Breast cancer fight hits the road

ON CALL
County EMS relies on better communication

BEST MEDICINE
School nurses play vital roles in kids' health
Are you ready for a telehealth future?

The presence of reliable broadband service holds great promise for rural America. While it touches many facets of life, broadband’s greatest impact may very well be in the area of health care. Consider this statement from the Federal Communications Commission:

“Advances in telemedicine are transforming health care from a service delivered solely through traditional brick and mortar health care facilities to connected care options delivered via a broadband internet access connection directly to the patient’s home or mobile location.”

While reliable access to a broadband network is still out of reach for millions of rural Americans, hundreds of cooperative and independent telecommunications companies across the country are delivering world-class internet service, often over a fiber connection. If you received this magazine in the mail, your local telco is one of those leading-edge providers.

If access to broadband is becoming less of the challenge to telehealth’s wide-scale availability, what is the greatest challenge? The Federal Communications Commission recently tasked the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee with studying and reporting on telehealth barriers and incentives. The report stated that “people-based” issues offer the most significant challenges to telehealth adoption. While this includes many factors, such as policy and licensing, broadband adoption is a leading concern.

In other words, the technology is there. Now, people need to embrace it.

“Increasing support must be given to rural and disadvantaged communities so that digital literacy and adoption does not exacerbate the digital divide,” the IAC report states. Quite simply, the presence of broadband doesn’t mean patients and doctors are ready to put it to use as part of their health care program.

Are you ready? Do you understand the implications of telehealth? What steps can you take toward enjoying its benefits?

Begin by asking your doctor what programs are available. This could include connected medical devices in your home or something as simple as remote monitoring via an app on your smartphone or tablet. Of course, access to telehealth starts with subscribing to broadband service that will support this life-changing technology. And once in place, broadband has the potential to enhance your life in many other ways as well.
Knowledge is power

Does your digital know-how stand up?

Convenience and power. Internet services bring both. Online bill pay eliminates a tedious task. Social media can keep family ties strong or reconnect you with old friends. Streaming services bring a wealth of music, books and more.

But when it comes to digital tools, knowledge is power, and the Pew Research Center’s recent “Americans and Digital Knowledge” report found that a majority of adults in the U.S. could not correctly answer half of the survey’s 10 multiple-choice questions.

Questions touched on security and a general understanding of technology. Here are a few of the queries, edited for clarity, focused on security and privacy — good information to know. The answers do include additional context and tips not included in the report.

Q If a website uses cookies, it means that the site …
A: Cookies allow websites to track user visits and site activity. They are common, and you are often tracked across the websites you visit.

Q Where might someone encounter a phishing scam?
A: Phishing scams can occur on social media, websites, email or text messages. Each form of communication offers an avenue for exploitation. For additional tips to improve your online security, visit FCC.gov/consumer-guides.

Q What is the largest source of revenue for most major social media platforms? (Several possible options were listed.)
A: Advertising is the largest source of revenue for most social media platforms. Often advertising is personalized to you by information gathered from not only your activities on a social media site but also your actions on other websites.

Q When a website has a privacy policy, it means that the site …
A: Privacy policies are contracts between websites and users about how those sites will use their data. Often long and legalistic, the agreements may outline how your private information can be used to target advertising or whether or not your information can be shared with other companies.

Q What does it mean when a website has “https://” at the beginning of its URL, as opposed to “http://” without the “s”?
A: “https://” in a URL means that information entered into the site is encrypted. Look for “https://” before completing any financial transaction on a site.

Q Many web browsers offer a feature known as “private browsing” or “incognito mode.” If someone opens a webpage on their computer at work using incognito mode, who will be able to see their online activities?
A: Private browsing mode only prevents someone using the same computer from seeing one’s online activities. In most cases, your internet provider, including your phone wireless provider, can see all digital traffic passing from your device to the internet.

Want to see the entire report? Do a Google search for “Pew Research Center and Americans and Digital Knowledge.”
Welcome to 2020! I sincerely hope you and those close to you had a great holiday season and are ready for this wonderful New Year.

