

CONNECTION



Building & Sharing

Ardmore family
gives back

ARDMORE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

FAMILY ROAD TRIP

By Mike Romano, CEO
NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association

More Than Service— A Commitment to Community

Before I begin this column, my first in your magazine, I would like to introduce myself. I am Mike Romano, the new CEO of NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association. I look forward to sharing a national perspective on the vital work your broadband provider does, and there is no better place to start than with the connections that work creates. Of course, I'm not only talking about broadband connections, but community connections, as well.



MIKE ROMANO
Chief Executive Officer

Across the country, community-based broadband providers like yours deliver advanced, high-speed networks that keep rural communities connected. But these providers' impact extends far beyond the technology they deploy. They are also active partners in the communities they serve.

Rooted in their hometowns, these providers are invested in helping their neighbors thrive. That may mean hosting workshops to help teach community members how to use new devices or stay safe online, supporting local schools with back-to-school supply drives, sponsoring sports teams and community events, creating good-paying jobs or partnering with local economic development organizations to build stronger communities. Their success is measured not only by network speeds and connections, but by the opportunities those connections make possible.

I am excited to highlight these efforts and the remarkable things happening in rural communities in future columns. When you choose a local provider, you get more than quality high-speed internet. You also have a partner committed to your community's success, today and for years to come. 📶

A LEGACY OF SPEED AND RESULTS

Fast, reliable and irreplaceable, your internet service connects you to essential digital services and resources. The pace of change has been blazing.



1. The Dawn of the Internet (1970s–1980s):

Early computer networks connected universities, researchers and government agencies, laying the groundwork for the modern internet.



2. Bringing the Web Home (1990s):

Internet access entered the home. Connections were slow by today's standards, but suddenly information, email and websites were available—even if it took a noisy modem to make it happen.



3. Always-On Connections (Early 2000s):

Faster, more dependable internet changed expectations. Users could stay connected without tying up phone lines.



4. The Streaming Era Begins (Mid-2000s):

Rising speeds made online video, music and larger file downloads practical for more households and businesses.



5. A More Connected Lifestyle (Late 2000s–2010s):

Internet service became essential, supporting smart devices, online gaming, social media and remote work.



6. High-Speed Homes and Businesses (2010s):

Growing demand drove another leap in performance, enabling high-definition streaming, cloud services and multiple connected devices running at once.

