

CONNECTION



**Find your
way to fun at
Pumpkins in
the Park**



**October 24
at WK&T
Tech Park**



By Mike Romano, CEO
NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association

America at 250: Building Connections That Last

Every community has a story to tell, and at NTCA, we're honored to help our members tell theirs.

As we celebrate America's 250th anniversary, it's worth remembering that much of our nation's story started in rural America, and the heartbeat of our great country can often be heard most loudly in the spaces between the biggest cities. You can see this spirit clearly in small towns and rural communities where generations of Americans have come together to build the infrastructure, roads, bridges, and yes, communications networks, that provide a reliable foundation for civic engagement, commerce and connection.

For generations, local providers stepped forward to make sure rural America stayed connected with the rest of the country and the world when others wouldn't. They invested in the infrastructure their communities needed to grow and thrive. As technology evolved, so did those networks. Today, our nation's small, community-based broadband providers are delivering robust and reliable high-speed broadband that powers education, healthcare, agriculture, public safety, small businesses and countless opportunities.

Throughout that journey, NTCA has been proud to advocate for the policies that make those investments possible—and help them provide connections that last for generations.

As we think about what will help America thrive from coast to coast, far beyond the celebration of its 250th birthday, those will matter even more. Together, we'll continue building connections that will take us into the next 250 years. [🔗](#)



NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH OCTOBER

Protect the Keys, Not the House

When it comes to cybersecurity, do you become overwhelmed by the idea of protecting dozens of accounts? Online banking, shopping sites, streaming services, social media and more. It can seem daunting.

Try thinking about protecting the keys, not the whole house.

Just a handful of accounts unlocks nearly everything else in your digital life. If criminals gain access to one of these “master keys,” they may be able to reset passwords, impersonate you or access sensitive information.

The most important key is your email account. It's where password reset links are sent, making it the gateway to many of your other accounts. Your mobile phone number is another key, since it's often used to verify your identity. If you use a password manager, it deserves extra protection because it holds the credentials to many of your accounts. Finally, your financial accounts should always have the strongest safeguards available.

Start by creating a strong, unique password for each of these accounts and turning on multifactor authentication whenever it's offered. Then make sure your phone and computer stay updated with the latest security patches.

You don't have to secure every digital door at once. Protect the few keys that unlock everything else, and you've taken one of the biggest steps toward keeping your online life secure. [🔗](#)



Adobe Stock image by suttinon602

Sell More, Stress Less

Online alternatives to the Saturday yard sale

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Who looks forward to spending days planning a yard sale only to get up early on a Saturday morning to deal with the guy who arrives early to nose around the garage while you get everything set up or the lady determined to haggle over every price? All that hassle, and you'll still likely wind up with less money in your pocket than you hoped.

Step away from those headaches with convenient online options. You'll be in control, and you can spend your Saturday mornings sleeping in.

WHAT TO SELL

If you are trying to sell collectibles such as vintage records, trading cards and memorabilia, eBay and Etsy are good choices. To sell your grandmother's china, crystal and silverware, start with Replacements Ltd., where you can search by pattern. There are even sites specializing in items like coins and currency or specific brands.

To sell designer clothes and accessories, explore options like The RealReal, Poshmark and ThredUp. Seller beware, though, as these sites often charge high commission rates and have restrictions on which brands they will buy. For the option of shipping or local pickup, look to Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist or local buy/sell groups.

DETAILS MATTER

Think about all the possible questions someone could ask about

your item. Take photos from multiple angles using good lighting. Consider taking a video as well, especially if it helps show the item is in working order. Write a detailed description including all relevant information such as dimensions, weight, brand, color, size and condition.

State the terms in the listing, such as price, payment methods accepted and whether it will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. When considering what price to ask, research comparable items. Know what the item costs to buy new, and leave room for negotiation.

SELL SAFELY

Selling online isn't completely free of hassles. Be prepared for lowball offers and messages from people who never respond to your reply. Don't be surprised if someone says they want the item but never shows up or cancels at the last minute.

Be aware of fake payment emails or overpayment scams. Ignore suspicious messages. Choose a safe, public location to meet. Your town may even have designated areas such as police station parking lots.

