THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

February 2022 tnmagazine.org

Healthier Living
One Step at a Time

History for Kids:
Telegraph Taps to Life in Tennessee

State Park Spotlight:
Roan Mountain

Taste of New Orleans
Mardi Gras Gourmet
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Ice and snow can make the drive to Roan Mountain State Park tricky or even treacherous. Remember that its elevation means the weather could be very different at the park compared to other areas of the state. Photograph by Robin Conover
Between the Lines

Show your support

Per Tennessee statute, the state’s standard license plate is redesigned every eight years, assuming that the General Assembly approves funds to do so in its annual budget. The last plate was launched in 2006 with modifications in 2011, 2016 and 2017.

Last year, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee announced that the state would redesign the standard license plate to celebrate our 225th year of statehood. Residents were invited to vote on their favorite design, and more than 300,000 votes were cast. The winning design, which received 42 percent of the vote, was announced in October and made available last month. You may have seen some of the new plates on cars in your community.

While most motorists use the standard plates, it may surprise you to learn that there are more than 175 specialty plates also available in Tennessee. These plates allow you to show your pride in a school, sports team or career; honor one’s military service; or support a cause that matters to you. It costs a little more to get a specialty plate, but the state returns a portion of that extra money to the cause, school or foundation responsible for the plate.

“Money raised through the sale of the Powering Tennessee specialty plates goes to the Tennessee Lineworker Lifeline Fund, a nonprofit foundation established to support lineworkers and their families in the event of a serious injury or fatality while on the job.”

Money raised through the sale of the Powering Tennessee specialty plates goes to the Tennessee Lineworker Lifeline Fund, a nonprofit foundation established to support lineworkers and their families in the event of a serious injury or fatality while on the job. More than $100,000 has already been raised to support this important effort.

Tennessee motorists have lots of options when it comes to license plates: the newly redesigned standard plate or one of the specialty plates. The next time you renew your plate, I encourage you to consider supporting Tennessee’s electric lineworkers with a Powering Tennessee license plate. You can learn more about the plate or how to order your own at poweringtennessee.org.
Finally . . . a better mobility solution than Scooters or Power Chairs.

The Zoomer’s versatile design and 1-touch joystick operation brings mobility and independence to those who need it most.

If you have mobility issues, or know someone who does, then you’ve experienced the difficulties faced by millions of Americans. Simple tasks like getting from the bedroom to the kitchen can become a time-consuming and potentially dangerous ordeal. You may have tried to solve the problem with a power chair or a scooter but neither is ideal. Power chairs are bulky and look like a medical device. Scooters are either unstable or hard to maneuver. Now, there’s a better alternative . . . the Zoomer.

My Zoomer is a delight to ride! It has increased my mobility in my apartment, my opportunities to enjoy the-out-of-doors, and enabled me to visit the homes of my children for longer periods of time. The various speeds of it match my need for safety, it is easy to turn, and I am most pleased with the freedom of movement it gives me.

Sincerely, A. Macon, Williamsburg, VA

After just one trip around your home in the Zoomer, you’ll marvel at how easy it is to navigate. It is designed to maneuver in tight spaces like doorways, between furniture, and around corners. It can go over thresholds and works great on any kind of floor or carpet. It’s not bulky or cumbersome, so it can roll right up to a table or desk – there’s no need to transfer to a chair. Its sturdy yet lightweight aluminum frame makes it durable and comfortable. It’s dual motors power it at up to 3.7 miles per hour and its automatic electromagnetic brakes stop on a dime. The rechargeable battery powers it for up to 8 miles on a single charge. Plus, it’s exclusive foldable design enables you to transport it easily and even store it in a closet or under a bed when it’s not in use.

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Resilience

Rather than use Webster’s definition of “resilience,” I’ll relate a phrase used by the late Rev. Robert H. Schuller. In one of his books, Dr. Schuller writes about his upbringing in rural Iowa. His father was a farmer, and their farm was wracked by hardship, almost driving his father into ruin.

Drought caused his crops to fail, and a tornado destroyed his entire farm. Schuller, in a motivational speech years later to 3,500 businessmen in a ballroom at an upscale hotel, relates his youth growing up on the farm: “Do you want to hear about my experience with poverty? Let me tell you about poverty. I was so poor, we had to use corn cobs to heat our homes to keep from freezing to death in the subzero winters. We used corn cobs because we could not afford coal. Those were tough times.”

He would immortalize that story into this mantra: “Tough times never last. Tough people do.”

We use the word “resilience” to talk about the electric grid. Over the years, technology has improved our ability to analyze the impact of weather on the poles and wires that provide you with comfort. The electric grid is designed to withstand, to some extent, the varying types of weather that affect a region.

Designs have improved even as weather intensity has increased. We’ve had some tough weather over the past few months: tornadoes, ice and heavy snowfalls. Throughout the storms, we have fixed the things that were broken and done what we are here to do: keep the lights on.

Only a few weeks into 2022, we’ve seen tornadoes and record snowfall and ice in several parts of the country — even Tennessee. As I draft this column, we are expecting even more record-setting snowfall across the Southeast.

With the damage we’ve faced, many poles have been snapped. But there is one thing that hasn’t broken: the dedication of the men and women who keep the lights on. It hasn’t been without challenges. You have likely heard the words “supply chain issues” over the past year. It’s a fact, not an excuse. During the pandemic, normal supply and demand forces created problems in almost every industry. With materials scarce and the workforce unstable, we’ve experienced shortages of transformers and other materials needed to maintain the flow of power to your home. The huge number of large, destructive weather events has also created additional demands. When you see towns and cities with lines and poles down, that means new ones must be procured from somewhere.

We’ve also had our own shortages of employees. Recently, when snowstorms caused massive damage in Virginia, Tennessee co-ops sent crews to assist with recovery through our mutual aid programs. However, some co-ops were not able to assist because they had too many employees unable to work due to COVID infections. We’re seeing that throughout the nation; it has hindered our response.

Despite the large number of challenges, we’re still out there, putting things back together. No matter what Mother Nature can dish out, we are going to fix it.

Dr. Schuller’s father was tough enough to start from scratch even though he was in his 60s. He outlasted the tough times and was successful.

Our electric utility employees, no matter how bad the damage or how severe the weather, will keep the lights on. Tough times never last; tough people do.
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World famous
I saw an article by Tammy Algood in our local newspaper, The Daytona Beach News-Journal, about pimentos and especially pimento cheese, which reminded me of a funny thing I would like to share with her. I am originally from Georgia, and EVERYBODY makes pimento cheese spread for crackers and pimento cheese-stuffed celery as well as pimento cheese sandwiches. I have many snowbird friends from “up north,” and they all rave about my pimento cheese and want the “recipe.” So now, we call it my world famous pimento cheese! If possible, please see that Ms. Algood gets this note. Thank you!
Janis Toles
Port Orange, Florida

Looking forward to more magazines
Hello, Ms. Conover,

We receive the magazine as members of Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation, and I read the December issue cover-to-cover. Kudos to you and your team for producing a first-rate publication that clearly works to be as inclusive of your market segments as possible. The emphasis on efforts being made to meet the needs of area residents who are food insecure, the range of articles that inform readers about the organizations that provide us with power, the snippets of regional history and culture, the how-to articles, the poetry and art showcase from young and older readers — I enjoyed it all.

Thank you. I look forward to reading the next issue!

Sincerely,
Janell Walden Agyeman
Cherokee County, North Carolina

Best of Tennessee
I would like to subscribe to your magazine if I could get the January 2022 issue that gives the 2021 Best of Tennessee list. Thank you.
Elaine Sturgill
Kingsport

Editor’s response:
We would be happy to mail you a copy of the January edition. You can also find the Best of Tennessee winners and runners-up in each category on our website at tnmagazine.org.

New category for Best of Tennessee
Hello,
I’d like to see an additional category for the annual “Best Of” list. Please add a category for healthy eating. City Silo in Memphis and The Dotted Lime in Columbia should have an opportunity to be recognized.
Thank you!
Alana Blackstone
Memphis

Editor’s response:
Thank you for the suggestion. We may incorporate that category in 2022.

Subscriptions
We have moved, but I would like to continue receiving the magazine. Can I pay for a subscription?
Melissa Dendy
Middle Tennessee Electric

Editor’s response:
The Tennessee Magazine is distributed through Tennessee’s electric cooperatives. The publication schedule varies by co-op as to whether members receive it monthly, bimonthly or quarterly.

If you are a member of an electric cooperative and are not receiving the magazine, please check with your local cooperative office to get back on the list. If you are not a member of an electric cooperative in Tennessee, you can purchase a subscription. Please visit our shop on the tnmagazine.org website.

Time zones
I always enjoy Bill Carey’s Tennessee history lesson. I especially liked this month’s story, “Time Zoning” (December 2021). I’m wondering when the rest of the world adopted time zones — but I guess that’s not Tennessee history.

Holly Couch
Middle Tennessee Electric

Editor’s response:
I’m guessing the answer is more complicated than Tennessee’s adoption of time zones. You may find some of the answers on an informative post found with a quick Google search for “International Time Zones” on Wikipedia.