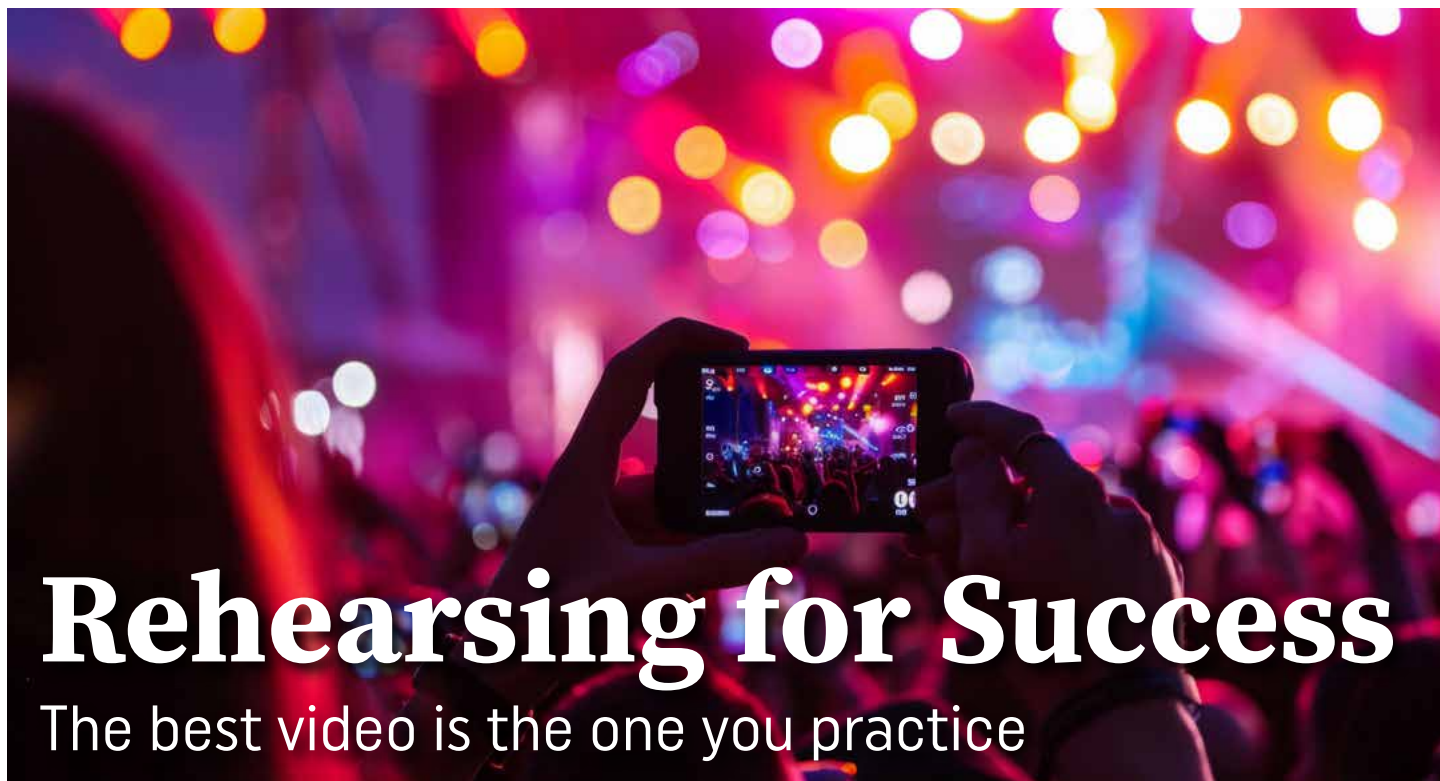


7. Keeping Pace With Demand (2020s–Present):

Today's networks deliver remarkably fast speeds and reliability, powering everything from telehealth and online learning to smart homes and more.



8. The Future Is Unlimited: Thanks to your broadband service, you'll have the speed you need.



Adobe Stock image by Emilia

Rehearsing for Success

The best video is the one you practice

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Smartphones make it easy to capture video of life's important moments. From concert footage of your favorite band to milestone events like graduations and weddings, there are so many special moments worth recording. Don't risk the results by being unprepared.

IN ADVANCE

The video camera on your phone is an amazing tool. And like with any tool, you need to practice to get the most out of it.

- Familiarize yourself with the settings and features to use them effectively. Do test shoots to learn and adjust.
- Holding a phone steady is harder than you think. If you notice your practice videos are shaky, try using a selfie stick, gimbal stabilizer or tripod.
- Take your videos up a notch with editing apps. These apps allow for color corrections and audio adjustments, as well as transitions, cuts and captions to produce an enhanced video.
- Be as prepared as possible by thinking ahead. Start with a full battery. If you are planning to shoot a long video or multiple videos, consider a portable battery pack. Check your phone's available storage capacity. During a shoot is the wrong time to realize you are out of space.

IN THE MOMENT

Once the camera is rolling, be aware of your phone's settings and your surroundings.

- Switch your phone to airplane mode to avoid interruptions from calls or notifications. Make sure your lens is clean.
- Position yourself in the optimal location. It is better to

be closer to your subject than to use the zoom function.

Remember, while filming in landscape mode is best for traditional video, some social media platforms prefer vertical formats. Choose the best approach for your end goal.

- Think about the lighting and sound. Pick a spot that is well-lit and close to the sound. If possible, use a microphone to improve sound quality.
- Tap the record button, then double-check that you are recording.

STORAGE OPTIONS

Now that you've shot that great video, you'll want to store it somewhere safe.

Physical external storage options include USB-C flash drives, SD cards and external solid state or hard drives. External storage means a one-time purchase of a device that gives you full control of your files.

Using a cloud storage service means that your videos and other files are stored with a third party. Some may offer a small amount of storage free of charge to their users. For example, Google provides 15 GB free for Google accounts. Additional storage is available for a monthly fee, maxing out at 2 TB for \$9.99 per month.

Amazon Prime members have access to 5 GB of free video storage from Amazon Photo. The free level also includes unlimited storage for photos. Additional video storage plans start at \$1.99 a month. iPhone users start with 5 GB of free storage through iCloud. They can upgrade to iCloud+ options, which range from 50 GB up to an impressive 12 TB. 