If the buyer is coming to your house, be cautious. Choose a safe time of day. Do not allow someone into your home. Instead, have the item sitting on your front porch or in the driveway. If you are alone, tell a neighbor what you are doing, and ask them to keep an eye on you when the buyer is there. 📞

Why Rural Broadband Matters More Than Ever

Connecting communities through local investment

Reliable broadband has become an essential part of everyday life, and its importance is only continuing to grow. From the way we work to how we stay connected with family, dependable internet has become a necessity for homes, businesses, and communities.



KAREN JACKSON-FURMAN
Chief Executive Officer

In rural communities, like the ones we serve here at Cornerstone Connectivity, that impact is especially significant. Farmers rely on broadband to monitor equipment, use precision agriculture technology, and manage day-to-day operations. Small businesses connect with customers, process transactions, and expand their reach beyond their local markets. Students depend on reliable internet to complete assignments and access educational resources, while healthcare providers and patients benefit from virtual appointments and online services. As technology continues to evolve, the need for reliable broadband will only become more essential.

This commitment to rural progress was reflected again recently as we announced our Carlisle County fiber expansion at our Mayfield headquarters on July 29th. This \$1.5 million investment will bring reliable, high-speed broadband to more families, farms, and small businesses across Carlisle County. It represents another step in our long-term effort to strengthen the everyday life of the communities we serve. We appreciate the federal and state partners who continue to support rural connectivity and help make projects like this possible. Their advocacy reinforces the importance of bringing dependable broadband to areas that have waited far too long for it.

That same spirit of trust and partnership was felt again in Weakley County, where we were recently recognized as the Weakley County Press Best of the Best Internet Service Provider for the third year in a row. We're proud of that title and grateful for the support. It reflects the confidence our members place in us and the commitment our team brings to serving rural communities with care and consistency.

Being a local provider gives us a unique perspective. We understand the needs of the communities we serve because we live and work here, too. We celebrate local success and we also understand the challenges that come with serving rural areas. That local connection inspires us to continue investing in the infrastructure that helps our region move forward. We also believe that strong communities are built through partnership. While we remain committed to providing reliable services, it's the people throughout our area who give those connections purpose. Together, we're creating opportunities, supporting local growth, and building a stronger future for the places we all call home.

As we continue to grow, our focus remains on delivering dependable service while investing in the future of rural communities. We appreciate the trust our customers place in us and look forward to continuing to build the connections that keep our region connected for years to come. 📶

Connection is published by Cornerstone Connectivity™, © 2026. It is distributed without charge to all members of the cooperative.



is a tech-forward, human-centric telecom company with a network spanning over 5,600 route miles and more than 38,000 residential and business subscribers. As the foundation of broadband communication for the communities it serves, Cornerstone brings high-speed fiber to places often overlooked by large telecommunications companies, ensuring that no one is left behind in the modern digital world.

Cornerstone Connectivity is an equal-opportunity employer and provider.

Send address corrections to:
Cornerstone Connectivity
100 WK&T Technology Drive
Mayfield, KY 42066
Telephone: 844-997-5433
cornerstoneconnectivity.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tony Goodman
President

Ricky Littleton
Vice President

Jerry Holloway
Secretary/Treasurer

Kate Bynum

Evelyn Causey

Jeff Davis

David Griffo

Melanie Thompson

Produced for Cornerstone Connectivity by:



On the Cover:



The popular Pumpkins in the Park event returns for its sixth year on Saturday, Oct. 24, at WK&T Tech Park, directly off U.S. Highway 45 in Mayfield, Ky. See story Page 8.

Photos courtesy of
Cornerstone Connectivity

Welcome OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBERS



Bryan Bailey

Where are you from?

Nashville.

What is your job title?

Direct sales representative.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I like to cook a good meal at home with my family. I love being out in nature whether it is hunting, fishing or hiking.

What is your favorite use of technology?

I like to watch streaming TV, movies and YouTube videos.



Garrison Bishop

Where are you from?

Huntsville, Alabama.

What is your job title?

IT specialist.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I enjoy whitewater kayaking.

What is your favorite use of technology?

I like digital photography.



Mary E. Blackburn

Where are you from?

I grew up in Pikeville, Kentucky. Kansas has been home for the last 26 years. It feels great to be back in Kentucky, and I'm excited for this new chapter.

What is your job title?

Staff accountant.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I'm a graduate student, so I spend a lot of time reading. I also love going for walks, and I often babysit my son's dog, Toothless.

What is your favorite use of technology?

Asking my Alexa for the weather every morning. I also love that technology has become simple enough that my 75-year-old mother can use it confidently.



