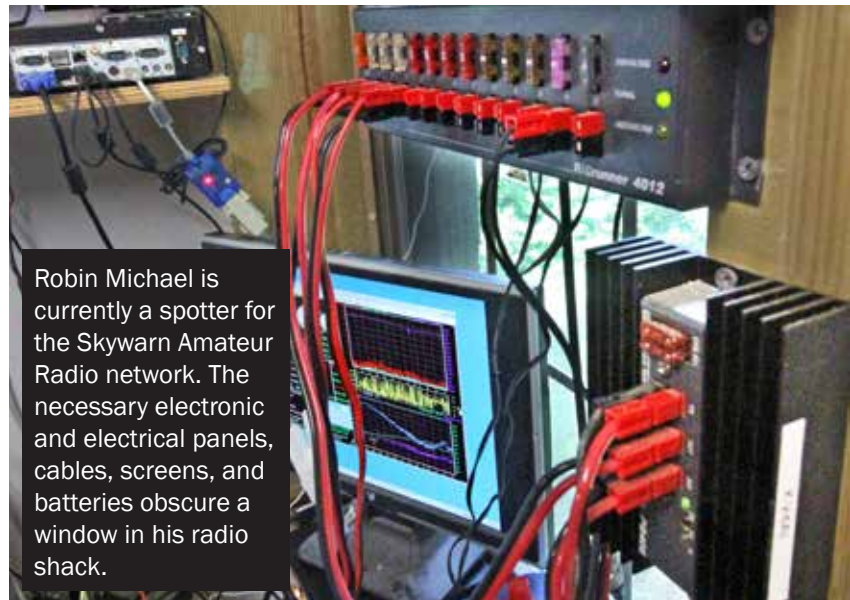




“Radio shack” is the term for the area where an Amateur Radio Operator keeps a ham radio and equipment. Robin Michael’s shack is in his Tryon home close to the peak of Piney Mountain. From there he can go out to much of the world as KV4AL.



There are three levels of operator licenses,” explains Robin Michael. “You don’t need to know Morse Code at any level, but I like having it as an option.”



Robin Michael is currently a spotter for the Skywarn Amateur Radio network. The necessary electronic and electrical panels, cables, screens, and batteries obscure a window in his radio shack.

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Robin Michael believes, "Ham radio is for all ages." An undated vintage public domain photo reinforces his position.



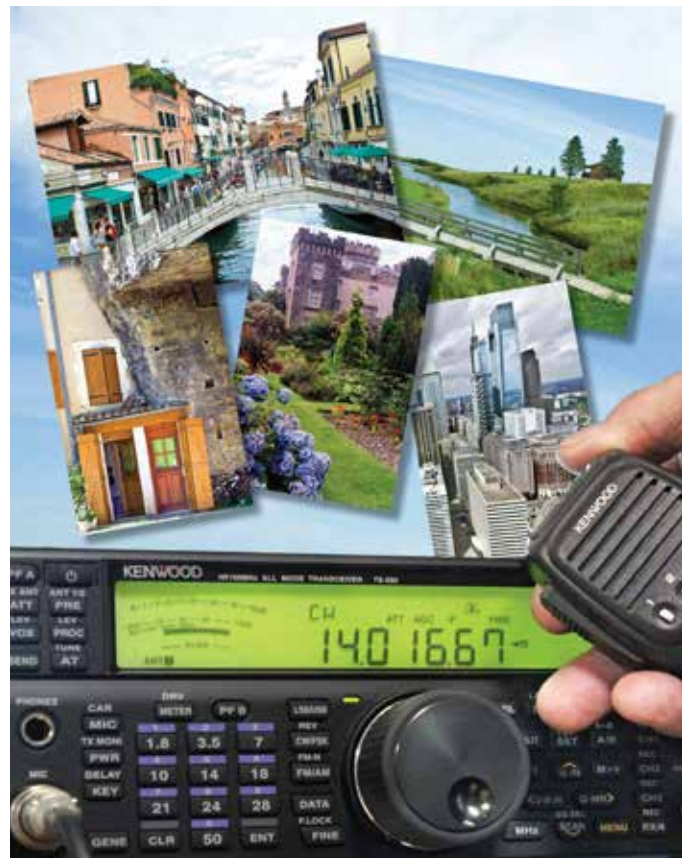
Under international agreement, amateur radio is a licensed service in every country. In the United States, the FCC helps assure the technical and communication skills of amateurs, and in cooperation with the UN International Telecommunications Union (ITU), administers the use of radio spectrum airwaves. In each of three regions of the world, a share of frequencies is allocated for amateur, commercial, military, and government operations. This helps assure effective communications for users that are literally and figuratively on the same wavelength.