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For questions or concerns about specific departments, please contact staff members listed below. To enter Almanac events or our contests, including Poetry and Shutterbug, please do so via our website at tnmagazine.org.

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Few people would deny that the past two years of Americans facing COVID-19 have been life-changing. Bringing uncertainty about finances, personal relationships and work lives, the pandemic will most likely have long-lasting effects many people would never have anticipated.

Working from home creates isolation and loneliness, families and friends are restricting their social interaction, and people are fearful for their own safety in a world where mask-wearing, vaccinations and testing have become routine. Stress has become a byproduct of the world of COVID-19 and its aftermath to get to a new normal.

“In some ways, we have adjusted to life during the pandemic — so much so that all the stress we face can start to feel normal, but the challenges we face are anything but,” says Cortland Dahl, Ph.D., chief contemplative officer at Healthy Minds Innovations and scientist at the Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “Research is showing that the effects of the pandemic on our mental health are much more far-reaching than we first thought.”

Those effects can show in physical manifestations, including diminished immunity and accelerated aging. They may also cause changes in mental health, swaying a sense of emotional well-being.

“Remember that it’s totally natural to feel the struggle to make it through the day, and these feelings are predictable responses,” Dahl says. “It’s important to keep in mind that you’re not alone in these challenging times.”

Making lifestyle changes to cope throughout the pandemic requires self-examination, contemplation and a fresh approach to managing time, family and pressures that seem to be more present than ever before.

“Living with this level of long-term stress, anxiety and lack of enjoyment can cause health problems such as heart disease, obesity, cognitive decline and depression,” says Katie Sandler, The Impact Coach, based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. “Recognizing that chronic stress can negatively affect physical and mental health is the first step toward achieving better well-being. And there are some very doable techniques to make it through these challenging times.”

Acknowledging the pandemic’s effects

As the world has dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, a new set of fears and challenges has emerged — from individuals being afraid to leave their homes to adapting behaviors related to socializing and carrying on the activities of daily life in a new and more comfortable way.

“During the pandemic, people began to isolate themselves and change their social behaviors, in effect cutting themselves off from the very networks that had previously helped them cope,” Dahl says. “Being told that
COVID-19 could spread through contact with other people meant that all of a sudden, people didn’t go shopping or to community events, and they stopped inviting friends to their homes or venturing out to visit family. It became a very real threat to continuing the supportive in-person socializing that so often serves as an outlet for dealing with frustrations, fears and doubts.”

Turning to online communication removed the all-important personal contact, the chance to interact on a more natural level. It became a way to seemingly connect without having to invest emotion or intimacy.

“For close to two years, people have compensated by developing a ‘new normal’ to stay in touch with family, friends and work associates,” Dahl says. “In effect, these new coping behaviors have removed genuine social interaction and support and replaced it with faces on a computer or phone screen.”

The key, he says, is to realize that physical distance between people doesn’t mean social distance.

“You can feel support from others without being in the same room,” he says. “For instance, you can use a technique we call ‘appreciative meditation’ to connect with someone by recalling their positive qualities. Role-play in your mind to bring back a moment when this person was kind to you and re-create those feelings of support and compassion.”

He says that these reflective moments can help you feel closer to the person and might even trigger an action to establish a meaningful connection such as a telephone call or sending a message of gratitude.

“Connecting with people will be crucial to getting back to normal,” Sandler says. “Having lunch with a friend, inviting a few people over to your home or re-engaging with a hobby or social organization will help. It most likely will not be exactly the way it was before the pandemic, but it’s a strong first step to resuming your life as you remember it.”

**Moving toward your new normal**

Both Sandler and Dahl say that understanding the connections between stress and physical or mental wellness is the first step toward adapting to the new normal, and Sandler emphasizes that practicing mindfulness is crucial to making significant changes.

“Mindfulness is synonymous with being fully present and paying attention to what is happening in the moment,”
A pneumonic or acronym can be an easy way to remember a concept. Take WWS, for instance. It stands for “walk, water and sleep,” and fitness experts — including Natasha Weddle, founder of The New Beginnings Center in Nashville — help their clients add these three vital health components into their everyday lives.

“Even if you’re not trying to run a marathon or become a competitive athlete, WWS is a good practice to get into,” says the former college basketball player. “When you add in Triple Sevens, you have a formula for better health no matter what your fitness level.”

Developed by fitness company Strength Matters, the formula is straightforward:

**Walk**
Seven days a week, take 7,000 steps a day.

**Water**
Seven days a week, drink seven glasses a day.

**Sleep**
Seven days a week, sleep seven hours a day.

She recommends beginning each of this program’s three components gradually. “If you’re not walking regularly as exercise, begin with 10 minutes, and increase your time 3 to 5 minutes each week,” she says. “The same goes with adding more hydration to your diet. If you’re not consuming plain water but instead are drinking caffeine or soda, add one 8-ounce glass each day for a week or so, and omit one nonwater beverage. Continue to increase your water consumption as you reduce your other beverages over several months to work up to seven glasses a day.”

Weddle suggests taking on the WWS/Triple Sevens gradually and keeping a log or notes on your calendar to keep up.

“As for sleep, set a schedule that allows for at least seven hours of sleep each night,” she says. “Calculate backward from your wake-up time, and add time for falling asleep so you can target getting seven hours of sleep each night. This will help with your overall quality of sleep and improve your focus during the day.”

she says. “Being mindful can literally become a hard break from spiraling stress to allow you to focus on the here and now, identify feelings and increase awareness of the specific challenges at hand.”

Her other byword is “intention,” consciously deciding on a plan forward.

“First, set the intention to make your life less hectic, to clear the way to formulate your thoughts, plans and goals,” she says. “Decide to reduce your stress — set the intention to do so — then chart a path to help you make the necessary changes to achieve that goal. You will have to put some work into it, but what you get back will be rewarding.”

Dahl also supports embracing a new perspective to break the cycle of stress, becoming more cognizant of the need to make a long-lasting transformation to better handle stress.

“By recognizing that stress — in fact any kind of change — can not only affect your mental well-being but your physical health as well, you can begin to adapt behaviors that will help you through these changeable times,” says Sandler. “Admittedly, it may be difficult to understand exactly how your life has changed, but you can see the indicators: increased fatigue, burn out, foggy brain and a sense of feeling disconnected or alone. Although you’re tired, you’re not falling asleep easily or, worse yet, you’re tossing and turning all night.”

Dahl’s program at Healthy Minds Innovations has done extensive research on how meditation can positively influence people’s ability to cope with change and break the cycle of stress. Based on meditation principles, the technique helps people unplug and focus on prioritizing their own well-being.

“The good news is that we can learn simple skills to manage our stress and even to learn and grow from adversity,” Dahl says. “Stress can be overwhelming at times, but the research shows that even five minutes a day of a simple practice like meditation can have a large impact on our lives and help us respond to stress in a healthy way.”

**About the author**
Journalist Pamela Keene writes for more than a dozen publications across the country, specializing in travel, lifestyle, features and gardening. Based in Atlanta, she is a photographer and an avid lifelong gardener.
Each person only has 24 hours in a day. It’s easy to fill time with demands of others and responsibilities to family, work or friends, but when it comes down to it, life’s busyness and stress could be holding you back. Technology adds to the equation, replacing real-time human interactions with quick, sometimes terse, messages. By taking steps to find time to relax and unplug, you’re taking the first step to better care for others and opening the door to a newfound happiness.

“The constant presence of computers, laptops, smartphones, instant-messaging, texts and emails can be all-consuming and can provide an excuse for being too busy to be human,” says Cortland Dahl, chief contemplative officer at Healthy Minds Innovations and scientist at the Center for Healthy Minds.

“People are getting lost in doing or constantly being busy as a way to measure their success,” says Katie Sandler, The Impact Coach. “Chilling out, just taking a break, goes against our programming to be going nonstop to prove their value.”

Sandler offers her clients ways to unplug. “Be present in the here and now, and be aware of your mood and surroundings,” she says. “If you feel stressed, it’s time for a break to slow down; just take a walk or sit quietly. It will be difficult at first, but the more you practice, the better you’ll feel.”

Unplugging from technology will create time to focus, identify the stressors and take a positive action.

“I call this process ‘setting the intention,’ committing to breaking the cycle of stress by taking time to formulate your thoughts and decide what you want the outcome to be,” she says. “You have the control, but you must set the intention to make the change happen.”

Sandler’s word for making time for yourself is to “steal” it. “Literally grab that time for you, which will mean taking it away from someone or something else,” she says. “At first, when you schedule that 10 minutes on Tuesdays and Fridays, you may not keep the appointments. But you’ll see it on your calendar as a reminder that you made a decision. The following week, you may switch the days or only make one of those appointments, but you’ll get closer to giving yourself this time.

“After a while, it will become a habit, and you’ll schedule other obligations around your ‘me time.’ You’ll be surprised how much better you will feel once you’ve recognized that you are important and deserve your own time each day.”

When technology can help

Technology has its benefits, particularly in accessing positive tools. Healthy Minds Innovations has researched the effects of unplugging on people’s moods and has developed a free app to lead participants through practice sessions and meditations that can help reduce stress, increase focus and put unplugging into practice.