Jeff Cartwright

Where are you from?

Springville, Tennessee.

What is your job title?

Combination technician.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I like hunting, fishing and boating.

What is your favorite use of technology?

The internet.



Jody Jackson

Where are you from?

I have called Wingo, Kentucky, home for 46 years.

What is your job title?

Direct sales representative.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I spend time outdoors with my family, like practicing volleyball with my daughter, Emery. I enjoy keeping up with UK basketball, the Tennessee Titans and NASCAR. When time allows, and I'm not disturbing anyone, I enjoy playing drums.

What is your favorite use of technology?

I like to download new music from my favorite artists and to stream live music.



Griffin Straub

Where are you from?

Mayfield, Kentucky.

What is your job title?

Construction.

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

I enjoy playing soccer, going to the gym and spending time with friends.

What is your favorite use of technology?

My favorite use of technology is telecommunications because of the way it connects people.

Autumn Advent

Hit the road for fabulous fall foliage

Maple, aspen, birch, oak, hickory, dogwood and gum trees are known for vivid fall colors, ranging from bright reds and oranges to golden yellows and browns. Those vibrant colors are always present. They just need a little seasonal help getting to the surface.

As temperatures drop and sunny days begin to shorten, trees stop producing chlorophyll, the substance that makes leaves

green. As it fades, the brilliant red, orange and yellow pigments obscured by the green begin to shine through.

Cool, crisp days and frost-free nights produce the sharpest fall colors. Drought conditions in early fall can trigger a premature chlorophyll shutdown, causing leaves to wither and fall without reaching their full color potential. And too much rain or an early frost can dull the leaves' colors. 🍂

Know Your Colors

YELLOW—Aspen, beech, birch, cottonwood, elm, ginkgo, hickory, sugar maple, tulip poplar, sassafras, sycamore

ORANGE—Bigtooth maple, Rocky Mountain maple, sugar maple, sweetgum

RED—Black gum, cypress, dogwood, oak, red maple, sourwood, sumac



Where to Look

Our expansive and ecologically diverse region offers ample leaf-peeping options beginning around mid-September and peaking in mid-October. Whether you're hiking forested ridgelines, driving scenic byways, floating a river or camping beneath golden canopies, unforgettable fall colors await you.

Chances are you can find plenty of color right in your own backyard. For fall excursions farther afield, consider these options:

- **Daniel Boone National Forest, Kentucky:** The Red River Gorge and Natural Bridge State Resort Park feature brilliant foliage from maple, beech and sycamore trees with sandstone arches and cliffs adding to the drama.
- **Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests, North Carolina:** The Blue Ridge Parkway, Craggy Gardens and Linville Gorge showcase fiery displays of sugar maples, red maples and hickories, framed by sweeping mountain views.
- **Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, Georgia:** Leaf peepers flock to Brasstown Bald, Tallulah Gorge and Anna Ruby Falls to see the golden hickories, scarlet oaks and tulip poplars.

ures Await

Don't Leaf Home Without a Plan

No matter the season's conditions, finding fall colors by car, boat or on foot is an autumn joy. Planning a leaf-peeping excursion has never been easier.

Founded in 1875, American Forests is the nation's oldest non-profit conservation organization. Its fall foliage map offers a clear look at where leaves are peaking throughout the United States with tips and suggestions. Visit americanforests.org/fall-foliage-map.

With the tried-and-true The Old Farmer's Almanac, both the yellow-bound classic booklet and online version, arboreal enthusiasts can easily find the best spots near and far. The website features an animated map showing the progression and historical presence of fall colors. The print version includes tables of expected peak dates, regional weather trends and travel features. Visit almanac.com.

Get tips from the folks at Find Fall, "the best place for fall foliage information, destinations, adventures and activities for an autumn you'll never forget." Visit findfall.com.



Adobe Stock image by standret



Adobe Stock image by Irina Mikhailchenko

Haunted Graves

Where to go and what to do when you're ready for a boo!

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Fully embracing the name, Haunted Graves is a celebration of the Halloween season in Mayfield, Kentucky, and throughout Graves County. From plenty of pumpkins to a themed scavenger hunt, the calendar is filled with spooky fun. See the latest information at visitmayfieldgraves.org/haunted-graves.

SEPT. 1 TO OCT. 31 DARNELL PUMPKINS

Find your perfect pumpkins and fall mums. Open seven days a week during daylight hours.