Everyone has heard the expression “hindsight is 20/20.” While it is hard to predict, we here at Sandhill are working to achieve 20/20 vision for the future. So much has changed in our industry in the past five years. When I was much younger, films such as “Back to the Future” tried to predict what life would be like today. Some things — flying cars, for example — still haven’t gotten here, but a connected community definitely has.

Today, everyone carries access to the world right in their pocket with smartphones. Homes can have a camera on the doorbell that allows you to see and even talk to people at your front door when you aren’t at home. Some cars are starting to drive themselves and can call 911 if needed in an emergency situation. Technology is everywhere around us, and its use is growing at a faster and faster pace.

With this in mind and since it is winter, let me quote one of the greatest hockey players of all time, Wayne Gretzky, who said, “Skate to where the puck is going, not where it’s been.” With this in mind, Sandhill is building a network not only for your needs today, but for your needs in the future. It’s hard predicting everything, but the past five years have given us a lot of insight to help get closer to that 20/20 vision.

This past year Sandhill achieved several meaningful accomplishments helping to work toward that vision. We:

- Spent $4.5 million on growth to our fiber network, including completing fiber buildout of the towns of Chesterfield and Pageland.
- Installed Netflix servers to improve your streaming experience, and we improved our own television service with more offerings, such as the ACC network.
- Expanded our security lineup to include more home automation options.

As we turn the page to 2020, we will continue working toward our vision of fiber service to every home in our territory by:

- Growing our fiber network into more rural areas as well as the rest of the towns we serve.
- Providing managed Wi-Fi mesh networks for in-home use as customers get more and more connected devices.
- Providing more technology support to our customers as homes become smarter.

Here at Sandhill, we are focusing on our strength as your local, nonprofit provider of all technology services. We’re building a world class network capable of handling your current and future needs. I believe we are well-situated to accomplish these goals for the year and even more. We’re thankful for the opportunity to serve you in 2020 – and into the future.
ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

The Foundation for Rural Service is accepting applications for scholarships. The foundation awards scholarships annually worth $2,000 each to high school seniors across the nation. If a senior from the Sandhill service area is selected, the cooperative will contribute an additional $500, bringing the scholarship total to $2,500.

Graduating seniors who will attend a college or a technical school during the 2020-2021 school year are encouraged to apply. Above-average grades are not mandatory. A student’s leadership qualities, community involvement, extracurricular activities and teacher recommendations will also be considered.

Contact your school’s guidance counselor or visit frs.org to download an application. To be eligible, at least one parent or legal guardian must be an active member with Sandhill.

Completed applications must be submitted online by March 1.

Winners will be announced by May 1.

ATTENTION, SANDHILL BUSINESS CUSTOMERS!

Sandhill is required by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina to publish and deliver an annual print directory. Sandhill has once again partnered with Data Publishing to create the directory. If you have questions about an existing account or wish to inquire about advertising, please contact Data Publishing at 1-888-328-2782.

Buck White Memorial Veterans Breakfast

As thanks for service to our country, Sandhill served breakfast to veterans in November at the Sandhill Conference Center in Jefferson.

Sandhill thanks all veterans for their service.

Lifeline Service

LIFELINE IS A FEDERAL PROGRAM TO HELP LOW-INCOME AMERICANS PAY FOR PHONE OR BROADBAND SERVICE

DO YOU QUALIFY?

Apply today!

To find out whether you qualify for Lifeline assistance, please visit lifelinesupport.org or call your local telecommunications provider.

$5

Find your NAME for $5!

A prize may be waiting for you in this issue! Sandhill has randomly selected the names of five lucky members and hidden them throughout this publication. If you find your name, call 843-658-6832 and you’ll receive a $5 bill credit!
The road between Georgiana and Fort Payne along the Hank Williams Trail is a journey lovers of country music should make at least once in their lifetime. It tells a story of one of Alabama’s most famous sons, from his beginnings as the child of a railroad engineer who was mostly absent from his son’s life to the glamour of stardom and Williams’ tragic demise at the young age of 29.