Cornerstone Connectivity

A name that connects us all

For more than a century, Ardmore Telephone Company has been a vital part of this region. Our story began in 1908 with a single telephone line, and while the technology around us has transformed and continues to do so, one thing remains consistent: our commitment to the people and communities we serve.



KAREN JACKSON-FURMAN
Chief Executive Officer

As many of you know, we recently transitioned our operating name to Cornerstone Connectivity. A long-standing name holds history, and it's only fair to share why this change is the right step forward.

This decision reflects both where we are from and where we are going. Communication tools have evolved from early copper lines to the high-speed internet and cellular networks that now power nearly every aspect of daily life. As these changes have taken place, our company has continued to evolve as well.

Ardmore Telephone Company was purchased in 2009 by West Kentucky & Tennessee Telecommunications Cooperative. At that time, we continued operating under the familiar ATC name. Since then, the cooperative has expanded service into Southern Illinois and, more recently, acquired two telecommunications companies southwest of Montgomery. This growth has strengthened our reach and our ability to serve rural communities well. As our footprint widened, it became clear that we needed one unified operating name to reflect the momentum across all regions. That's how Cornerstone Connectivity came to be.

The name Cornerstone Connectivity was chosen with purpose. Reliable, high-speed internet is no longer infrastructure; it is foundational. Just as a cornerstone supports the structure built upon it, strong connectivity supports the growth, education, and safety of rural communities. Our new name reflects that belief and the role we are committed to playing across every community that we serve.

Although our name is changing, nothing about the service you receive or the support you expect will change. The same people will answer your calls, install your equipment, and show up when you need support. The same commitment to reliability and local service will continue to guide our work. We remain deeply rooted in Ardmore; its history, its progress, and its future.

Thank you for trusting us for more than a century. We are proud of our past, confident in our future, and honored to serve you as Cornerstone Connectivity. 📞

Cornerstone
Connectivity

CONNECTION

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Cornerstone
Connectivity™

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

Cornerstone Connectivity is an equal-opportunity employer and provider.

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On the Cover:



Courtney Apperson, from left, is joined at her charity camp in South Africa by her parents, Wayne and Sherry Browning, of Ardmore.
See story Page 9.

Photo courtesy of
Courtney Apperson

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Take Family Fun on the Road

Tips for traveling with kids

Story by LAURA MCGILL

Nothing ruins a family road trip faster than an unhappy child. Meltdowns at the museum and refusals at restaurants are the stuff of parents' nightmares. However, with a little planning, family getaways can be enjoyable experiences for everyone.

Consider the ages and tolerance levels of your kids when deciding how many miles you should drive, how many days to stay and what activities to plan. If this is your first family getaway, pick a closer destination and a shorter stay. If everything goes great, you can extend your visit. If things don't go so well, you can end the trip early and be back home quickly.

ON THE ROAD

Pack a few favorite toys and games and bring along plenty of snacks. Keep a supply of over-the-counter medications for cuts and scrapes, upset tummies and motion sickness handy. Look for convenient stops along the way to take short breaks.

Spend some time getting your children excited about the destination before you leave. Check for coloring pages and puzzles from the tourism office. You can also share details about the places you are going to visit to build interest and to set expectations.

AT YOUR DESTINATION

Make sure your plan includes where to stay and where to eat. Pick a family-friendly accommodation close to the places on your itinerary to cut down on time in the car. Do some research in advance to check out restaurant menus, especially if you have a picky eater.

Pace yourself and be flexible because something will likely not work out as planned. Have options in mind if you need to adapt to weather conditions or need to slow things down with a low-key activity. ☺

Adobe Stock image by Halfpoint





Adobe Stock image by Kiebergpici

Where to Go

To increase your chances of having a fun family trip, pick some activities you know your children will enjoy. Maybe they are all about dinosaurs, or perhaps they love animals or are obsessed with their favorite sport.

GET PREHISTORIC

In addition to a collection of 70 million-year-old dinosaur bones, the museum also features 40 million-year-old whales and the impressive skull of a saber-toothed cat that was unearthed about an hour's drive from the museum.

The Middle Tennessee Museum of Natural History in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, allows visitors to observe ongoing research while touring exhibits of dinosaur bones and other unique relics from around the world. Cave City, Kentucky, takes the roar outdoors at Dinosaur World, where guests can walk among hundreds of life-sized replicas and enjoy interactive exhibits.