1148 Darnell Road, Mayfield
Facebook @darnellpumpkins

SEPT. 18 TO OCT. 31 THE INDUSTRIAL SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, this haunted experience is the stuff of nightmares.

10537 KY-80, Fancy Farm
theindustrialslaughterhouse.com

SEPT. 26 WEST KENTUCKY PARANORMAL EXPO

This event for all paranormal enthusiasts

includes vendors, book signings, tarot readings and oddities.

Mayfield-Graves County Fairgrounds,
1004 KY-121, Mayfield

OCT. 5-8 THE CITY OF MAYFIELD HALLOWEENTOWN SCAVENGER HUNT

Designed for children 12 and under, the hunt features local businesses and organizations.

Starting point: The mayor's office at
1257 Paris Road, Mayfield

Facebook @mayfieldky.gov

OCT. 9-11 & 16-18 'RIDE THE CYCLONE'

Purchase Players theater company presents an outlandish musical exploring the fate of six teenagers who die in a roller coaster accident.

302 W. Water St., Mayfield
purchaseplayers.com

OCT. 9-10, 16-17 & 23-24 CARTWRIGHT GROVE HAUNTED TOWN FALL FESTIVAL

The fairgrounds transform into an 1880s Old West ghost town with concessions and live music in the saloon.

Mayfield-Graves County Fairgrounds,
1004 KY-121, Mayfield

Facebook @cartwrightgrove1880

OCT. 10 HAUNTED HARVEST

Enjoy an all-ages event with crafts, candy, popcorn bar, costume contest and door prizes.

Graves County Public Library, 601 N.
17th St., Mayfield

gravescountypubliclibrary.org



Known as The Strange Procession That Never Moves, these monuments were built by Henry Wooldridge from 1892 until his death in 1899.

MAPLEWOOD CEMETERY AND THE WOOLDRIDGE MONUMENTS

Test your courage with a spooky visit to see the strange Wooldridge Monuments at the Maplewood Cemetery in Mayfield. Open daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., the cemetery is well known and has been featured on the "Ripley's Believe it or Not" TV show and in the book "Weird Kentucky."

Learn more at visitmayfieldgraves.org/wooldridge-monuments.

OCT. 17
TOMBSTONE RACE

The Rotary Club of Mayfield hosts two bike races, a family-fun ride and a competitive race, all to raise funds for scholarships.

Chief Cornerstone Baptist Church, 5772 Highway 464, Mayfield

OCT. 17
CAMO FOR COLE 5K

Run or walk a rolling course through downtown Mayfield and Kess Creek Park to support the Coleson Vaughn Scholarship.

Independence Bank, 100 E. College St., Mayfield

OCT. 17
JUST FOR BOO! ART & CRAFT SHOW

Come shop for Halloween-themed handicrafts.

Mayfield-Graves County Fairgrounds, 1004 KY-121, Mayfield

OCT. 22
FIRST KENTUCKY GLOW IN THE PARK

Enjoy a free family-friendly event where children can trick or treat along the Trail of Treats.

Kess Creek Park, 201 Locust St., Mayfield

Facebook @firstkentucky

OCT. 24
WK&T/WKRECC PUMPKINS IN THE PARK

This annual family favorite is back at WK&T Tech Park. Come join the fun for games, food, hayrides, character photos and, of course, pumpkins.

WK&T Tech Park, 100 WK&T Technology Drive, Mayfield

OCT. 24
FNB'S GLOWING GRAVES PARADE

Light up the night, and get ready to catch lots of candy, glow sticks and other treats.

Parade route starts on Seventh Street, near Court Square, and ends at Mayfield High School.
growwithfnb.com



Cartwright Grove, a replica Old West town, gets spooky for the annual Haunted Town Fall Festival.

OCT. 29
STORY WALK TRUNK OR TREAT

Join the Graves County Cooperative Extension Service for a fun and safe way for children to trick or treat.

4200 State Route 45 N., Mayfield
Facebook @GravesCountyCES

OCT. 31
FRIGHT NIGHT ENDURO DERBY

Prepare for a full night of racing, plus concessions, trick-or-treating and more.