Based on practicing various types of meditation, the app walks participants through practical ways to learn connectivity with other people, turn down the noise of life’s demands and learn to periodically unplug — except for the audio of the app.

Most of the sessions are brief, 10 to 15 minutes, and can be accomplished anywhere — at work, at home or even on the go, during a short walk or simple chore. Dahl recommends tapping into the app daily.

“Our studies have shown that when people prioritize their own well-being, they’re happier,” Dahl says. “The world will never stop giving you things to do. It’s up to you to create time to recharge your battery, take a step back or do nothing. It will revitalize you. Just give yourself permission to let go.”

Relax: Take a break from technology and outside demands
The average American spends between six and nine hours each workday sitting at a desk, sometimes without a break. Add online and in-person meetings, lunch at his or her desk and time in the car to get to work, and that figure grows to 10 or more hours. Once at home, the sedentary lifestyle continues with dinner, watching television and surfing the web, bringing nonactive hours closer to 12 to 14.

“People are moving less and sitting more,” says Terry Browning, president and CEO of MOSSA, a provider of group fitness workouts and movement programs to health clubs and to individuals through “MOSSA On Demand.” “In the past three decades, statistics show that people have become less active, more overweight and less healthy than ever before.”

“The term ‘sitting disease’ is now being used by the scientific community to refer to the metabolic syndrome and ill effects associated with an overly sedentary lifestyle,” he says. “All this sitting has created a generation of people with back and hip issues, joint stiffness and muscle soreness. We would say their movement health is really suffering, and this results in the country spending billions in medical costs annually to keep people well.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that adults do at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week.

“The reality is that for most people, this number seems unattainable,” he says. “However, this amount of activity can be a reality if people start slowly and build up their movement and activity levels over time.”

Getting active doesn’t mean going out on Day 1 and running a marathon. In fact, activity can be as simple as parking the car farther from the grocery store or getting off the bus one stop earlier. Walk around the neighborhood or a nearby park. Or instead of fast-forwarding through commercials when you’re watching television, get up and walk around your house.

“For most people, any type of movement can help,” he says. “From standing up and stretching for five minutes every 45 minutes to walking around while you’re on the telephone, you can help prevent your muscles and joints from becoming too stiff and even safely increase your heart rate to get your blood flowing.”

Individualize your movement routine. Some people prefer group activities while others do better with one or two friends or on their own.

“Consider joining a gym, health club or YMCA and taking a group fitness workout a couple of times a week,” Browning says. “Group fitness using music has been proven to be one of the most effective methods of not only starting to move but being able to keep moving. The dynamic of having an instructor and other people in the room provides motivation. And having a specific schedule of classes will help build a routine and consistency each week.”

Consider finding an activity-buddy to take regular walks together at a local park or at a mall. “It’s a good way to spend social time that’s not focused on a food-related activity while adding movement to your life,” he says.

Regular movement and activity can also be a mood elevator and stress reliever.

“Getting outside in the fresh air can do wonders for your outlook,” he says. “Purchase a good set of headphones to listen to your favorite tunes to keep you going. Our research has showed that music is a prime motivator for getting people to move more. The tempo can help you keep up the pace, and people who use music as part of their movement or fitness routine are more likely to continue their program.”
Browning recommends that before beginning any increased physical activity, check with your physician. “That way you’ll be alerted to any potential health problems and can feel confident to safely begin moving and exercising.”

Being consistent will improve fitness, so start with an easy schedule of two to three times a week.

“Set realistic goals, and pace yourself,” he says. “Whatever you do, know that you’re taking the first step in leading a healthier life. The first moves may be the hardest, but once you’ve found an activity you enjoy, you’ll have set the pace for a healthier life, no matter your age or ability.”
How well are you sleeping? Do you toss and turn? Does it take a long time to fall asleep? Throughout the day, do you feel drowsy? In what ways is your quantity or quality of sleep affecting your overall health?

“Sleep is vital to good health and wellness, no matter your age,” says Raj Dasgupta, MD, spokesperson for the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. “When you think about it, people spend one-third of their lives sleeping. If you live to age 90, that’s 30 years of sleep.”

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends at least seven hours of sleep for adults. However, just being in bed, tossing and turning, doesn’t mean your sleep is effective in helping your organs, brain and body rejuvenate.

“As physicians, we measure the effectiveness of sleep by both quantity and quality,” says Dr. Dasgupta. “If you’re not getting the right amount of sleep to meet your individual needs and your quality of sleep is poor — meaning your mind and body are not going to the deeper stages of sleep or REM sleep — you are at higher risk for such ailments as heart disease, diabetes and obesity. It may sound easy to aim for good sleep, but in reality, a number of factors can make it harder than you think.”

Dasgupta says that society has conditioned people to prioritize productivity above sleep.

“Phrases like, ‘The early bird gets the worm,’ or, ‘Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise,’ have been around long enough that people accept them as fact,” he says. “However, we are finding that more and more people are getting less sleep in their quests to be more productive or force more activity into their days.”

Rest: A good night’s sleep can improve your health

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that adults sleep seven or more hours per night on a regular basis to promote optimum health.

However, a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that more than 70 million U.S. adults reported sleeping six hours or less.

“The percentage of Americans sleeping six hours or less has increased more than 30 percent since 1985,” he says. “Some of these people have various sleep-wake disorders such as chronic insomnia, obstructive sleep apnea or restless legs syndrome, and many of these conditions go undiagnosed or misdiagnosed.”

Dasgupta says that people having difficulty initiating sleep, maintaining sleep or feeling unrefreshed despite having adequate time to sleep for more than three times a week over three months should strongly consider talking with their physicians. Keeping a log or journal of sleep and daytime symptoms can assist with identifying possible causes.

The pandemic has also resulted in quantifiable issues regarding sleep.

A recent study by the American Association of Sleep Medicine found that more than half of Americans reported
an increase in sleep issues since the pandemic, sometimes called “COVID-somnia.” The group of 2,006 adults reported they were having difficulty falling or staying asleep, sleeping less, experiencing worse quality sleep and having more disturbing dreams.

“Sleep boosts the immune system and strengthens the effectiveness of vaccinations, so don’t ignore persistent sleep problems,” says Dasgupta. “Talk to your medical provider if you’re struggling to sleep well on a regular basis.”

If you’re having difficulty with daytime fatigue, concentration and memory, there could be many causes.

“One of the first things we as physicians look for is a diminished quantity of sleep,” he says. “If that’s the case, we recommend establishing a regular bedtime routine and practicing good sleep hygiene.”

Setting and sticking to a regular bedtime routine includes managing the noise, light levels and temperature of your bedroom, which can help improve your sleep.

“Be mindful of your activities a couple of hours before your bedtime,” he says. “Eating a large meal and then going to bed less than two hours later, using a laptop computer, playing on your smartphone or e-reader in bed within 30 minutes of bedtime or using the noise of the television to help you fall asleep can reduce the effectiveness of your sleep.

“Try to remove the electronics from your bedroom. If you have to watch television, go to another room in the house if possible. Your bedroom should be set up and dedicated to getting a good night’s sleep.”

He also suggests setting a regular wake-up and bedtime each day, trying your hardest to be consistent on weekends, holidays and vacations, which can be difficult.

“Set your alarm in the morning, and don’t hit that snooze button,” Dasgupta encourages. “Try your best to get out of bed when your alarm goes off, and try to get outside, especially if the weather is good and there is a lot of sunshine in the morning. It’s not surprising that many individuals report that their sleep needs are not being met during the week. While you may try to make up for that lack of sleep on days off and weekends, this is not a sustainable strategy to consistently and safely make up for that sleep debt you may have accumulated every week.”

“Healthy sleep is as important as proper nutrition and regular exercise for our health and well-being,” says Dr. Dasgupta. “And, since most of us are sleeping about 30 percent of our lives, why not prioritize these sleeping hours to maximize all their benefits?”

Having a hard time getting the rest you need? Here are tips from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for improving sleep:

• Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Get up at the same time every day, even on weekends or during vacations.
• Set a bedtime that is early enough for you to get at least seven hours of sleep.
• Don’t go to bed unless you are sleepy.
• If you don’t fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed.
• Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
• Use your bed only for sleep and sex.
• Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
• Limit exposure to bright light in the evenings.
• Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
• Don’t eat a large meal before bedtime. If you are hungry at night, eat a light, healthy snack.
• Exercise regularly, and maintain a healthy diet.
• Avoid consuming caffeine in the late afternoon or evening.
• Avoid consuming alcohol before bedtime.
• Reduce your fluid intake before bedtime.
On Monday, March 6, 1848, people walked around Nashville, excitedly blurting out the same sentence. “Did you hear that the Brittainia arrived at Boston?” they said to each other.

It was a weird greeting. After all, no one in Tennessee probably cared about the steamship Brittainia. The important thing was that the Brittainia had arrived in Boston only two days earlier. The fact that the news was new is what made people so excited.

The news of the Brittainia was the first information ever transmitted to Nashville by telegraph — the first news ever received in Tennessee that had not come by foot, horse or boat. Before that day, it could take as long as three weeks for news to get from New York or Washington, D.C., to Nashville.