Over the span of Hank Williams’ life, he recorded more than 165 songs. Though he could not read a note of music, he was a wordsmith when it came to writing hits that have become part of the American songbook.

The trail is a 250-mile trip through history that includes a visit to Williams’ boyhood home and ends at a barber shop where he made one of his last stops before dying in his car in West Virginia on his way to perform at a concert in Ohio. “The Alabama Tourism Department has done an incredible job with the Hank Williams Trail, and it’s a great way to experience some of my dad’s life story,” says his daughter, Jett Williams.

**Here are some trail highlights**

**GEORGIANA**

Thousands of newspaper clippings, photos of family and friends, record albums and 45s, royalty receipts, clothes, one of Williams’ early guitars, the old wooden bench he stood on to sing at Mount Olive Baptist Church in nearby Greenville, Alabama — there are too many items to list, and it will take a couple of hours to take in the scope of the collection at the Hank Williams Boyhood Home & Museum.

Williams lived here from 1931 to 1934. It was in this house at 127 Rose St. that he played his first guitar, having bought it by selling peanuts and shining shoes at the town depot.

Among the more unusual items in the small house is a stage light used in the Municipal Auditorium for the show “Louisiana Hayride.” The Hank Williams Festival is on the grounds the first Saturday each June.

Online: www.hankmuseum.com

**MONTGOMERY**

Montgomery is ground zero for Hank Williams. He called it home from 1937 to 1948 and moved back in 1952. He lived there at the time of his death.
Chris’ Hot Dogs, 138 Dexter Ave.
This shotgun-style eatery is the oldest restaurant in the city and was Williams’ favorite place to eat — and drink. “He’d order two hot dogs all the way — mustard, sauerkraut, onions and Chris’ famous chili sauce — and a Budweiser and a shot of Jack,” a server said when asked about Hank Williams’ favorite dog. Williams’ seat isn’t marked, but it was one of 12 stools along the counter. There are also booths and tables, so it’s not hard to find a seat and eat where the Hillbilly Shakespeare once dined.

Online: www.chrishotdogs.com

D’Road Cafe, 121 Montgomery St.
This cafe, the former location of the Elite Cafe, is worth at least a drive-by to see where Williams made his final public performance just four days before he died. The Elite opened in 1911 and was a Montgomery institution before it closed in 1990. Now reopened as the D’Road Cafe, the restaurant allows visitors to sit in the place where Williams last performed.

Online: droadcafe.com

Hank Williams Museum, 118 Commerce St.
This museum is the tell-all of Williams’ life — both public and private. The collection includes thousands of pieces of not only his, but also of his wife’s, Audrey’s, past — furniture from their house in Nashville and suits, including several handmade Nudie suits. There are guitars, bills and other receipts, and artwork. The collection is massive, but its crowning jewel is the baby blue 1953 Cadillac in which Williams died. It’s on loan from his son, Hank Williams Jr.

Take your time touring the museum, but when you’re done, browse the gift shop — ticket and shop sales and private donations fund the museum.

Online: hankwilliamsmuseum.net

Hank Williams Gravesite, 829 Columbus St.
On your way out of town is Oakwood Cemetery. It’s here, high atop a hill, that Hank and Audrey Williams are buried. Inscriptions at the base of Hank’s headstone remind visitors of his most well-known songs, such as “Kaw-Liga,” “I Can’t Help It” and “Jambalaya.”

LAKE MARTIN, ALEXANDER CITY
Hank Williams’ Cabin on Lake Martin is a small, white frame affair where Williams and Fred Rose, his friend and a giant in the music publishing business, wrote blockbusters “Kaw-Liga” and “Your Cheatin’ Heart.”

The cabin is now on the property of Children’s Harbor, a camp for sick and disabled children. The two-bedroom building is available for rent.

Online: childrensharbor.com

Kowaliga Restaurant, 295 Kowaliga Marina Road
This restaurant, now serving a menu of cheeseburgers and catfish, sits at the water’s edge of Lake Martin. Inside, a carved statue of the Indian Kowaliga, whose story was the inspiration for Williams’ song “Kaw-Liga” guards the entrance.