The ITU divides the radio spectrum into frequency bands ranging from 3 kilohertz (Very Low Frequency) up to 300 gigahertz (Extremely High Frequency). AM radio transmits at Low and Medium Frequency; amateur radio at High Frequency; and FM stations at Very High Frequency.

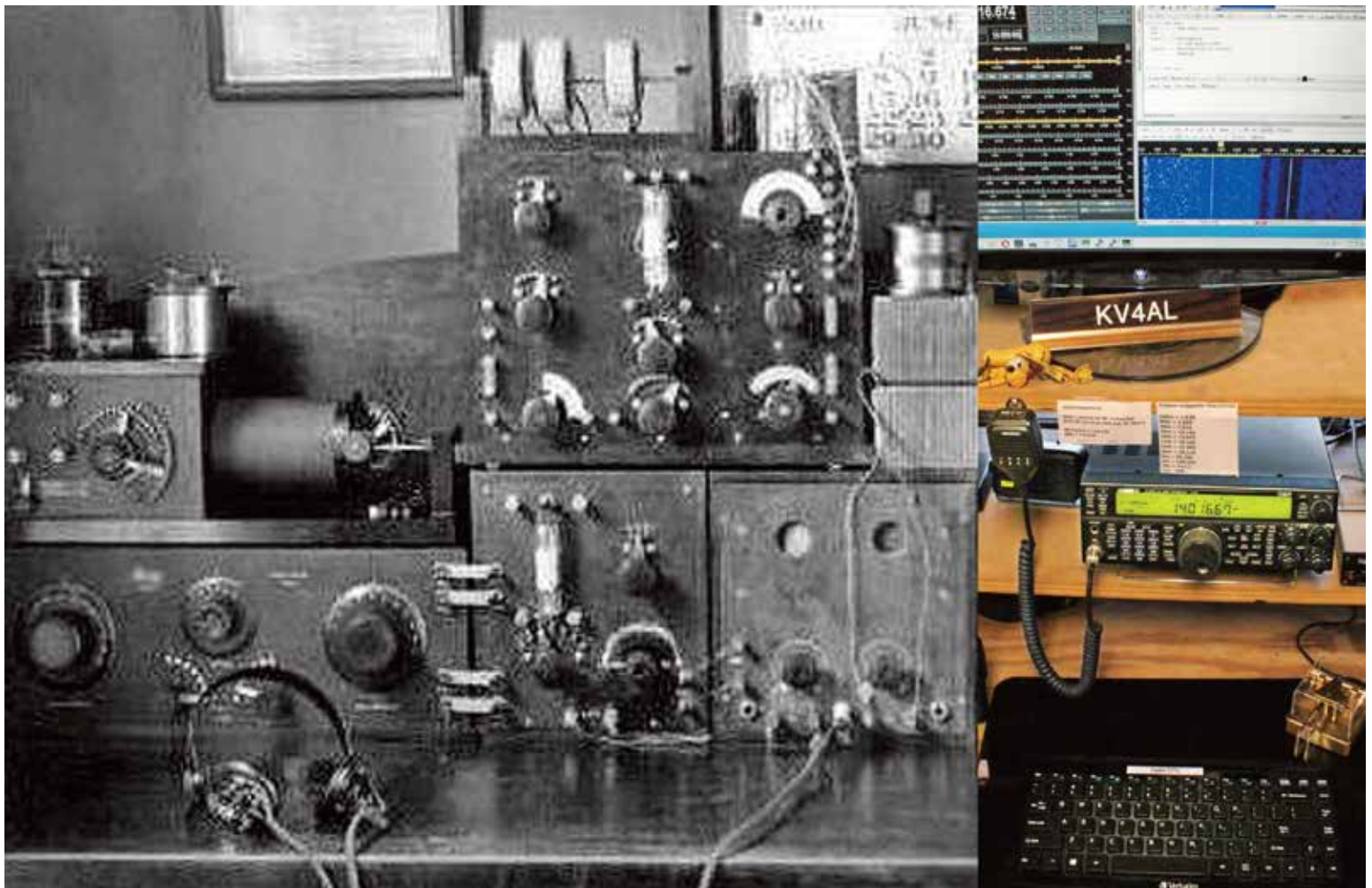
"Mister C.D. Stevens first got me interested not only in amateur radio but electronics in general," recalls Robin. "He was Tryon mayor, owner of Tryon's Builder Supply, and a Heathkit hobbyist. I was thirteen when he introduced me to building Heathkits and soon let me help him troubleshoot SWL and HAM receivers and HiFi audio equipment. One of the first kits that I assembled on my own was a Ham radio general coverage receiver."