To understand the telegraph, you have to go back to another steamship voyage 16 years earlier. On a trip from Great Britain to New York in 1832, a painter named Samuel Morse and a doctor named Charles Thomas Jackson had several long talks about electricity.

People had known about electricity for years; Benjamin Franklin had conducted experiments with it 80 years earlier. But no one had found a way to use it. During their long talks, Morse and Jackson discussed the idea that if an electrical current could be created, then broken, then created and broken again and again in a series of patterns, it could be used for long-distance communication.

Morse was so excited when he got to New York that he started doing experiments with electricity. But he wasn’t the only man working on it. Other scientists were already trying to find on a way to use electricity to communicate over long distances, which is why we can’t really call Morse the “inventor” of the telegraph (it’s more complicated than that). What Morse eventually did with the help of Leonard Gale and Alfred Vail was come up with a series of circuits and relays that allowed the telegraph to send messages long distances.

On Jan. 6, 1838, Morse and Vail demonstrated their invention by sending a message along 2 miles of electric wire at the Speedwell Ironworks in Morris-town, New Jersey.

You might think that this demonstration would have gotten everyone’s attention, but it didn’t. A message sent along a 2-mile-long wire was one thing, but people still didn’t think you could send a message 20 or 30 miles. To demonstrate that, Morse needed a lot of money, which he didn’t have. He also needed help from the government.

You see, back then, you couldn’t just run 20 miles of wire from one place to another, unless you owned a 20-mile-long strip of land. But the federal government didn’t pay for or even allow this sort of thing in 1838. There was nothing in the Constitution about a person having the right to string telegraph lines all over the place, which is why members of Congress scratched their heads when Morse asked them to help him.

Finally, in 1843, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 89 to 80 to allocate $30,000 and give Morse the legal right to string a telegraph line a long distance. Morris and his friends got to work, laying a telegraph line along the way from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore. It wasn’t easy. After all, copper wires were hard to come by, and 38 miles of copper wire, well, didn’t exist. A company had to be hired to make the wire, long poles had to be purchased to hold the wire, and men had to be paid to stick the poles in the ground and string the wire to the top of them. This took time and patience, and Morse’s mood was up one minute, down the next. “He changes often than the
wind,” Vail said. “Now he is elated up to the skies, then he
is down in the mud.”

On May 25, 1844, a group of businessmen and elected
officials gathered around a funny-looking electronic device
in the Capitol building in Washington while another group
of men gathered around another funny-looking electronic
device at a railroad office in Baltimore. Morse, at one end,
typed a series of dots and dashes into a machine that would
have looked, to us, like a cross between a stapler and a
small cash register. Vail, 40 miles away and on the other
end the wire, translated the dots and dashes into a four-
word message.

The dots and dashes came one at a time, and Vail trans-
lated them using the code that he and Morse had come up
with. The first letter was “W.” The second was “H.” The third
was “A.” And so on and so forth.

Vail transcribed the mes-
sage one letter at a time. It
spelled out the words, “What
hath God wrought” — a Bible
verse (Numbers 23:23) that
a girl had chosen for Morse.

The men standing around Vail
at the railroad office in Balti-
tmore were amazed. “Send
him something in return!” they
probably said. “No, no … send
him a question! See if he can
respond to a question.”

Newspaper reporters real-
ized the implications of what
Morse and Vail had done.
“Time and space have been
completely annihilated,” said
the Baltimore Sun.

This display at the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore illustrates the historic telegraph message sent from Washington, D.C., to a B&O Railroad office on May 24, 1844.

Morse now had the
world’s attention and as many
investors as he needed. He
and his partners formed a
business called the Magnetic
Telegraph Company to build
telegraph lines to New York
City; Philadelphia; Boston;
Buffalo, New York; and other
large cities. Morse would
also sign an agreement with a
man named Henry O’Reilly,
who started another business
called the Atlantic & Ohio
Telegraph Company. It was
this company — the Atlantic
& Ohio — that extended
telegraph lines to Cincinnati,
Ohio; Louisville, Kentucky; and Nashville.

The lines were installed at the rate of about 10 miles
a day through Kentucky, heading south from Louisville.
O’Reilly and his crew showed up in Nashville on or about
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 1848, sticking poles in the ground and
attaching wire to the top of them as fast as they could. It
took a few days to get the apparatus working.

So on March 7, 1848, the Nashville Daily Union report-
ed that the steamboat Britannia had arrived in Boston — a
bit of news that no one cared about but everyone talked
about. Since that date, news has made its way instantly
into Tennessee — via telegraph, later by telephone, later
by television and later by internet.

Finally, a postscript about Morse and O’Reilly: By the
time the telegraph arrived
in Nashville, the partner-
ship between the two men
had become a rivalry and a
lawsuit. That case (O’Reil-
ly v. Morse) made it all the
way to the U.S. Supreme
Court.

In January 1854,
the high court ruled in
Morse’s favor, causing
the collapse of O’Reilly’s
business empire. When
O’Reilly died in 1886,
newspapers in Tennessee
made a small mention of
it, reporting that he had
been a prominent citizen
of Rochester, New York.
But no one pointed out
that it was O’Reilly who
had brought the telegraph
to Tennessee.

This article in the March 7, 1848, issue of the Nashville Daily Union announces that the city has an operating telegraph.
Feb. 21 is deadline for CEMC youth programs

Students interested in submitting short stories for the Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest, applying for the Senior Scholarship Program or entering the Calendar Art Contest: Mark your calendars for Monday, Feb. 21, which is the deadline for each of Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation’s youth programs.

Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest

The Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest is open to high school juniors within CEMC’s service area. To enter, students are required to write short stories explaining how electric co-ops are “Building a Brighter Tennessee” through investments in energy, education, broadband, economic development and more. Each writer of the top 12 entries will win an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Additional details about the 2022 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest can be found at youthtour.tnelectric.org.

Senior Scholarship Program

CEMC’s Senior Scholarship Program will help graduating seniors pay for college by awarding 12 scholarships of $1,000 each to qualifying students. Each interested student must submit a completed application, including two letters of reference and an original essay of at least 300 words describing what the student most looks forward to about attending college and how a scholarship, in terms of financial assistance, will help in completing his or her education. Applicants must have also attained a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade-point average, enroll or plan to enroll as a full-time student at an accredited Tennessee college (Murray State and Western Kentucky universities are included) and be a graduating senior whose parents or guardians are members of CEMC and receive electric service from CEMC at his or her primary residence. Applications are available online at cemc.org.

2023 CEMC Calendar Art Contest

The 2023 Calendar Art Contest is open to students in grades kindergarten through 12 who live within CEMC’s service area. Winning entries will receive cash prizes and be featured in CEMC’s 2023 calendar.

Entries will be accepted through participating schools, and each grade has been assigned a calendar month to illustrate: January, kindergarten; February, first; March, second; April, third; May, fourth; June, fifth; July, sixth; August, seventh; September, eighth; October, ninth; November, 10th; and December, 11th. Seniors will design the cover.

For additional information about any of CEMC’s youth programs, contact Susie Yonkers, community relations coordinator, at 800-987-2362, or by email at syonkers@cemc.org.
Project Help: neighbors helping neighbors

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation, in cooperation with local energy assistance agencies, offers a program in which members who choose to participate can donate $1 or more each month to help provide some relief to individuals who are struggling to pay their utility bills.

The program, Project Help, allows members to contribute an additional $1 on their electric bills each month to help pay the utility bills of the elderly, disabled and/or those who are not economically self-sufficient. Project Help is a voluntary program. All money collected from Project Help goes to energy assistance agencies in our communities, which determine how these special funds are distributed.

If you would like to contribute to Project Help, you can do so by marking the box on your bill stub and completing the Project Help section on the back of your bill or by contacting CEMC at 1-800-987-2362.

By donating to Project Help, you can help provide some relief to individuals who are struggling to pay their utility bills. A dollar a month can truly make a difference.

CEMC’s ‘Trees of Giving’ spread joy to children in foster care

This past December, the lobbies of Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation’s business offices were decorated with special Christmas trees known as the “Trees of Giving.” Each year, CEMC employees and members fill the trees with gifts for those in need. This year, CEMC partnered with YAIPak Outreach to collect items for YAIPak’s Project Foster Hope. Project Foster Hope helps local children and foster families in emergency situations by providing Boxes of Joy, which include new clothing, toiletries, toys and other items meant to provide a bit of comfort to children facing trauma in our communities.

Springfield District employees pose with items donated to decorate their “Tree of Giving.” All items collected in all of CEMC’s districts were delivered to YAIPak Outreach to benefit the organization’s Project Foster Hope program.
Shine a light on home security

By Paul Wesslund

Lighting up your yard will keep the burglars away, right? That’s mostly true, but like a lot of things in life, it’s not that simple. A brightly lit yard could make it easier for the bad guys to see during a break-in.

From street lights to porch lights, studies show that better outdoor lighting reduces crime. But those same reports say that security lighting works best as part of a plan that takes into account what crooks look for.