EXPLORE NATURE

If your trip includes a Saturday near Franklin, Tennessee, stop by Noble Springs Dairy for Baby Goat Cuddling Days. During your visit, you can learn about the farm, pet some adorable baby goats and try some amazing cheese. In Cottageville, South Carolina, Bee City Zoo offers animal encounters with hedgehogs, lemurs, sloths and more.

Its reptile center will certainly illicit a few shrieks with snakes, lizards and alligators.

CATCH THE GAME

If your child likes baseball but major league prices aren't in the budget, try a minor league game. The tickets are more affordable, stadiums are smaller, putting you closer to the field, and the atmosphere is relaxed and family friendly with a children's play area at many of the ballparks.

Madison, Alabama, just outside Huntsville, is home to the Rocket City Trash Pandas. Bats are swinging in Tennessee with the Nashville Sounds, Memphis Redbirds, Knoxville Smokies and Chattanooga Lookouts. In Kentucky, the Louisville Bats and Bowling Green Hot Rods take to the diamond. Central Indiana welcomes fans to watch the Indianapolis Indians. Fans in South Carolina cheer for six teams, the Greenville Drive, Hub City Spartanburgers, Augusta GreenJackets, Myrtle Beach Pelicans, Charleston RiverDogs and Columbia Fireflies.

This summer's biggest sporting event is the FIFA World Cup. With 48 clubs playing games in 16 host cities, it's generating a lot of excitement. If your child now has soccer fever, consider a closer-to-home option at an MLS NEXT Pro league match. Huntsville City FC plays its home games in Huntsville, Alabama, and the 2026 season runs through September.



Building With Their Hands

Brownings proudly serve their community

Story by LAURA MCGILL

A lot has changed in the industry since Wayne and Sherry Browning purchased Ardmore Cabinet Shop 36 years ago. Styles have evolved, and new building materials emerged. The Brownings' business values, however, remain the same with an ongoing commitment to their hometown and their customers.

Before the couple became business owners, Wayne was working 12-hour swing shifts and missing out on important family moments. They hoped that something would change to allow them more time together. That change came from Wayne's love of woodworking, which he did on the side.

Ardmore has always been home for Wayne and Sherry. It is where they raised their daughters, Holly, Brooke and Courtney. When the opportunity to buy Ardmore Cabinet Shop arose, they looked at it as a chance to have that flexible schedule. But they knew it would be a lot of hard work. "We only really purchased the name of the business," Wayne says. "It wasn't very established at the time."

Building momentum for their business often meant convincing prospective customers to work with a local company instead of going with a well-known national name. "I feel like that is one of the greatest challenges facing small hometown businesses," Wayne says. "We had to overcome it, and we have."

TIMES ARE CHANGING

Trends in home building and remodeling have changed over the decades. Quartz, granite, concrete and butcher

block countertops replaced the laminate surfaces popular in years past. The wood stains Wayne used on cabinets gave way to a myriad of paint colors.

"We have gone from very simple and cost efficient to now anything goes," Wayne says, pointing to how today's starter homes don't compare to starter homes from 25 years ago. "We have gone from \$3,000 for a set of cabinets to options that make it \$30,000 for a set."

Through all those changes, Sherry has been by his side. She manages the financial part of the company, ensuring that everything runs smoothly. In her role, Sherry has also seen her share of changes. "When we started, everything was on paper. We hand wrote checks," she says. "Now, everything is online. We count on Cornerstone Connectivity to keep us connected with our phones and internet."

WHAT COMES NEXT

After nearly four decades of owning Ardmore Cabinet Shop, Wayne and Sherry are looking to slow down a bit. Thanks to a dedicated group of employees, including son-in-law Kendall Tiemann, they feel comfortable doing so. "We couldn't have accomplished what we have without our committed employees over the years," Wayne says.

Slowing down means more time for their grandchildren, their church and perhaps a bit more golf for Wayne. "We have been blessed beyond measure," he says. 📞

ARDMORE CABINET SHOP

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ABOVE: Contrasting colors above the stove and on the island cabinets is a popular design trend.

BELOW: Wayne and Sherry Browning have worked together at Ardmore Cabinet Shop for 36 years.



Photos courtesy of Ardmore Cabinet Shop

Serving With Her Heart

Courtney Apperson creates spaces of faith and joy for children

Story by LAURA MCGILL

When measured on a map, the distance from Ardmore to South Africa is more than 8,000 miles. When measured in Courtney Apperson's heart, that distance is covered with the speed of a prayer.