The term HAM is an acronym and call name of the first amateur wireless station founded in 1908 by Albert HYMAN, Bob ALMY, and Poojie MURRAY.

"When I enlisted in the Air Force, I aced the electronics test." Robin eventually got to wear the Air Commando Bush Hat of the ground Forward Air Support Service (FACS) in



"I've talked readily with operators ranging from Italy to Iceland, Germany to Mexico, England to three-fourths of the United States," says Robin Michael, born at old St. Luke's Hospital and growing up on top of Piney Mountain.



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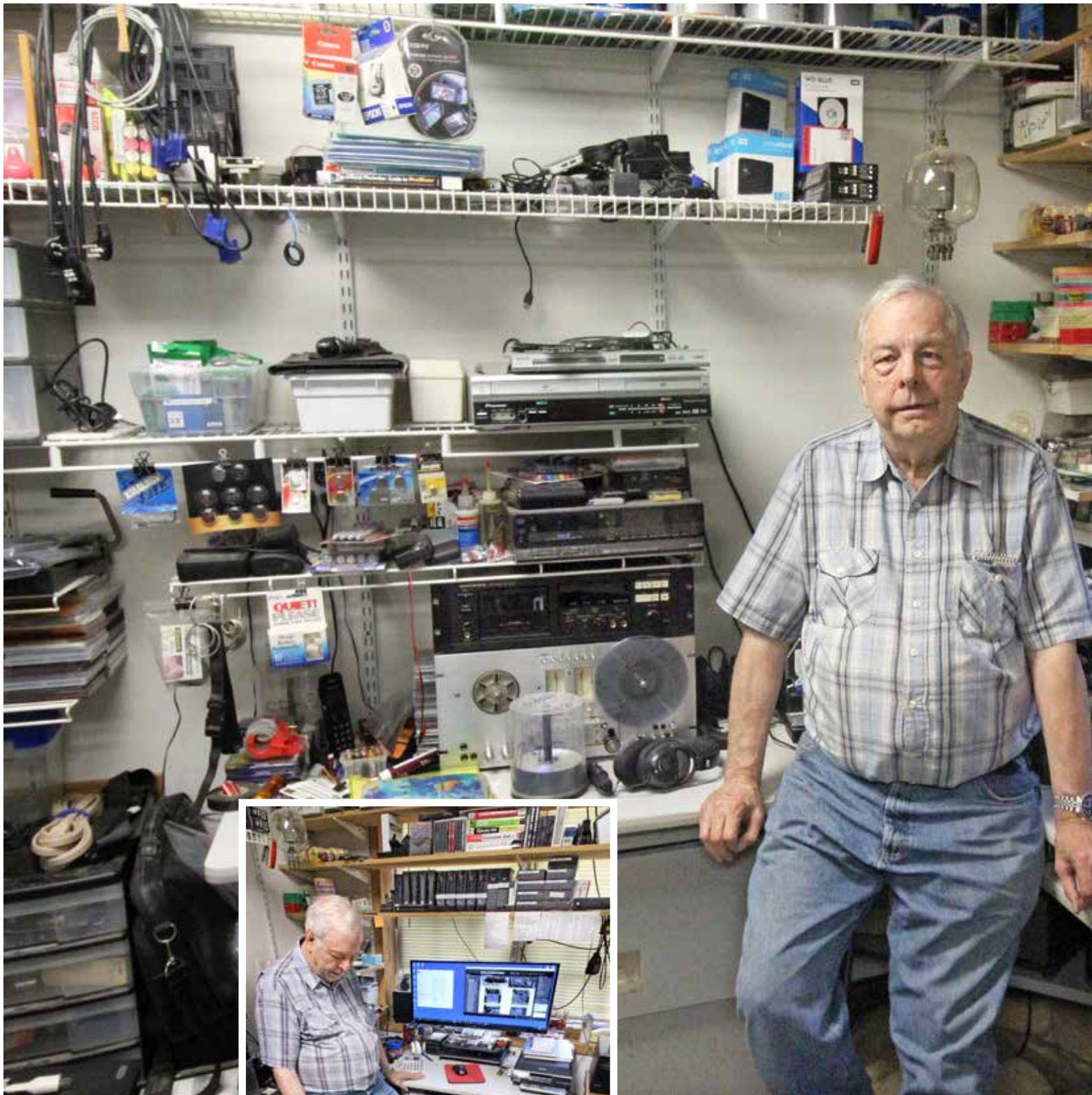
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Dolly and Pixie are Robin Michael's constant companions in his radio shack and in his camper when he packs up his ham radio gear and camera to explore America.



Electronic memorabilia from his 50 years operating Robin's Electronics on Depot Street fill shelves and cover the wall space of Robin Michael's radio shack.

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Vietnam. As a radio operator in a jeep full of equipment, he pinpointed and transmitted enemy troop locations. After returning to hometown Tryon, he earned an Electronic Engineering Degree and started his electronics service business.

“Ham radio is my hobby...an opportunity to talk with new people, learn...hear news as it happens. For example, I was talking with an operator on Treasure Island across from Fisherman’s Wharf as it burned just a short time ago.

“One advantage of radio is that I can simply switch frequency to shut off someone who is being disrespectful of someone or using foul language about politics or wanting to argue about religion. I want to enjoy my time on the air, not get aggravated. I am not into radio contesting, but for many operators, it’s a fun way to earn bragging rights.”

The essence of Radiosport is for an individual operator or team of operators to contact as many stations as possible within parameters of location, information exchange, and time. Generally, the more contacts the higher the score. The purpose of some contests is to help contestants’ practice and improve messaging skills.

In exchange for this access to public radio space, ham radio also provides important public services.

“During the war in Iraq in the 90s, a MARSgram was relayed from Charlotte to me. MARS stood for Military Affiliated Radio System. The MARSgram was a casualty notification, and I had to deliver the message to a local family of their son’s injury. In 2005, I was getting messages out about what was happening in Hurricane Katrina.”

Robin is currently a spotter for the Skywarn Amateur Radio network. The necessary electronic and electrical panels, cables, screens and batteries obscure a window in his radio shack. The real time information he gathers is relayed to the National Weather Service in Norman, Oklahoma where it is accepted as first hand fact. Most members of the Thermal Belt Amateur Radio Club (TBARC) are Skywarn spotters. Robin, club president, notes that the club is also active in ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) for Polk County.