The basic advice from law enforcement, insurance companies and home security system vendors is, don’t just flip on the yard light before bed. In fact, you may want to turn it off before turning in.

The goal is to make it look like people are home. Turning lights on and off gives your home that lived-in look. And if you’re not there, well, there’s an app for that.

Here are six tips to electrify your outdoor lighting tech and increase the security of your home:

1. **Think like a burglar.** Intruders tend to enter a home through a door, and they’d rather you not be home, so they watch for signs that people are at work. That’s why most burglaries happen in the day and why leaving your lights on all day and night or when you’re on vacation can be an advertisement that no one’s home. Do keep the yard lit while you’re up and around to show normal activity — turning off the porch light at bedtime can be a sign to a potential intruder that someone is in the house. Pay attention to spots that could cover up a break-in — keep trees and bushes trimmed.

2. **Light for the right reasons.** Are you trying to light a walkway for guests or keep intruders away from an entrance? Place lights so they achieve your objective. And safety isn’t just about reducing crime. A well-lit outdoor space can also prevent trips, falls and other accidents.

3. **Enlist technology.** Electronic timers and lights that turn on when they sense motion can give the impression that someone’s home and can light the sidewalk when you return from an outing without leaving the lights on all the time. Increasingly, lights and fixtures can be linked to a smartphone so you can turn them on and off while you’re out and about.

4. **Weigh the pros and cons of a home security system.** Security cameras, alarm systems and protection services offer a wide range of conveniences, including fire protection or checking whether your pets hop onto the dining table when you leave. A security camera can also help identify someone stealing a package delivered to your doorstep. They can be expensive, so do your research carefully, and know what you’re trying to achieve.

5. **Protect yourself from internet hackers.** Internet-connected devices can be hacked by digital-savvy troublemakers. Whether it’s a security camera or a smart lightbulb, they offer cyber crooks a way into your personal information. The basic internet security advice is to have strong passwords.
and change them regularly, especially on your home’s central router. Keep software updated on your devices — those updates often add the newest cyber protections. Even though it’s tempting, don’t use social media to tell the world you’re on vacation. Consider sharing your travel photos after you get back.

6. Go old school. Besides electricity and technology, use people to reduce crime. Invite a police officer to give a safety briefing at a neighborhood meeting. Police can describe the best steps for your area. And of all the crime-reducing tips, experts say the best one is to get to know your neighbors, who can recognize and report any out-of-the-ordinary activity.

Lighting the path to safety, it turns out, involves making a plan, wise use of technology and a little help from your friends.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.

From street lights to porch lights, studies show that better outdoor lighting reduces crime. Photo credit: Ring
Are portable space heaters efficient for my home?

By Abby Berry

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But, unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat an entire home, which can really take a toll on energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home’s efficiency and energy needs.

If you’re using a space heater to compensate for problems like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you’re on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs $1 to $1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you’re cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater could work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you’re occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter’s Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

We know it’s cold out there, but remember that in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.

If you’re looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, contact the energy professionals at Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation by phone at 800-987-2362, or visit us online at ceme.org. We’re here to help you manage your energy use.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.
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Energy-saving, budget-friendly tips

Q: I don’t have a big budget for energy-efficiency upgrades. Can you share any budget-friendly energy-saving tips?

A: You don’t need a lot of money to save on your energy bills. I have some suggestions that are low-cost, simple adjustments you can make in your home — whether you rent or own.

We all want to afford being comfortable in our homes. If you’re having trouble paying your energy bills, you are not alone. The U.S. Energy Information Administration reports that one in three households face challenges meeting their energy needs.

Decreasing monthly bills and being more efficient at home are things we all should practice. Here are some budget-friendly energy efficiency tips targeting one of the biggest energy users in the home: the heating system. Heating and cooling account for nearly half of a U.S. home’s energy consumption.

Add coziness to your home

One way you can feel warmer in your home without turning up the thermostat is by making your home cozy.

The way our bodies perceive the temperature of a room is based more on the surfaces in the room than the air temperature. In general, harder surfaces feel colder. For example, your tile floor will feel cooler than your fabric sofa.

Cold floors in a room make us feel colder. Adding an area rug to a hard-surface floor can make us feel warmer, even with the same setting on the thermostat.

The same goes for windows, which are typically the least-insulated surface in a room and can feel cold in winter months. Adding or closing curtains can help the room feel warmer.

Check your windows

Make sure your windows are closed and locked. Locking windows pulls the sashes tighter together, reducing gaps that allow air to flow through and cause drafts. If your sash locks don’t form a tight fit, adjust them or add weather stripping.

There’s a variety of window weather stripping products available for less than $20. Most are simple to install and only require tools you most likely already have around the house such as...
scissors and a tape measure.

Some are more permanent solutions, and some are intended to be used for one heating season and then removed. Temporary solutions such as caulk strips, putty, pull-and-peel caulking or window insulation films can be used if you rent your home and can’t make permanent changes.

**Seal your doors**

Weather stripping doors is an easy do-it-yourself project. Make sure your doors seal tightly and don’t allow drafts to pass through around the edges or under the door.

Make sure any doors leading to an unheated space — outside or into a garage — are sealed tightly. If you can see light around the edges or underneath the door or feel air movement when the door is closed, you know you are losing energy.

Because doors need to open and close easily, expect to do a bit of adjusting after installing weather stripping. If weather stripping isn’t installed correctly, it can make the door hard to close. Making it too loose defeats the purpose. You need to get it just right.

**Close the damper**

If you have a fireplace, make sure the damper is completely closed when not using it. Leaving the damper open is like leaving a window open — it’s just harder to see. The air you just paid to heat your home will go right out the chimney.

The only exceptions are some gas fireplaces that need to remain open for gas fumes to exit the home. If you have a gas fireplace, check the owner’s manual for more information on the damper position.

**Layer up**

Dressing for the season prevents going overboard on your energy use. It can be tempting to adjust the thermostat to increase your comfort. Putting on a sweater or comfy sweatshirt can have the same comfort impact without increasing your energy use. Slippers can be a big help, too, especially when your feet touch a cold floor.

The next time you consider turning up the thermostat a few degrees, try some of these tips first to stay warm and leave increased energy bills out in the cold.

Miranda Boutelle is director of operations and customer engagement at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She also writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.
Standing in the middle of Roan Mountain State Park, it would be easy to imagine that you were actually surrounded by paradise itself. For what else should one call these more than 2,000 acres of hardwood forests, breathtaking mountains, crystal-clear streams and a rich biodiversity of flora and fauna?

“Roan Mountain is unique and different because of its location in terms of elevation,” says Park Manager Monica Johnson. “The park sits at around 2,600 feet and reaches as high as 3,600 feet on our highest ridges. The elevation alone exposes us to a variety of weather patterns. We get snow when other parks do not. We can have snow at 3,600 feet and none at 2,600 feet.”

Because of its elevation and location, the park can be 10 degrees cooler than most other places in Tennessee. Thus, Johnson suggests bringing layers of clothing when visiting the park, no matter the season.

“Our park is a gem and very comparable to the Smoky Mountains in terms of climate.”
Come and play

As you would expect from a park in the beautiful mountains of East Tennessee, there are lots of activities to keep you occupied during your visit.

Hiking and biking the park’s 14 miles of trails are among the most popular activities. Johnson calls Roan Mountain “a hiker’s dream.” You can breathe in the loamy forest scent, listen to and try to spot songbirds, snap photos of wildflowers and woodland creatures, pass by the ruins of an old iron mine and follow the lovely Doe River. While near the river, it’s possible you might spot the Eastern hellbender, the largest salamander in the country. This species, which can grow as long as 30 inches (average is 12-15 inches), is threatened, and Johnson says it’s important to not disturb the salamanders’ habitat.

“Something I wish visitors would educate themselves more on is the importance of not building rock dams in our river,” she says. “Moving rocks and stacking rocks are detrimental to their (the salamanders’) existence. With the population on the decline, it is very important to protect the areas they still seek to call home.”

The salamander is only one of the many rare, endangered and threatened species that live in the park.
If you fancy some trout, you might want to try your luck in the Doe River in the park, a fly fisherman’s heaven, as well as other wild trout streams in the area and the Watauga River.

For a slice of the human history of this corner of Tennessee, make sure to schedule a group tour (no more than 12 participants) of the 1908 Miller Farmstead if you’re visiting between April and October.

“The history behind the Miller Farmstead is very interesting, and I would encourage visitors to register for our Farmstead Tours in the summer months to gain a better understanding of what the farmstead is about,” Johnson says. “The Chestnut Ridge overlook is also located at the Miller Farmstead and provides views of the Roan Highlands.”

Johnson says that visitors often get the park itself and the adjacent National Forest Service property confused. Roan Mountain State Park abuts the Cherokee National Forest, which is actually the location of the famous balds that offer stunning, unobstructed views of the Blue Ridge Mountains in both Tennessee and neighboring North Carolina. The national forest is also home to 6,285-foot Roan High Knob, the Appalachian Trail and the gorgeous Catawba rhododendron gardens, which put on their colorful show when they bloom in mid to late June. Access to this area is closed during the winter months.