Mayfield-Graves County Fairgrounds, 1004 KY-121, Mayfield 📍

Pumpkins in the Park

The popular Pumpkins in the Park event returns for its sixth year Saturday, Oct. 24, at WK&T Tech Park, directly off U.S. Highway 45. WK&T/Cornerstone Connectivity and West Kentucky Rural Electric Cooperative present the event from 12-3 p.m.

The gym will be the headquarters for pumpkin decorating, costume contests, coloring contests and lots of games. All activities, including hayrides, are free, and a food truck will sell treats. Visitors can even find a new friend to take home at the on-site adoption event by the Mayfield-Graves County Animal Shelter.

"We're excited to have the Pumpkins in the Park event back at WK&T Tech Park," says Natalie Morgan, marketing and revenue manager at WK&T/Cornerstone Connectivity. "The park is our home base, and this event gives us the opportunity to visit with the community that we serve. Seeing everyone having fun is what it is all about."

WK&T Tech Park is at 100 WK&T Technology Drive in Mayfield. For directions and more information, visit www.wkttechpark.com. Follow WK&T/Cornerstone Connectivity on Facebook by searching for Cornerstone Connectivity and on Instagram @cornerstoneconnectivity.



Join the Circle

Bluegrass music grows far beyond its Appalachian roots

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

For many bluegrass musicians, the genre is steeped in tradition. Born with an instrument in their hand, they come of age listening to Bill Monroe, the Osborne Brothers and Jim and Jesse, learning the patterns of old-time folk music before eventually adding their own voices to the mix.

The members of The Last Revel took a different path. Hailing from Minnesota and Wisconsin, far north of bluegrass music's Appalachian roots, banjo player Ryan Acker, fiddler Vinnie Donatelle, guitarist Lee Henke and bass player Ryan Krauss came to the genre a bit later in life.

"My first introduction to bluegrass was probably in college," Ryan Acker says. "I was really drawn to it as the energetic side of the folk singer-songwriter music that I was already pretty fond of. It just seemed like a really great outlet for reckless-abandon youth."

Formed in Minneapolis in 2011, the band started out playing

music based more in blues-rock style, but quickly found the people they met in that space were not as welcoming as they hoped. Around that time, Lee remembers seeing bluegrass-influenced bands like Trampled by Turtles and Pert Near Sandstone and thinking they looked like they were having a pretty good time.

"That was the moment when we were like, 'Instead of trying to turn an acoustic song into something else, what if we just kept it acoustic?'" he says. "If it weren't for all those bands in Minnesota kind of showing us the ropes, I don't know if I would have ever gotten this steeped in it. But the genre itself has just been so heartwarming and embracing."

TIME TO SHOW OUT

As someone who grew up in Kentucky's bluegrass tradition, Ken White finds the community to be as defining a feature as the music itself. A multi-instrumentalist who has played in



Alabama-based band Mountain Grass Unit performs at the World of Bluegrass.



Sierra Hull joins The Wood Brothers, from left, Chris Wood, Oliver Wood and Jano Rix, on the Bluegrass Live! stage.

several bands, Ken now serves as the executive director for the International Bluegrass Music Association. This October, he'll be welcoming musicians from across the globe to the World of Bluegrass in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

"The thing I love about bluegrass is that you don't have to know anybody in the jam circle to walk up and start making music," he says. "From beginners all the way up to the best professionals, people are welcoming. And that's something that transcends language."

The same is true for the music itself. Ken compares being part of a traditional bluegrass band to a jazz ensemble, where each musician has mastery of his or her instrument. They all make an essential contribution to the group's sound but also have moments to shine individually.

"In a lot of old-time folk traditions, the instrumentalist will just play the melody or an accompaniment. They don't really show out," he says. "Part of what makes bluegrass unique is the emphasis on virtuosity. I think that resonates with a lot of people around the globe and is a big part of why bluegrass takes root in other cultures."

Here in the United States, musicians in different parts of the country have found ways to take that sound and make it their own. Texas bluegrass often incorporates elements of Western swing and contest fiddling that are popular in folk music throughout the Lone Star State. For the members of The Last Revel, the earnestness that comes through in their songwriting follows the tradition of other Midwestern bluegrass musicians.

"It's all very songwriter based. That's kind of the main focus

and the bluegrass aspect around it is almost secondary," Ryan Acker says. "The music aspect is more like the vehicle for the song. And I think that is different from other subgenres around the country."