“Communications failures are typical in natural and man-made disasters. When all else fails, you can depend on radio. If necessary, a signal can be bounced off the moon. And you don’t have to operate only from your shack. You can have gear in the front seat of your truck or on your back. I had all the equipment I needed temporarily mounted on my motorcycle when in the advance support crew for rolling closure bicycle races. Even in mountain terrain, I always could talk with the rear support.

“Of the 350 or so Ham radio operators I know about in Polk and Rutherford Counties, and the Landrum area, 25 are TBARC members. We always welcome more,” says Robin. “Ham radio is for all ages. There is no age restriction to get a license. I’ve taught children as young as 6. There are three levels of operator licenses: Technician at the entry level, General, and Amateur Extra. You don’t need to know Morse Code at any level, but I like having it as an option. If you pass the General Class test with 26 out of 35 questions correct, you can say hello to the world in High Frequency.”

For more information on Ham radio history,

The Wind and

our Willow By Pebbles





Arizona and Willow

Who knows the story of the willow versus the oak tree? The willow is the perfect foil for the mighty oak, which is strong, majestic, and unyielding. The willow in turn is graceful, delicate, pliable. Facing a storm with charging winds and torrid rain, it is the willow that can ride out the turbulence that topples the oak. With the rolling thunderstorms of summer, I think it is better to be a willow in times of turmoil. 2020 will make the history books as one of the most ominous times.

With the overwhelming quarantine isolation, coupled with the worry and social distancing we endured for months, there is a new bright spot here at the rescue farm. A tiny, delicate gift that brings smiles to our faces; a new joy that is immeasurable. Who knew something so small could have such a big impact on our summer?

Little Willow arrived in the early dawn hours, sheltered under a sprawling oak tree. Her Welsh pony mother, Arizona, a beautiful, pinto chocolate palomino, knew just what to do. She had joined us last winter in HERD nursing a five-month old filly pony, Sedona. Neither newcomer was halter broke upon arrival, which made for an interesting time trying to catch them to administer vaccines and apply medications to their wounds. We managed over time to win them over. Arizona was the first to accept us. Eventually, spunky

little Sedona succumbed to taking a halter and putting her little hooves on the farrier stand for trimming.

When Arizona's sides begin to swell in late spring, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no question another baby was coming. She had possibly been rebred to the same Haffinger stallion while at her original home. Or she had been placed in with a stud when she was at one of the livestock auctions with her little foal, or the kill pen lot awaiting her last chance at life.

What was growing inside of her, was anyone's guess, was a baby pony, or a mule in the making. Only time would tell as we watched her swell monthly to balloon-like portions. Arizona had to leave her back legs sticking straight out like rigor mortis had set in when she took her midday naps in the pasture. This is where I stepped up to perform my daily duty. I had momma pony watch. I stood next to her while she slept, keeping an eye on our pasture for intruders. She also enjoyed having me groom her in those impossible to reach places that were a result of her pregnancy.

Arizona was growing uncomfortable in her final pre-labor days. So much so that she got terribly ornery and chased me around, biting me when I tried to graze or rest. Mistress Heather witnessed my fear and displeasure.