Roan Mountain State Park also co-manages nearby Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area, which has both natural and historical significance.

Stay more than a day

While Roan Mountain State Park is a great destination for day-use visitors, you might want to plan to stay overnight or even for several days. Accommodations include 30 cabins complete with rocking chairs on the front porches and cozy
wood-burning stoves. Ten of these cabins are pet-friendly for an extra fee.

If you prefer camping, there are 86 RV campsites with water and electric hookups and 20 tent sites with water. Each campsite has a grill and picnic table for the warmer months or if you’re daring enough for some chilly al fresco meals. The campground has bathhouses with hot showers, but only one of these is open during the offseason.

Each of four group sites can accommodate up to 25 campers. There is no electricity at these gravel tent pads, but they do have water spigots, grills, picnic tables and fire rings.

Johnson, who has been the park manager since April 2020, says that Roan Mountain visitation has followed the pattern of other state parks during the pandemic — lots more people seeking out its natural beauty for rest, relaxation and an escape from stressful reality. Many of those visitors have chosen to spend more than a day in the park.

“Our cabins and campgrounds have never been busier,” she says. “The past two years have been the best in terms of revenue in the park’s history and statewide. Events slowed down due to limitations on having them. The first year, we did not have any major events. In 2021, we were able to kick back up our events with COVID safety protocols in place. As of right now, everything is open, and events are being planned for the upcoming season. Unless we are directed differently by upper management, all of our major events will take place this year. In a normal year, we have around 750,000 to a million visitors. The last two years, we have exceeded 1 million with last year reaching 1.3 million visitors.”

**Growth underway**

Johnson has been with Tennessee State Parks for 22 years, but she says that her favorite memory since coming to Roan Mountain is the acquisition of a 150-acre tract of land that borders the park and will increase its size from 2,006 acres to 2,156 acres once it is official sometime in February.

“Acquiring acreage for parks doesn’t come along often, so I’m extremely proud of that,” she says.

Johnson is quick to say she thinks she manages the best park in the state.

“It’s an amazing and unique place, and I’m very blessed to have the opportunity to manage here.”

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For more information, visit the park’s website at tnstateparks.com/parks/roan-mountain or call the park office at 423-547-3900. To learn more about Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area, visit tn.gov/environment/program-areas/na-natural-areas/natural-areas-east-region/east-region-na-na-hampton-creek-cove.html.
Let the Good Times Roll

Celebrate the flavors of Mardi Gras with these New Orleans favorites

Crawfish Cakes with Cocktail Aioli

Recipes by Tammy Algood; photographs by Robin Conover
Your New Year’s resolutions may have been fastidiously observed… until now. Are you ready to have some fun? Mardi Gras is French for “Fat Tuesday,” a time to relax the rules and indulge before the austere religious season of Lent that begins on Ash Wednesday. These dates are determined by moon phases and coincide with many even more ancient celebrations like the Roman holiday of Saturnalia. The point? Since the beginning of history, everybody has needed a break from everyday life right about now. Dig in to these recipes, and let the good times roll!

**Crawfish Cakes with Cocktail Aioli**

*Yield: 8 servings*
- 2 cups corn oil
- 3 pounds crawfish
- ½ pound trimmed white bread, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons Old Bay seasoning
- ½ teaspoon ground white pepper
- ¾ cup chopped pimientos
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 egg
- 1¾ cups mayonnaise, divided
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup zesty cocktail sauce

Pour the oil in a large skillet and place over medium-high heat. Bring to 350 degrees.

Meanwhile, mix together the crawfish, bread cubes, Old Bay, pepper, pimientos and parsley. In a separate bowl, beat the egg and stir in all but 2 tablespoons of the mayonnaise, mustard, juice and Worcestershire. Stir into the crawfish mixture and combine to a meatloaf-like texture. The mixture should not be too dry or too wet. Adjust accordingly with more bread.

Divide the mixture into 16 equal portions (about 4 ounces each) and shape into patties. Carefully place a few patties at a time into the hot oil and cook each side 4 to 5 minutes, until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and repeat with the remaining patties.

Stir together the remaining mayonnaise and cocktail sauce. Serve with the warm crawfish cakes.

**Holy Trinity Shrimp Creole**

*Creole cooking always makes good use of tomatoes and is a blend of French, Spanish and African cuisines. The “holy trinity” of green peppers, onions and celery is found here as well.*

*Yield: 8 servings*
- ¼ cup bacon drippings or vegetable oil
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups chopped yellow onion
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 (16-ounce) can stewed tomatoes
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground red pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon hot sauce
- 5 pounds large or jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley

Place the drippings or oil and flour in a cast iron skillet over medium heat. Stirring constantly, cook 15 minutes or until the roux is dark brown. Add the yellow and green onions as well as the celery, green peppers and garlic. Cook another 15 minutes, stirring often. Transfer to a large Dutch oven. Add the tomatoes, salt, black pepper, red pepper, bay leaves, juice, Worcestershire and hot sauce, stirring well. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the shrimp and simmer 5 minutes or until the shrimp turn pink. Remove and discard the bay leaves. Sprinkle the parsley on top and serve immediately over hot cooked rice.

**Oyster Po’Boys**

*Two brothers, Benny and Clovis Martin, owned a sandwich shop in New Orleans in 1929. When the streetcar workers’ union went on strike, the brothers fed the striking workers sandwiches. A greeting of, “Here comes another poor boy,” worked its way into the name of this popular sandwich.*

*Yield: 4 servings*
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- 1 (24-inch) loaf French bread
- 1 recipe Fried Oysters (see below)
- 1 lemon
- 4 cups shredded iceberg lettuce

In a small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise and hot sauce. Split the bread in half lengthwise. Smear the mayonnaise mixture on the inside of the top and bottom.

Fry the oysters as directed in the recipe. After draining on paper towels, drizzle with lemon juice.

Place the oysters on the bottom slice and top with the lettuce. Place the top bread slice on the lettuce and press down gently. Cut the entire loaf into 4 sandwiches and serve immediately.

**Fried Oysters**

*If you have those in your midst who think they don’t like oysters, start them out on this Southern dish to change their minds. Use a thermometer to make sure the oil is heated to the proper level before you begin.*

*Yield: 6 servings*
- Vegetable oil
- 1 cup self-rising flour
- 1 cup self-rising cornmeal
- ½ teaspoon red pepper
2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
2 (12-ounce) containers oysters, drained

Pour the oil to a depth of 3 inches in a large Dutch oven or skillet. Place over medium-high heat and bring to 375 degrees.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine the flour, cornmeal and pepper. In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg and milk. Dip the oysters in the egg mixture and dredge in the flour mixture.

Fry until golden brown in the oil, 1½ to 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels and serve warm.

Spiced Right Crawfish Stew
Yield: 6 servings
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 cup chopped onions
1 cup chopped celery
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
2 cups water
1 (14.5-ounce) can crushed or diced tomatoes
1½ teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1 egg
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
Yield: 2½ dozen
1 egg
1 teaspoon salt
1 egg
4½ cups all-purpose flour
Vegetable oil
Confectioners’ sugar

In a large Dutch oven over medium heat, melt the butter. Whisk in the flour and stir constantly until the roux is the color of chocolate, around 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in the onions, celery and jalapeño pepper. Cook 3 minutes longer.

Stir in the water, tomatoes, salt and pepper. Cook 15 minutes. Add the crawfish, okra, bell peppers and parsley. Simmer 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in the file powder. Ladle the rice into warm soup bowls. Top with the stew and serve warm.

*File powder can be found in the spice aisle of the supermarket. It is a spicy powder made from dried and ground sassafras leaves.

Bourbon Street Beignets
Beignet is the French word for “fritter,” and these yeast pastries are served all over New Orleans. The dough is refrigerated overnight, which slows down but does not stop the yeast activity.

In a small bowl, combine the yeast and water, stirring until the yeast dissolves. Let stand five minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk together the milk, granulated sugar, salt and egg. Stir in the yeast mixture. Gradually add the flour to make a soft dough. Cover and refrigerate eight hours or overnight.

Pour the oil to a depth of 4 inches in a Dutch oven. Place over medium-high heat and bring to 375 degrees.

Turn the dough onto a well-floured surface and knead six times. Roll the dough into a 15-by-12-inch rectangle and cut into 2½-inch squares.

Carefully lower a few dough squares into the hot oil and fry 1 minute on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle with confectioners’ sugar. Repeat with the remaining dough. Serve warm.

Tammy Algood develops recipes for The Tennessee Magazine that feature farm-fresh Tennessee food. Those fresh, local ingredients will always add cleaner, more flavorful foods to your table. We recommend visiting local farms and farmers markets to find the freshest seasonal produce.

Mary Virginia writes: “I have a recipe for a cold sauce that calls for cream cheese, lemon juice, oil and chervil. I tried using low-fat cream cheese and light olive oil to make it — with very disappointing results. Help!” Mary Virginia, first of all, it will help greatly if you bring the sauce out of the refrigerator for about 20 minutes before serving. Light olive oil is basically for high-temperature cooking and adds no flavor. I would consider using one that will contribute some depth to the taste such as regular olive oil. The sauce you are making is called Parisienne sauce, and it’s most often served on cold or room temperature asparagus. A dash of paprika will give it some color when served.