Online: www.kowaligarestaurant.com

BIRMINGHAM
The Redmont Hotel, 2101 Fifth Ave. N., is the place where Hank Williams spent his last night in 1952 and is also the oldest hotel in Alabama still in operation. Remodeling a few years ago reconfigured many of the guest rooms, but Williams’ room was on what is now the third floor, somewhere around what is now room 304.

Step off the elevator on the third floor and you’ll see a wooden plaque with four of Williams’ records. This is the only floor displaying any Hank Williams decor and is a silent tribute to one of the hotel’s most famous guests.

Online: www.redmontbirmingham.com

FORT PAYNE
On the eve of his death, Hank Williams stopped by Carter’s Barber Shop for a haircut and a shave from barber Howard Simpson. He also had a sip or two or three — maybe more — of moonshine while there. When Simpson died, he left the chair that Williams sat in to local barber Alton Beason, who opened his shop at 1719 Gault Ave. It’s now on display in a corner of the shop, carefully roped off for all to see but not sit in. ©
Chesterfield County continues to grow, and the growth is creating special challenges for ambulance crews, given the lay of the land. Internet-based technology, however, is providing new tools that make a positive difference for those who work to save and protect lives.

The number of 911 calls has increased along with the population, which is about 46,000 people. The county’s only hospital is in Cheraw. At the southern end of the county lies the Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge, a 45,348-acre nature reserve that presents an obstacle to ambulances needing to get from point A to point B, depending on the call.

A BIG TERRITORY

The county’s 911 call center operates out of a former health department building in the town of Chesterfield. In 2015, the call center switched its communication system from landline analog to Voice over Internet Protocol, or VoIP. Dana Tarlton, operations manager for Chesterfield County E911, says changing to digital broadband has improved the emergency response system by leaps and bounds.

“If someone was digging and cut a landline and we lost contact to one of our radio towers, we’d be dead in the water,” Tarlton says. “With the new technology, if we lose a link, we are able to channel our communication to another lane. The switch to digital has given us more redundancy. If we lose a link, we can mesh in with another channel, and that can save lives.”

The towns of Chesterfield, Cheraw, McBee, Jefferson and Pageland serve as bases for the five ambulances that serve Chesterfield County. Crews consist of emergency medical technicians and paramedics. Tarlton says virtually all of the EMTs and paramedics receive pay. “Unfortunately, the volunteer generation is fading away,” she says. “We just don’t have the turnout of volunteers we had 15 years ago.” Lifeguard Ambulance Service, a company that does business throughout the South, provides the county’s emergency medical services.

The emergency dispatch center in Chesterfield receives all 911 calls related to law enforcement, fire, or EMS and rescue. A staff of four telecommunicators work the console for each shift. Every month, the call center receives anywhere from 150 to 200 calls. Its staff is certified in emergency response, and in Chesterfield County, the call center may have to address hurricane conditions.

NATURAL CHALLENGES

The county is located around 100 miles inland, but every hurricane season, from early June to late November, emergency managers are on high alert. In September 2018, Hurricane Florence blew inland and broke the South Carolina record for the most rainfall from a tropical storm system. Chesterfield County received 2 feet of rain in a short period of time. The National Guard conducted high water rescues. Swift water rescue teams from Florida and Louisiana also responded, and ambulances and rescue squad vehicles were out in droves. Trees toppled, and roads washed away in the floodwaters.

“During hurricane season, we carefully monitor the weather, even what’s developing way out in the ocean,” Tarlton says. “Not knowing what’s going to happen can be nerve-wracking. Sometimes you feel like a parent waiting to discipline a child. You don’t know if they’re going to come home or just forget about you.”

Operator Dee Dixon and Chesterfield County Emergency Services Director Harold Hainey monitor the first responders heading to a call.
CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Historians trace the origins of prehospital emergency care back to the horse and buggy days of the Civil War, when a system of field care and transportation of the injured developed out of necessity. Historians say the first civilian ambulances in the U.S. appeared on the streets of Cincinnati in 1865.