Willow

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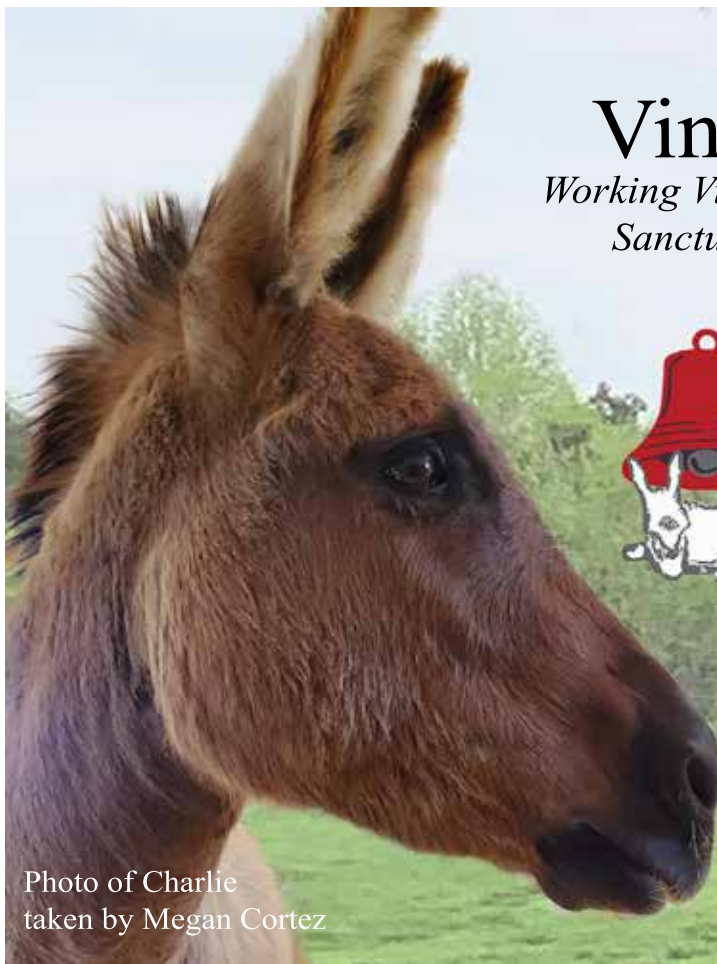


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Photo of Charlie taken by Megan Cortez



Buster

She moved Arizona to her own private small paddock nestled under a stand of oak trees next to the house. Sedona, her yearling daughter, was placed in with me for companionship. We could both keep an eye on her mother just across the lawn.

The next morning as the household rose for coffee and chores, it was noted that Buster, the newest dog addition to the family, was not in the house. This 35-pound, sweet mixed breed dog had been thrown over the fence at our farm. Lucky for him, he ended up moving in with us. A quick trip to the vet for neutering and shots was all that was needed before he was one of the cherished dog pack.

Buster is one of those canines with a sense of purpose. He is regularly patrolling the fence lines observing. He is the first one out the dog door at the sign of trouble or intrusion. While not aggressive with the horses, he does go out exploring in the fields at feeding time. He manages to avoid conflict with the equines, including the three rather aggressive miniature donkeys.

What was very odd on this bright morning was that Buster was sleeping in the corner of the pasture housing Arizona. On closer observation, we noted he was within five feet of her, and more importantly, there was an extra pair of tiny white legs under momma pony's belly. With glee, we realized the baby had arrived while we slept. She was already standing and nursing contently. Only Buster

had been aware of her birthing. For some unexplainable reason, Arizona was fine with him being so close to watch after her.

Heather called Buster out of the pasture and he came willingly on command. Now what to call this lovely little rose-colored filly with the most unusual jagged-edge, wide blaze? She clearly is a full sister to Sedona. The Haffinger color is the tale tell sign.

Heather's husband Scott came up with the perfect name; Willow. She was delicate and nimble, dancing around on wobbly legs. Yet she was sturdy and curious about her new world, complying to her mother's wishes while also finding her way in the morning breeze. Buster was clearly taken with her. He kept returning to lie down quietly under the oak tree where she was born. This was his spot from which he could protect and observe while staying close to the house.

Willow and Arizona came into the barn for the evening after her exciting first day of life. Willow followed along with her mother's encouraging neighs and settled right down in deep shavings for the night. The following morning, mother and filly returned to their shady pasture for a nice day of exploration, intense galloping spurts followed by many leisurely naps. Willow also mastered the athletic maneuvering of a good buck and the art of a playful rear on her lovely legs.