BRIDGING THE GAP

That distinction has, at times, left bands like The Last Revel on the fringes of the traditional bluegrass scene. Early in the band's run, as the members incorporated their blues and indie rock influences alongside traditional bluegrass instrumentation, figuring out where they fit into the genre could be a source of frustration.

"It used to be something we were worried about, and now we kind of pride ourselves on being a little different," Lee says.

"I have so much respect for traditional bluegrass. But I also like that we can lean into our own thing. There are so many variations on bluegrass and roots music. Maybe we can show a different side of it."

As the band tours in support of its 2025 album "Gone for Good," those moments have become some of Ryan's favorites. Whether it's working the merch booth or meeting people at shows, fans regularly tell him they had never listened to bluegrass music until they discovered The Last Revel.

"We're like the gateway to this whole other genre of music that people maybe didn't think they would like," he says. "And I think that's great. With Spotify and other streaming services, it's easy for genres to blend together. If we can be a tiny little bridge for somebody's musical tastes, I really get a kick out of that." 🗨️



The members of The Last Revel came to bluegrass in a nontraditional way and enjoy sharing the genre with new audiences.

Farm Fresh

Martin Stockyards focuses on real food from real farmers



From left, Hiatt and Hunter Burlison, whose parents co-own Martin Stockyards, spend time with some curious cows.

Story by LAURA MCGILL

For the Nanney and Burlison families, locally raised beef is more than a business plan. It is a way of life.

As the owners of NB Beef Co. and Martin Stockyards, they believe in selling the same quality products they feed their own families. And, thanks to great relationships with pork and poultry producers as well as other local businesses, Martin Stockyards offers a wide range of meats and other products from close to home.

Located on Highway 45 South in Martin, the retail shop opened in March 2025 and has been busy ever since. The business

recently received approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to accept EBT cards, a move that will make its local products accessible to even more people.

FAMILY MATTERS

In 2017, Justin and Brittany Burlison and Cody and Jennifer Nanney started selling freezer beef from their home-based business, NB Beef Co. They delivered these large orders to customers within a two-hour drive. As the business grew, they began to get requests for smaller-sized orders. After the COVID-19 pandemic

ended, they started planning a retail location. In spring 2025, the couples decided the momentum was right to open Martin Stockyards. Just two months later, they opened a second location, Paragould Stockyards, in Arkansas.

The Burlisons live near the Arkansas store, and the Nanneys live in Martin. Both couples stay busy with their own full-time jobs and young children. For the Martin Stockyards, they are joined by one employee, Rebecca Frazier, who keeps things running smoothly.

The Martin store is open weekdays from

2-6 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those limited hours are important to uphold the owners' strong belief in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. "We have our other jobs and everything going on with our kids," Jennifer says. "Making time for family is important to us."

FROM PASTURE TO PLATE

Both the Burlison and Nanney families are involved in raising the cows for NB Beef Co. On farms in Arkansas and Tennessee, they raise primarily Angus cattle. The cattle are trucked to Martin for finishing on the feedlot before being processed at a USDA facility in Missouri. "We know the quality of our beef because we are involved in every step," Justin says. After leaving the USDA facility, the beef heads back to the Martin Stockyards store or to the Arkansas location.

Practicing the philosophy of sustainable agriculture, Martin Stockyards sells beef tallow as well as a special "ancestral

blend" that contains the heart and liver. A local maker buys tallow and uses it to produce skincare products. "We want to be good stewards of the land and the cattle," Justin says.

Martin Stockyards doesn't have a website yet, so the business relies on its Facebook page to let customers know about specials and new products like spicy dill pickle jerky and brisket burger patties. While a website may be in the future, for now, using only social media is part of a controlled growth plan. Justin says they don't want to grow too big too fast and lose any loyal customers along the way. "We are very present owners and the face of the business," he says. "We believe that a handshake still matters, that your word and your name are all you have."

LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Knowing that customers want a greater selection, Martin Stockyards works with a producer in Southeast Missouri for

MARTIN STOCKYARDS

8504 Highway 45 S., Martin

731-281-8998

NB BEEF CO.

870-450-7087

chicken. The store also carries eggs from local farms, marinades from Black Oak Gourmet Foods in Dresden, rice from Tennemo Rice Family Farm & Mill in Finley, Tennessee, and a selection of locally canned fruit preserves and relishes.

Want to savor Martin Stockyards' product but have someone else do the grilling? The business partners once a quarter with Blake's at Southern Milling for Tomahawk Night at the Mill. The restaurant serves a limited number of massive tomahawk steaks to the lucky few who make their reservations in time.