William asks: “What kind of oil can I use for making vinaigrettes? I have been using olive oil, and it’s not working at all.” William, I am assuming you are refrigerating the mixture, and I can understand why olive oil isn’t working. It becomes solid when cold, so unless you can remember to pull it out of the refrigerator at least 30 minutes or longer before using, it will remain that way. Instead, try using canola oil that doesn’t solidify in cold temperatures.

It will assure that your dressing remains nice and pourable straight from the refrigerator.

Rachel writes: “Do I need to place a package of bacon in a large bag before freezing it for later use?” Rachel, if the package of bacon is unopened and vacuum sealed, you do not. If the package has been opened, then you do, but wrap it in waxed paper before slipping it into a zip-top bag. Then make sure it is labeled and dated so you can use it within two months.

Email your cooking questions to Tammy Algood: talgood@tnelectric.org.
West Tennessee

Now-March 1 • The Fascinating World of Murray Hudson’s Globes and Maps, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or discoveryparkofamerica.com

Now-March 16 • Savages and Princess: The Persistence of Native American Stereotypes, Memphis Museum of Science and History. 901-636-2362 or moshmemphis.com

Feb. 1-6 • “Hadestown,” Orpheum Theatre, Memphis. 901-525-3000 or orpheum-memphis.com

Feb. 5 • 10th Annual Chocolate Tour, downtown Covington. 901-476-9727 or cedc38019@gmail.com

March 5 • Blind Tiger Speakeasy, Mallory-Neely House, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or moshmemphis.com

Middle Tennessee

Now-Feb. 20 • 2021 Best of Tennessee Craft Exhibition, Tennessee State Museum, Nashville. 615-741-2692 or tnmuseum.org

Now-Feb. 20 • Ted Jones: Faith, Hope, Love Exhibition, Monthaven Arts and Cultural Center, Hendersonville. 615-822-0789 or monthavenartsandculturalcenter.com

Feb. 3-11 • Mayberry Valentine Dinner Theatre, historic Granville. 931-653-4151 or granvilleetn.com

Feb. 4 • Hog Day 2022, Davis Kessler & Davis, Winchester. 931-967-7000

Feb. 5 • Sweetheart Shopping Pop-Up, Time to Eat Bar and Grill, Lewisburg. 931-246-9057 or thunderrunevents.com

Feb. 8-13 • “Mean Girls,” Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Feb. 10 • Dancing with the Stars: Live! 2022 Tour, Grand Ole Opry, Nashville. 800-SEE-OPRY or opry.com

Feb. 12 • DelMonaco Wine Tasting Excursion Train, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-241-0436 or tcry.org

Feb. 12 • Sweet as Candy Crafts Show, Coffee County Fairgrounds, Manchester. 931-841-5584 or facebook.com/oliverswoodandfabric

Feb. 12 • Smyrna Lions Club Sweetheart Dance 2022, Smyrna Event Center. 615-753-1337

Feb. 13 • Bob’s Your Uncle, Rock ‘N’ Roll, Blues, Americana, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville. 931-647-6750 or grace-lutheran-church.org

Feb. 19 • Valenshine’s Moonshine Sippin’ Excursion Train, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-241-0436 or tcry.org

Feb. 19 • Shadows Ignited, Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville. 615-784-8679 or silentnolonger.tn.org

Feb. 22-27 • “The Prom,” Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Feb. 25 • Colbie Caillat, CMA Theater at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville. 615-416-2001 or countrymusichallof fame.org

March 2-6 • “Dear Evan Hansen,” Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

March 3-6 • Lawn and Garden Show, The Fairgrounds Nashville. nashvillelawnandgardenshow.com

March 5 • Women Who Rock Nashville 5K Walk, Shelby Park, Nashville. womenwhorocknashville.org

March 5 • Maury County Soil and Water Conservation District’s Tree Day Giveaway to Residents, United Farm and Home, Columbia. 931-388-1307, ext. 3, or julie.davidson@tn.nacdnet.net

March 5 • Mardi Gras Excursion Train, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-241-0436 or tcry.org

March 6 • Fire Department Annual Chili Cook-Off, downtown Bell Buckle. bellbucklechamber.com

March 6 • Bach Organ Concert with Dr. Jonathan Rudy, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville. 931-647-6750 or grace-lutheran-church.org

East Tennessee

Now-Feb. 15 • Pigeon Forge Winterfest, throughout Pigeon Forge. pigeonforgewinterfest.com

Now-Feb. 27 • Sandhill Crane Kayak Tour with Chattanooga Guided Adventures, Cherokee Removal Memorial, Birchwood. 423-390-8688 or chattanoogaguidedadventures.com

Feb. 3 • Gypsy Moon, 35 North, Farragut. 865-585-4508 or facebook.com/gypsymoonknoxville

Feb. 5, 12 and 26 • The Dinner Interactive Mystery Dinner Show, Hilton Knoxville. knx.info@thedinnerdetective.com or thedinnerdetective.com/knoxville

Feb. 5, 12 and 26 • The Dinner Interactive Mystery Dinner Show, Hotel Indigo Chattanooga Downtown. cht.info@thedinnerdetective.com or thedinnerdetective.com/chattanooga

Submit your events!

Complete the form at tnmagazine.org or email events@tnelectric.org. Information must be received at least two months ahead of the event date, and we accept submissions up to a year in advance. Due to the great demand for space in each month’s Almanac, we cannot guarantee publication. Find a complete listing of submissions we’ve received at tnmagazine.org/events.
COMMUNITY CORNER
What our neighbors are up to

Find the Tennessee flag

We have hidden somewhere in this magazine the icon from the Tennessee flag like the one pictured here. It could be larger or smaller than this, and it could be in black and white or any color. If you find it, send us a postcard or email us with the page number where it’s located. Include your name, address, phone number and electric cooperative. One entry per person. Three winners will be chosen from a random drawing, and each will receive $20.

Note that the icon we hide will not be on an actual flag or historical marker, will not appear on pages 20-26 and will not be placed in any ads. This month’s flag will not appear on this page (that would just be too easy). Good luck!

Send postcards only (no phone calls, please) to: The Tennessee Magazine, Find the Flag, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Or email flag@tnelectric.org. Entries must be postmarked or received via email by Tuesday, March 1. Winners will be published in the April issue of The Tennessee Magazine.

December Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found in the barrel of donated food items on page 10.

Winners are drawn randomly from each month’s entries. December’s lucky flag spotters are:
Avery Vaughn, Rossville, Southwest Tennessee EMC
John F. Wilhelm, White House, Cumberland EMC
Jonathan Morgan, Robbins, Plateau EC

Artist’s Palette
Assignment for February

Three age categories: 1 to 9, 10 to 14 and 15 to 18 years old. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners.

Media: Drawing or painting on 8½-by-11-inch unlined paper, canvas or board. We encourage the use of color.

Entry: Send your original art to: The Tennessee Magazine, Artist’s Palette — February, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. (Please make sure you include the month on the outside of the envelope!) Only one entry per artist, please.

Deadline: Art must be postmarked by Tuesday, March 1.

Include: Your name, age, address, phone number, email address and electric cooperative. Leaving anything out will result in disqualification.

Artwork will not be returned unless you include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission. For best reproduction results, do not fold artwork.

Each entry needs its own SASE, please. Siblings must enter separately with their own envelopes. Attention, teachers: You may send multiple entries in one envelope along with one SASE with sufficient postage.

Winners will be published in the April issue of The Tennessee Magazine. First place wins $50, second place wins $30 and third place wins $20. Winners are eligible to enter again after three months. Winners will receive their checks, artwork and certificates of placement within 30 days of publication.

Call for Entries

Poet’s Playground

Are you a poet at heart? If so, we would like to see your efforts in The Tennessee Magazine’s monthly poetry contest. Please limit your poem to no more than 100 words. Your work must include a Tennessee theme. Winning poems will be printed in our April issue.

Subject: While the theme of your poem must include something Tennessee-related, including the word “Tennessee” is not required.

Age categories: The competition has six age divisions — 8 and younger, 9-13, 14-18, 19-22, 23-64 and 65 and older. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners. First place wins $50 and will be printed in the magazine, second place wins $30 and third place wins $20. Poems capturing first-, second- and third-place honors will be published online at tnmagazine.org.

What to enter: A poem of 100 words or fewer pertaining to the theme. One entry per person, and please give your entry a title.

Deadline: Entry must be emailed or postmarked by Tuesday, Feb. 22.

Please note: By entering, you give The Tennessee Magazine permission to publish your work via print, online and social media.

Please enter online at tnmagazine.org or mail handwritten entries to: Poetry Contest, The Tennessee Magazine, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Make sure to print your poem legibly, and be sure to keep a copy of your poem as submissions received via mail will not be returned.