Gazpacho Soup

By Pebbles

Summer's gift of ripe tomatoes from the garden makes this the perfect time of the year for this easy soup. Serves two big bowls or four starter size portions.

Directions

1. Combine tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper, garlic, vinegar, and water in the bowl of a food processor or blender. Blend until smooth, then add olive oil and blend to combine. Taste and season with salt, pepper, and more vinegar if needed. Cover and refrigerate until chilled.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat, add enough olive oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Add cubed bread and cook, stirring occasionally, until bread is golden and crisp. Remove from heat, season with salt, and let cool.
3. To serve, divide soup among bowls and top with basil, croutons, and a small drizzle of olive oil.



Ingredients

- ⇒ 2 lb. tomatoes, quartered
- ⇒ 2 Persian cucumbers, peeled and chopped
- ⇒ ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- ⇒ 1 clove garlic, roughly chopped
- ⇒ 2 tbsp. red wine or sherry vinegar
- ⇒ 1/2 c. water
- ⇒ 1/3 c. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for garnish
- ⇒ sprinkle of Kosher salt to taste
- ⇒ sprinkle of freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ⇒ 2 slices country bread, cubed
- ⇒ 2 tbsp. thinly sliced basil

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QUICK BITES

SUMMER TIME PEACHES

by Jimmi Buell



Grilled Pork Chops with Peach Barbecue Sauce

by Jimmi Buell

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- ⊕ ¼ cup plus ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ⊕ ¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ⊕ 2 cups boiling water
- ⊕ 3 cups ice cubes
- ⊕ 4 bone-in, center-cut pork chops, ½-¾ inch thick (1¾-2 pounds), trimmed
- ⊕ 2 ripe but firm peaches, peeled, pitted and quartered
- ⊕ 1 medium tomato, quartered and seeded
- ⊕ 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- ⊕ 1 tablespoon canola oil
- ⊕ ½ cup chopped onion, preferably Vidalia
- ⊕ 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh ginger
- ⊕ 2 tablespoons honey
- ⊕ ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste

Directions

1. Place ¼ cup salt and brown sugar in a medium heatproof bowl. Pour in boiling water and stir to dissolve. Add ice cubes and stir to cool. Add pork chops, cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to 4 hours.
2. Puree peaches, tomato and vinegar in a food processor until smooth.
3. About 30 minutes before you're ready to cook the pork chops, heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add ginger and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the peach puree, the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, honey and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cook until reduced by about half, 20 to 25 minutes. Reserve ¼ cup of the sauce for basting the chops; keep the remaining sauce warm in the saucepan until ready to serve.
4. Preheat grill to medium.
5. Remove the pork chops from the brine (discard brine), rinse well, and thoroughly dry with paper towels. Season the chops with ¼ teaspoon pepper and brush both sides with some of the reserved sauce.
6. Grill the pork chops, turning once, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center registers 145°F, 2 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate, tent with foil and let rest for 5 minutes. Serve with the warm peach barbecue sauce on the side.

It's peach time! We live in an area that is abundant in peach trees. Peaches can be used in a variety of ways: for recipes, or for making jams and jellies, marmalade, pickles or chutney. With the great variety and quantities of peaches available this year at roadside stands, it's impossible to eat them all at once. But peaches are one of the easiest foods to preserve by turning them into jams and jellies, salsa, pickles or just freezing the peaches themselves for later use.

Peaches are a staple in the South, and it would be a shame to miss out on this wonderful fruit. Like most fruits or vegetables, peaches taste best when eaten or used as soon as possible after harvest. Since peaches do not get sweeter once harvested, they are one fruit where "buying local" can truly benefit you.

When shipped peaches are picked before they are fully ripe, they will soften, but not get as sweet. The best use for these under-ripe peaches is salsa. For all other uses, look for soft fruit with a pleasant smell, and no dark, bruised, or mushy places. If the peaches are ripe and will not be eaten or used quickly, you may store them in the refrigerator for up to five days.