If you want to stock up, NB Beef Co. still offers freezer beef for a whole, half or quarter cow. Just be prepared with enough space because the steers come in around 900 pounds of hanging weight or 600-650 pounds of finished beef.

SHOPPER'S DELIGHT

Martin Stockyards' new point-of-sale system is powered by Cornerstone Connectivity Wi-Fi. It provides better inventory tracking and a faster shopping experience.

Initially the store was a cashless operation, but the Burlisons and Nanneys have now decided to accept cash. Customers paying in cash will receive a discount to reflect the savings the store sees from avoiding the credit card processing fee. The popular loyalty program, which allows customers to earn points toward an in-store discount, is still in place.

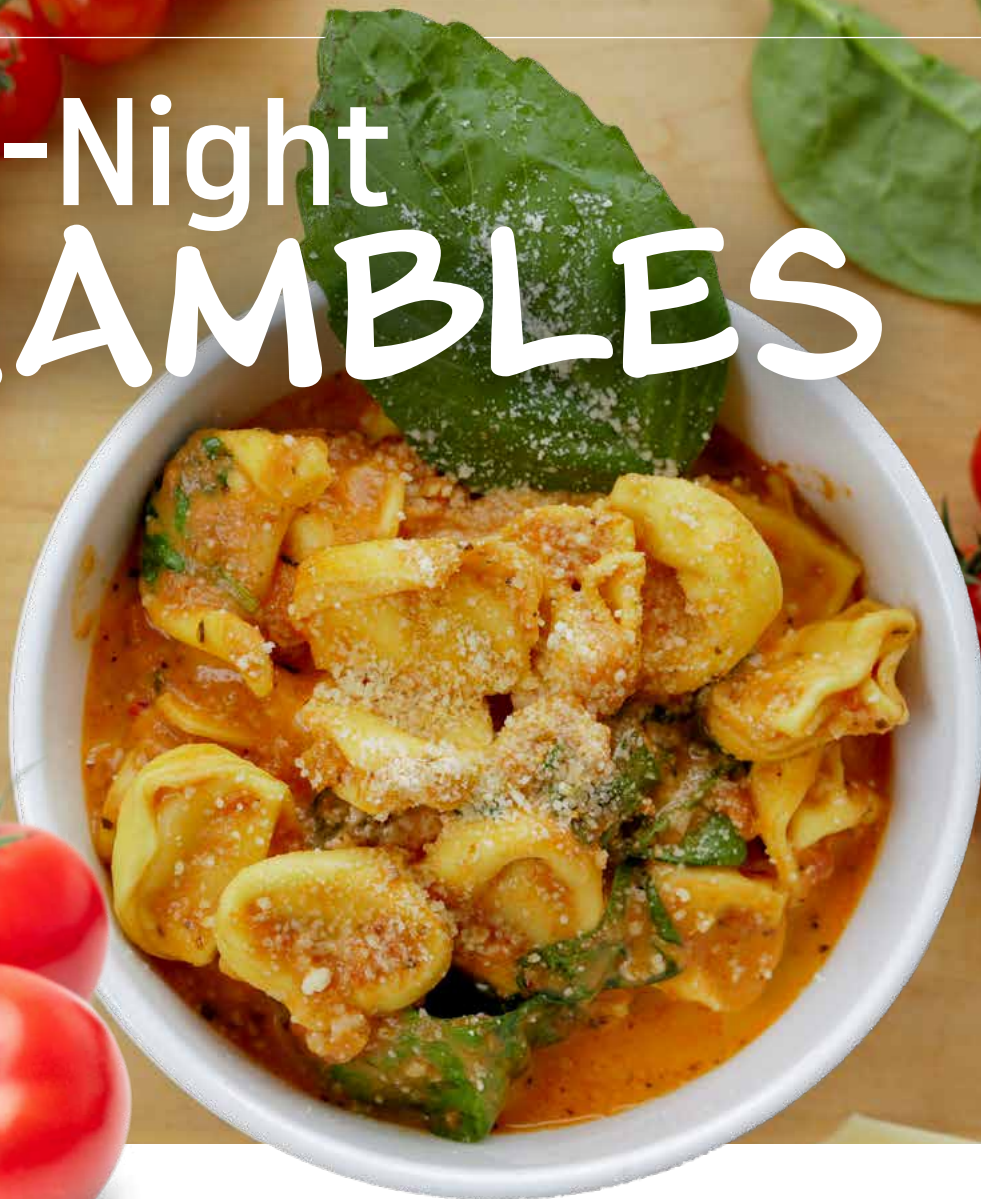
"Martin Stockyards represents a lot of hard work," Jennifer says. "It is early mornings and late nights. It is our commitment to support local families and local farms. Being in Martin is important to us because this is our home and our customers are our neighbors." 