Things have come a long way in the last few years with the advent of modern telecommunications and broadband internet. Before the county’s EMS switched to broadband, lines of communication between the 911 center, first responders and those who needed help were often tenuous and subject to time-consuming breakdowns.

Today, instead of physical phone lines, the county uses VoIP, which takes analog audio signals like voices on a phone and turns them into digital data that travels over the internet. “There are two things you have to have for emergency communication: radio contact and phone contact,” Tarlton says. “With our old system, if we lost those two lifelines, we’d have to rely on another county or another department within our county to establish communication. In the old days, depending on which lines got cut, it could take hours before we realized where our linkage failed.”

Harold Hainey, Chesterfield County’s emergency services director, says the 911 center’s communication system will be even speedier after the county switches from broadband internet to next-generation fiber optic cables in the near future.

“Having faster internet service has improved our emergency response at all levels,” Hainey says. “It couldn’t come at a better time, because as the growth rate and population of our county have increased, so have the number of 911 calls we receive. Speed is vital. Everything we do revolves around receiving the call and arriving at the scene as quickly as possible. Seconds can make the difference between life and death, and sometimes we’re dealing with minutes.”

Director Harold Hainey checks the batteries on a response device that allows first responders to have cell service at times when a natural disaster disables the traditional cellphone towers.
Telemedicine changes the health care landscape

Broadband makes a difference daily

Imagine a world with greater health care accessibility, as convenient as contacting a physician from your home. Or consider a medical system where rural communities can easily connect in real time with specialists based dozens, if not hundreds, of miles away.

Broadband technology provides the key link between you and medical providers needed to make those innovations and others possible. That more convenient, healthier world is becoming a reality for rural communities across the nation.

The systems are not yet what they one day may become, but every day more and more people are receiving the benefits of telemedicine. And the results are often profound.

Kentucky veterans have easier access to important care. Changing laws in states such as Texas allow greater access to telemedicine. Telestroke programs in Minnesota and North Dakota save vital minutes when patients most need care. And those are just a few examples of broadband technology changing health care for the better.

KENTUCKY VETERANS

In rural Kentucky, getting to and from an appointment at any medical specialist can often require hours of travel. But when you’re a veteran trying to get to a Veterans Administration Medical Center in a metropolitan area, travel times can increase even more. And a veteran might need multiple doctors and have multiple appointments scheduled on different days.

An innovative pilot program in a mountainous section of eastern Kentucky is helping to change that. The Virtual Living Room program, which started in 2017 in McKee, offers vets a comfortable and private room in their local library complete with high-speed internet access to visit with VA health care providers located more than an hour’s drive away.

The program, available for setup at other qualifying sites, not only illustrates the potential of telemedicine but also shows the efforts being made to create a system capable of benefiting as many people as possible.

The McKee Virtual Living Room is a collaboration among four organizations: the VA, NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, the rural telecom provider Peoples Rural Telephone Cooperative and the Jackson County Public Library. The VA has provided telehealth services for several years, but it can’t happen if vets don’t have access to high-speed internet connections either in their homes or nearby.

“The rest of the country, like us, really admires our veterans,” says Keith Gabbard, chief executive officer of PRTC. “Before the project, we saw veterans spending the day in a waiting room at the hospital, and when they live an hour and a half away, it’s pretty much an all-day event for a veteran to get health care.”

Fast fiber optic internet networks make telemedicine a realistic option for more and more communities, and the cooperative was a leader in establishing the Virtual Living Room at the Jackson County Public Library.

“We’ve done a lot to promote it, and the library staff and the veterans are really proud of it,” Gabbard says. “It’s a source of pride for our community, and it continues to grow. The Virtual Living Room is a beautiful area where veterans, even
if they don’t have a doctor’s appointment, can go and read a book. It feels like it’s their home.”

**CHANGING LAWS**

While faster internet may provide the foundation for telemedicine services, the legal and regulatory framework of each state can play a role in determining the effectiveness of the programs.