All entries must include the following information, or they will be disqualified: your name, age, mailing address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.
**Artist’s Palette December Winners**

**WINNERS, 15-18 AGE GROUP:** First place: Lillian May, age 16; Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Maritsa Gonzalez, age 16, Middle Tennessee Electric; Third place: Isabella Otterman, age 16, Duck River EMC

**WINNERS, 10-14 AGE GROUP:** First place: Kaley Jones, age 14, Fort Loudoun EC; Second place: Corabelle Beazley, age 14; Third place: Pearl May, age 14, Middle Tennessee Electric

**WINNERS, 1-9 AGE GROUP:** First place: Karoline Mears, age 9, Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Naomi Hill, age 6, Gibson EMC; Third place: Charlotte Harrington, age 8, Powell Valley EC
**Age 8 and younger**

**Snow in Tennessee**
The winds blow, and there are rows of snow.
Here comes Santa, ho ho ho!
When you go outside, the snow is cold especially to hold!
Making a snowman is fun!
So get out there and run!
— Grant Hayes, Cumberland EMC

**Age 19-22**

**Sleeping out loud.**
Sleep, my only solace.
When dreams become nightmares once I awake.
The ghosts from past mistakes become stains in my soul.
Scars that bleed.
Nothing cleans the shadows left from who I’ve been.
My past is my future.
Broken hearts may mend, but broken spirits never grow back the same.
Lost is my way.
I can never go back to who I’ve been, the innocence of a childhood gone for good.
Hurt is my name.
Pain is my signature.
I will never be the same.
Sleep, my only refuge.
— Mary Smith, Fayetteville Public Utilities

**Age 65 and older**

**Landscape**
First the spirit of the land summoned kindred souls with mockingbird’s call, charmed them with sunlight on poplar leaves, mesmerized them with scent of cedar. Then the stories of their lives and lines of greats and grands began to twine like maypop vines around the hickories and oaks. They tilled limestone spines of ridge and valley troughs, they smoothed the rocky tops of smoke-veiled mountains with fervent hymns, and set the river’s rhythm by the pumping of their own bold hearts, until, in time, the land became its people and now the people are the place.
— Kay Smith, Meriwether Lewis EC

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More poetry can be read at tnmagazine.org. See page 36 for details on how to enter The Tennessee Magazine’s monthly poetry contest.
For more than 50 years, *The Tennessee Magazine* has been the official publication of our electric cooperatives, keeping consumer-members informed about their co-ops, showcasing the wonders of electric service and highlighting the special events around the state.

The cover of the February 1972 magazine featured a wildlife painting by Tennessee artist Ralph J. McDonald. Inside, readers learned about meat inspections and all-electric nursing homes and were introduced to Miss Tennessee Electric Cooperatives Margie Shepard, a student at the University of Tennessee and handler for the school’s beloved mascot.

While our fashions, appliances and recipes have significantly changed since our first issue in 1958, our mission to entertain, educate and inform our readers has not. Here’s a glimpse of what members saw 50 years ago in *The Tennessee Magazine*. View the entire February 1972 edition online at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org).
Dear Connie Sue,
I received this harmonica from my 83-year-old grandmother recently. She says she has had it for as long as she can remember. “M. HOHNER auto valve harp key C Made in Germany” and the years 1873, 1871, 1881 and 1876 are listed on the harmonica. I’m a teenager who would like to know the value of what she has passed down to me. It has lots of sentimental value.

Tucker, Hillsboro

Dear Tucker,
Grandmother’s harmonica is a 10-hole Chromonica model with a wood reed. The six-point, star-shaped fasteners on each end confirms a date before 1937, a year before your grandmother was born. After a swipe and shine of surface dirt, your harmonica might sell for around $50. With the original box and in pristine condition, the value would double. Thank you for reminding us of sentimental value.

Dear Connie Sue,
I have an item I’d like appraised. This floor lamp belonged to my grandmother. Family lore is she received it as a wedding gift, June 6, 1908. It measures 56 inches at the top of the goose neck. This seems very short for a reading lamp based on today’s furniture. The shade is not original and had to be handmade as the style of harp is no longer available.

Russell

Dear Russell,
Electricity was available in many near-town homes by 1910, so your grandmother as a bride may have stepped into a lighted house. It’s called a bridge lamp and has a nice solid base of green stone for stability. Similar lamps sell for $45 to $75. A full restoration would more than double the price.

Dear Connie Sue,
The attached picture shows a Shirley Temple cream pitcher that belonged to my mother. She passed away recently at the age of 96. I believe she said it came in a cereal box. I think she also had a bowl or cup that matched. I’d like to know its current value.

Jean, Clarksville

Dear Jean,
Even as an adult, Shirley Temple was happy and hopeful. Her attitude helped our mothers cope with some difficult decades.

Yes, there were various cereal-related items made by Hazel Atlas Glass in its Ritz blue glass color. I see the pitcher most often. Today it sells for $9 to $15. In my antique shop in the 1970s, customers paid $45 or more for this pitcher.

Larry

Dear Larry,
Yes, the Rapid Washer was used to plunge clothes through water. It was patented in 1894. I’ve seen them used to stack toilet paper, but I tend to look away from such novelties. They sell for $9 to $25.

Want to learn more about your antiques?
Send your inquiry with photos to the mailing address or email below. Only published appraisals are free. Private appraisals are available for a fee.

Mailing address: Connie Sue Davenport, P.O. Box 343, White House, TN 37188
Email: treasures@conniesue.com

Connie Sue Davenport makes her living by appraising houses full of antiques for private clients and at appraisal events hosted by businesses and organizations. Her website, ConnieSue.com, describes these services.
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TAYLOR MOBILE HOME SOLUTIONS
Point of View

By Robin Conover

Street photography is defined by Wikipedia as “photography conducted for art or enquiry that features unmediated chance encounters and random incidents.” Such is this moment I captured last winter.

While photographing landscapes and wildlife on an ice-cold, snowy morning at Radnor Lake State Park and Natural Area in Nashville last year, this gentleman walked into my purview, perfectly completing the scene. Though it may be more trail photography than actual street photography, his presence completes the composition, adding a focal point and scale with his presence.

As the weather had kept most hikers away on this particular day, he was one of the few people I met on the trails. Hiking in solitude, he kept a brisk pace in front of me. I set a fast shutter speed to capture him “frozen” as he was in motion.

Choosing a shutter speed of 1/1,000 of a second does that and helps define his body language with a sense of movement. A slower shutter speed under 1/30 of a second would have allowed his arms and legs to blur as he moved, losing the desired effect.

I adjusted the exposure manually and metered in the center of the trees hanging over the road rather than the whole scene. Bright snow can throw your camera’s meter off by making it read the scene as much brighter than it actually is.

He and I spoke for a few moments, each of us commenting on what we had seen on our separate hikes that day. He told me that he was a caretaker for his ailing wife and that others were with her that day so he could take a needed break.

As he hurriedly walked away to get back home, I wondered how many times they had hiked here together. I saw that while she might never be able to join him again here, he still found these familiar trails to be a respite and a place of healing for his soul.
Eye Doctor Helps Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again

For many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving. A Lebanon optometrist, Dr. John Pino, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to help people who have lost vision from macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

"Some of my patients consider me the last stop for people who have vision loss," said Dr. Pino, one of only a few doctors in the world who specialize in fitting biotic telescopes to help those who have lost vision due to macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other debilitating eye diseases.

Imagine a pair of glasses that can improve your vision enough to change your life. If you’re a low vision patient, you’ve probably not only imagined them, but have been searching for them. Biotic telescopes may be the breakthrough in optical technology that will give you the independence you’ve been looking for. Patients with vision in the 20/200 range can many times be improved to 20/50 or better.

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of blindness and vision loss in people over 50. Despite this, most adults are not familiar with the condition. As many as 25% of those over the age of 50 have some degree of macular degeneration. The macula is only one small part of the retina; however, it is the most sensitive and gives us sharp central vision. When it degenerates, macular degeneration leaves a blind spot right in the center of vision, making it difficult or impossible to recognize faces, read a book, or pass the driver’s vision test.

Nine out of 10 people who have macular degeneration have the dry form. New research suggests vitamins can help. The British medical journal BMC Ophthalmology recently reported that functioning, especially driving," says Dr. Pino.

When Elaine, 57, of Kingsport, TN, came to see Dr. Pino she wanted to keep her Tennessee driver’s license and was prescribed biotic telescopic glasses to read signs and see traffic lights farther away. Dr. Pino also prescribed microscope glasses for reading newspapers and menus in restaurants.

As Elaine puts it, “My regular glasses didn’t help too much – it was like looking through a fog. These new telescopic glasses not only allow me to read signs from a farther distance, but make driving much easier. I’ve also used them to watch television so I don’t have to sit so close. I don’t know why I waited to do this; I should have come sooner.”

“Biotic telescopes can cost over $2,000,” said Dr. Pino, “especially if we build them with an automatic sunglass.”

“The major benefit of the biotic telescope is that the lens automatically focuses on whatever you’re looking at,” said Dr. Pino. “It’s like a self-focusing camera, but much more precise.”

To learn more about biotic telescopes or to schedule a consultation with Dr. Pino, give us a call at 1-855-405-8800. You can also visit our website at:

www.lowvisiontn.com

For more information and a FREE telephone consultation, call us today: 1-855-405-8800

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