One creative way to use peaches is to combine them with another Southern staple: barbecue. In fact, this may become one of your favorite summer dishes. Add a salad or some grilled vegetables--and maybe even some peach ice cream to top it off!



NEW YORK CHEESECAKE

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups graham crumbs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 5 packages (250g each) Philadelphia Brick Cream Cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 cup sour cream
- 4 eggs
- 1 can (19 fl. oz) cherry pie filling

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 F if using a silver 9-inch springform pan (or to 300 F if using a dark nonstick 9-inch springform pan). Mix crumbs and butter; press firmly onto bottom of pan. Bake 10 minutes.

Beat cream cheese, sugar, flour, and vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Add sour cream; mix well. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing on low speed after each addition just until blended. Pour over crust.

Bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until center is almost set. Run a knife or metal spatula around the rim of the pan to loosen cake; cool before removing the rim of the pan. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. Top with pie filling before serving. Store leftover cheesecake in the refrigerator.

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Even though the end of the 2019-2020 school year didn't play out as most hoped it would, that didn't deter the excitement of rising 7th grader Grace Settles. She was all smiles on June 5, what would have been the official last day of her 6th grade year.

The staff at Life in Our Foothills magazine would like to wish Grace, and every other student a happy summer and good luck in August as school gets back to normal.



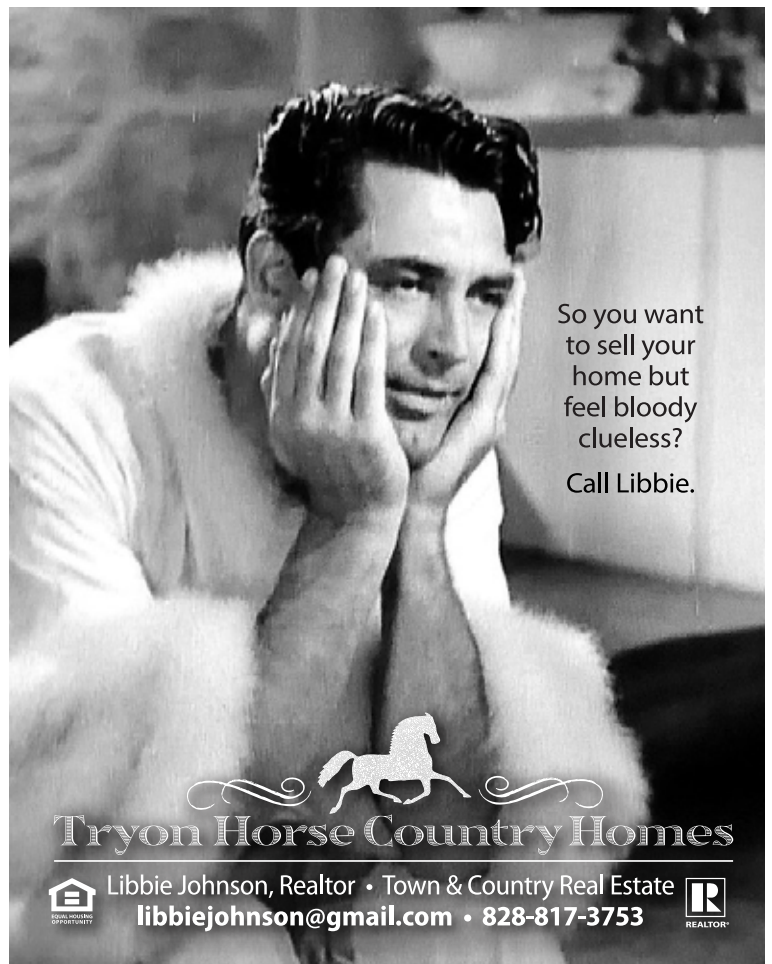
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