In May 2017, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed a bill into law that leveled the playing field for telemedicine physicians and doctors who work in traditional office settings. In part, the law eliminated a requirement for a patient to first visit a physician in person before receiving care through telemedicine.

“The bill removed a lot of barriers, and we’ve seen an increase in queries about telehealth,” says Becky Bounds, program manager for the TexLa Telehealth Resource Center in Lubbock, Texas. The federally funded center works to provide resources and technical assistance to telehealth programs in Texas and Louisiana.

Bounds says the internet-based tools offer key services. For example, Lubbock is home to the Timothy J. Harnar Regional Burn Center, which often receives patients injured while working in the industries of West Texas. After treatment and returning home, follow-up visits to Lubbock could require drives of five to six hours. However, a telemedicine-equipped clinic on the campus of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in El Paso allows patients to virtually visit with specialists in Lubbock.

“About 12% of the state’s population lives in West Texas, and telehealth matters,” Bounds says. “We are producing cotton, beef, oil and more, and we need health care for the workforce producing those products for the rest of the state and the nation.”

**THE GOLDEN HOUR**

When it comes to treating a stroke, doctors have a saying: Time is brain. It’s a reminder that every minute that passes between the event and treatment can lead to irreversible damage. Fortunately, telemedicine technology already gives doctors a fighting chance to begin treating patients before the critical “golden hour” passes.

One of the leaders for this technology in the Midwest is Essentia Health, which established telemedicine capabilities in each of its 17 hospitals, 70 clinics and eight nursing homes throughout Minnesota and North Dakota. With its telestroke program, emergency medical technicians can identify stroke patients on the way to the hospital and even begin treatment.

Essentia Director of Telehealth Services Laurie Hall recalls an ambulance picking up a rural patient nearly 90 minutes from the nearest hospital. In the past, serious brain damage would have been a near certainty for such a patient. But thanks to telestroke technology, EMTs diagnosed a stroke and began treatment about 45 minutes after the stroke occurred.

“The goal is to shorten that window from the time the patient has the event to the time they actually get those clot-busting medications or the clot is removed,” Hall says. “Getting that done so quickly is profound when you think about the injury that could happen from just those few extra minutes. It helps these patients get out of the hospital much quicker and to get on with their normal lives.”
One of the most powerful weapons against breast cancer in northeastern South Carolina is a 40-foot-long motor coach that has served over 27,800 women since it got rolling just over a decade ago.

Each year, the McLeod Mobile Mammography Unit crisscrosses a 12-county region, bringing state-of-the-art mammography screening to scores of women who have difficulty scheduling a visit to the hospital due to the demands of jobs and family. The McLeod Foundation purchased the mobile unit in 2007 with more than $800,000 it raised through private and philanthropic sources. It was the first unit of its kind in northeastern South Carolina and the first in the state to offer digital mammography.

Johnnah Black, radiology liaison for McLeod Health, says that with breast cancer, early detection can mean the difference between life and death. According to the American Cancer Society, survival rates for breast cancers are better than 95% for cases that are discovered early.

“One of our early goals was to increase the likelihood that women would get screened,” Black says. “In our part of South Carolina, there are a lot of underserved women who take care of their aging parents or have to be at work all day. Those things take priority. By bringing the hospital to them, they don’t have to choose.”

Since 2008, the McLeod Mobile Mammography Unit has detected over 130 cases of breast cancer. So far this year, the unit has identified nine cases. The mobile unit is staffed by an all-female team of registered radiologic technologists who specialize in mammography. The examinations are private and confidential, and the state-of-the-art imaging equipment aboard the motor coach is identical to that in hospitals.

“A patient can be in and out in 20 minutes,” Black says. “That’s especially important when we visit a manufacturing environment or a school where the women have limited time before they need to get back to work.”

After a day of screening at each site, the mobile mammography unit returns to the hospital, where board certified radiologists review the images the next day. A report then goes to patients’ physicians, and patients learn of the results in a week to 10 days. “It’s the same service that hospitals provide, except the images are taken locally from the mobile unit,” Black says.