Martin Stockyards opened on Highway 45 South in Martin in March 2025.

School-Night SCRAMBLES

Quick and satisfying recipes for family dinner time



For many families, September means fresh school supplies, the morning rush to get everyone to class on time and, of course, the dreaded question—what’s for dinner?

Between carving out time to cook and navigating pantry options, finding the right answer isn’t always easy. These quick and easy recipes will keep everyone at the table happy, even on a busy school night. 🗨

Photography by
Mark Gilliland

Food Styling by
Rhonda Gilliland

CREAMY TOMATO TORTELLINI WITH SPINACH

- 1 20-ounce package refrigerated cheese tortellini
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 24-ounce jar marinara sauce
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 4 cups fresh spinach
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cook the tortellini according to the package directions. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook the garlic for about 30 seconds until fragrant. Stir in the marinara sauce and heavy cream and bring to a gentle simmer. Add the spinach and cook until wilted. Drain the tortellini and add it to the skillet, tossing until coated in the sauce. Stir in the Parmesan cheese, season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

This recipe offers a nice contrast to the other dishes in the lineup—it’s meatless, family-friendly and has a rich, comforting flavor while still taking less than 30 minutes from start to finish.

TERIYAKI MEATBALL BOWLS

- 1 24- to 26-ounce package frozen fully cooked meatballs
- 1 cup teriyaki sauce
- 3 cups broccoli florets
- 2 cups cooked white or brown rice
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds (optional)

Prepare the rice according to package directions if it is not already cooked. Meanwhile, place the frozen meatballs in a large skillet over medium heat with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water. Cover and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until heated through.

Add the teriyaki sauce and simmer for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring until the meatballs are evenly coated and the sauce has thickened slightly. Steam the broccoli until tender. Divide the rice among serving bowls and top with the teriyaki meatballs and broccoli. Garnish with sliced green onions and sesame seeds, if desired. Serve immediately.



HONEY MUSTARD CHICKEN WITH ROASTED POTATOES AND CARROTS

- 4 boneless chicken thighs
 - 1 pound baby potatoes, halved
 - 4 medium carrots, sliced
 - 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
 - 1 tablespoon honey
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- the Dijon mustard and honey. Toss the potatoes and carrots with olive oil, garlic powder, salt and pepper on a sheet pan. Arrange the chicken thighs among the vegetables and brush them with the honey mustard mixture. Roast for about 30 minutes or until the chicken reaches 165 F and the vegetables are tender. Serve immediately.

Preheat the oven to 425 F. In a small bowl, whisk together



CHEESY BLACK BEAN AND RICE SKILLET

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 small onion, diced
 - 1 bell pepper, diced
 - 2 cans black beans, drained and rinsed
 - 2 cups cooked rice
 - 1 cup salsa
 - 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
 - 1 teaspoon chili powder
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook the onion and bell pepper until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the black beans, rice, salsa, chili powder, salt and pepper. Cook for several minutes until heated through. Sprinkle the cheese over the top, cover the skillet and cook until the cheese is melted. Serve on its own or with tortilla chips.

Local. Reliable. Affordable.

By the GIG

FIRST LINE FREE Promo*

FREE for 1 year

Monthly Price

~~\$29.99~~ **\$19.99**

Premium Data

1 GB

BEST VALUE!

Unlimited

FIRST LINE FREE Promo*

FREE for 1 year

Monthly Price

~~\$39.99~~ **\$29.99**

Premium Data

30 GB

Hotspot

5 GB

Unlimited Max

FIRST LINE FREE Promo*

FREE for 1 year

Monthly Price

~~\$49.99~~ **\$39.99**

Premium Data

50 GB

Hotspot

10 GB

*Restrictions may apply.

877-866-7228

cornerstoneconnectivity.com

Cornerstone Connectivity is an equal opportunity
employer and provider.