In 2018, the McLeod Mobile Mammography Unit acquired 3D mammography capabilities. This is an advanced form of breast cancer screening with multiple images of the breast from different angles to produce 3D images. Black says the new technology is a giant leap forward in the battle to detect the disease as early as possible. “The old X-ray images were like looking at the front and back of a book,” Black says. “With 3D, we get all the pages in between.”
School nurses do everything from administering medicine to treating bumps and bruises, and over the last 25 years, Mary Alice Matthews has seen it all.

As the lead school nurse for the Chesterfield County School District, Matthews oversees the nursing staff at 17 schools across rural northeastern South Carolina. There are 13 student nurses in all — 10 at the elementary schools and three at the middle schools — who serve a total of 7,367 students.

Matthews, who works at Chesterfield-Ruby Middle School, says she and other school nurses are seeing an increasing number of students being diagnosed with autism and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, as well as a rise in asthma and diabetes.

“We’re seeing chronic diseases in smaller children,” Matthews says. “I have 20 medicines a day I give to my students. This involves making sure the prescriptions are given to doctor’s orders and communicating with family members so we have their permission. There’s much more data and medical histories to keep track of than there used to be.”

Matthews says the school system’s broadband internet service helps run several software tools that enable teachers and nurses to share information ranging from students’ medical histories to their attendance records. “When a child comes into my school from another school, I can track his history for the last five years,” Matthews says. “I’ll know if he is supposed to wear glasses, so if he is not wearing them, that tells me that might have something to do with his headaches.”

The Chesterfield County school system currently utilizes PowerSchool and EasyTrack — software programs that connect staff, combine data and provide detailed medical profiles for each student.

“The most important thing in a school setting is to meet the students’ medical needs without interfering with their educational needs,” Matthews says. “If we have a child who’s allergic to watermelon, then we don’t want that served in the cafeteria. With modern technology, we can disseminate that information immediately to the staff.”

She says the school system’s next technological upgrade will likely be some form of telemedicine system where a nurse assesses the student and then “dials up a doctor” on a computer screen to receive a diagnosis, prescription and plan of care.

While technology plays an important role in school nursing, Matthews says, the backbone of the job is as simple as one person talking to another. “My favorite thing is showing a student how to take responsibility,” she says. “It could be a diabetic who learns to calculate how much insulin they need to self-inject based on what they eat. Or it might be showing a student how to treat an infected toe so that it gets better over the weekend.”

“There’s much more to this job than the salary,” Matthews says. “School nurses are proud of what they do. We’re reminded of that every day in the faces of the children.”

**Story by MORGAN SIMMONS  |  Photography by MATT LEDGER**
Pizza is one of those foods where when a craving hits, nothing else will do. It’s been an American favorite for decades. And now, people in the Rising Fawn area of Lookout Mountain, Georgia, are satisfying those cravings at Lookout Mountain Pizza Company.

A pilot for American Airlines for 32-plus years, Chris Stone jettisoned himself into a new career as a pizza maker. And it’s not just any pizza. It’s the artisan pizza that brings people from as far away as Atlanta and Birmingham, and as close by as Chattanooga and Mentone, Alabama. “It’s really become a little destination place,” Stone says.

When asked how he jumped from piloting to pizza, Stone says he’s always loved to cook. “Before 9/11, I was based in Washington, D.C., but after 9/11, I ended up in New York for about five years, and one night, I ended up taking a pizza class.”

He was hooked then, although he waited to turn it into a career. “It took me about 10 years to figure out exactly what I wanted to do with it,” he says. Stone continues to fly European routes weekly Monday through Wednesday. On Thursdays, he’s home to open his pizzeria with the help of a well-trained staff. They know how to make the pizza dough from scratch and heat up the wood-fired pizza oven to its optimum heat: 750 F at its base and 1,000 degrees at its dome. The oven bakes pizza to perfection in under two minutes.

The class he took in New York, under renowned bread baker Jim Lahey, owner of Sullivan Street Bakery, taught the art of making Roman-style pizza crusts. On his many trips to Europe — Italy is on his route — he learned about Neapolitan pizza and began working with the dough at home. “I ended up building a pizza oven in my kitchen at home,” he says.

In 2016, he found a location for his pizzeria, an old building that had housed an art shop, church and mechanic’s shed at different times through the years. After spiffing the place up with some paint, a new roof and other renovations, he opened Lookout Mountain Pizza Company in July 2017, and it quickly became the place for pizzas that feature quality ingredients like wheat flour from Naples, Italy, along with canned tomatoes from a town near Italy’s Mount Vesuvius and Wisconsin cheese. “It’s not the cheapest pizza to make, but you need to use good ingredients to make a good pizza,” Stone says.

The dough is a simple mixture of flour, water, salt and a little yeast. The pizza sauce is made from scratch. Onions roast in the wood-burning oven and function as a topping for pizzas named after Italian women. Sophia is the house favorite, with wood-roasted onion tomato sauce, fontina cheese, Italian sausage and Peppadew peppers. The Maria, with pepperoni, onions and portobello mushrooms, is another top seller. All pizzas are 13 inches and have a marvelous crispy, blackened edge to the dough that softens as you reach the center.

Here are some helpful hints for home pizza cooks:

- Use a good flour, such as King Arthur. “Some people use bread flours with plain flour and stuff like that, but I’ve found it really makes no difference. But you’ll need to add a little oil to the dough to get it to brown up,” Stone says.
- Do not overwork the dough. You want the dough to “pop,” and overworking it will make it tough. You want the dough to be airy. Pizza dough is a very dynamic thing. It changes with the humidity and temperature. The texture won’t be the same from one day to the next.

Chris Stone and Andrea Clark make the Lookout Mountain Pizza Company a dining destination.

Ooey gooey chewy — Pizza

Warm up a cold day with a perfect slice

FOOD EDITOR

ANNE P. BRALY

IS A NATIVE OF

CHATTANOOGA,

TENNESSEE.
Artisan Pizza

Though this is not Lookout Mountain Pizza Company’s recipe, it’s a good one for beginners.

3 cups plus 3 tablespoons lukewarm water (100°F or below)
1/3 cup olive oil
1 tablespoon granulated yeast
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
7 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

Combine warm water, olive oil, yeast and salt in a 5-quart bowl, preferably a lidded, but not airtight, plastic container. Measure the flour using a “scoop and sweep” method. Reach into the flour bin with your measuring cup, scoop up a full measure all at once, and sweep it level with a knife. Mix until all of the flour is incorporated (kneading is not necessary) using a wooden spoon or a food processor with a dough attachment. Cover with a non-airtight lid. Allow to rise at room temperature for 2 hours. Do not punch down. You want to retain as much gas in the dough as possible. A reduction in gas will make your pizzas and flatbreads dense. Refrigerate and use over the next 14 days. Refrigerate at least 3 hours before using.

To make: A half-hour before you’re ready to bake, place a pizza stone in the bottom third of the oven and heat it at your oven’s highest temperature. Prepare and organize your toppings. Dust a pizza peel or a large cutting board/flat cookie sheet with enough flour or cornmeal to easily transfer the pizza over to the hot stone. Pull up and cut off a 1/2-pound (orange-size) piece of dough. Using a little flour (enough so it won’t stick to your fingers), stretch and shape the dough into a ball. Sprinkle your work area with a little flour. Using your hands or a rolling pin, roll out and stretch the dough until it is approximately 1/8-inch thick and 12 inches wide.

Place the finished dough onto the prepared pizza peel. Then, add the toppings of your choice. Carefully slide the pizza onto the hot stone. If it isn’t sliding, sprinkle more flour or cornmeal between the pizza and the pizza peel until the pizza moves. Check for doneness after 8-10 minutes — it may take a few minutes longer. Turn the pizza around if one side is browning faster than the other. Allow to cool slightly on a wire rack before serving.

Lookout Mountain Pizza Company is located at 203 Scenic Highway, Rising Fawn, Georgia.
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