Founded in 2013, her nonprofit organization, The Hidden Place, provides camp experiences for children in the townships of Alexandra, Soweto and Tembisa. Thanks to donations, the children selected to attend the camps do so free of charge.

Courtney knew from an early age she wanted to work with missions. She attributes that to her family and growing up in a mission-minded church. After high school, she attended the University of Mobile and participated with various mission organizations on trips to Honduras in Central America and Mali in West Africa.

On that Mali visit, Courtney felt West Africa would be where she would pursue her calling. Soon afterward, a mission to South Africa changed everything she had planned.

JOURNEY TO SOUTH AFRICA

In the fall of 2010, Courtney was placed in a South Africa mission program. "It was supposed to be for six months," she says. "But I fell in love with the culture and the people." Knowing she had found her place, she came home from that mission program determined to return. In 2011, she moved back to South Africa to begin a new chapter in her life.

Seeing that mission opportunities were limited for a single female, Courtney took the leap of faith and founded The Hidden Place. The name comes from Psalm 32:7-8

THE HIDDEN PLACE

256-423-5417

www.thehiddenplace.org

which reads "You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance."

The goal of the camps is to help local children have a temporary escape from their often-difficult daily lives. "The biggest reward for me is seeing kids come through camp and then return to help in a leadership position," Courtney says. "The camp changed their lives, and they now want to share with others."

After 14 years in South Africa, a change in visa policy brought Courtney back to North Alabama. She travels to South Africa twice a year to continue her charity and camp work.

Campers sport stylish new sunglasses.



Photo courtesy of Courtney Apperson

SUPPORT FROM HOME

To say that The Hidden Place is a family effort is a bit of an understatement. Courtney's parents, Wayne and Sherry Browning, have traveled to help with every camp. Courtney's husband, children, both of her sisters, her grandmother, a brother-in-law, an aunt and an uncle have all joined in.

Courtney is grateful for the help she receives from the local community, including pillowcases for the camps crafted by the Piecemakers from Wooley Springs Baptist Church in Toney. "Everyone around me made this idea come true to life," she says. 

Without a Trace

Bigfoot researchers hope to turn myth into reality

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Charlie Raymond knows all the best spots for Bigfoot hunting in Kentucky. As founder of the Kentucky Bigfoot Research Organization, he can tell you where you're most likely to run into the dark-haired Skunk Man or an Anderson County Sasquatch nicknamed Howdy for its habit of waving at spotters.

So, when a group of Girl Scouts visiting from Ohio wanted to go on their own expedition about 10 years ago, he knew Mammoth Cave was the place to take them. Bigfoot sightings at the edge of the park spiked after a park employee reported seeing what he thought was a bear stand up on two legs and run off.

"I told them Bigfoots are curious, so the best thing to do is go out there with no flashlights and just laugh, talk and act natural," Charlie says. "Here I've got two dozen giddy girls, aged 10 to 14. I said, 'You're perfect bait.'"

Much like the skeptical Scout moms who joined them, Charlie didn't really expect the group to run into Big Mo, the name of the Bigfoot living in the area, according to local legend. But Charlie showed the girls how to knock trees with a baseball bat and make whooping noises, which he believes the creatures use to communicate.

Then, they heard a distant knock and whistle in response. Shortly after, there was a loud bang as something big struck the boardwalk they were standing on. The entire group was so startled that Charlie recalls one of the moms making a break for the parking lot, leaving the girls behind.

"I think it thought we were another Bigfoot calling for help, then it stomped or jumped on the boardwalk as kind of a bluff charge," Charlie says. "But I heard when they drove back to Ohio, those girls didn't talk about putt-putt or riding horses. All they talked about was that night."

MYTH AND MEMORY

Charlie is just one of many Bigfoot researchers around the country hoping to find definitive proof of the legendary elusive creatures. Driven by true believers, skeptics and gawkers alike, the ongoing hunt has produced hit TV shows, museums and even festivals that bring people together from all corners.

Robert Dobler, a senior lecturer at the Indiana University Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, says the lasting power of these creatures is fundamentally human.

"I think it's human to need to think about things outside of the everyday or the mundane," he says. "We're interested in these creatures that exceed language as often as they exceed categories. These stories are how we can take something that is unknown and unknowable and still find ways to talk about it."

That sense of the unknown is often inseparable from the creatures themselves. For Bigfoot or his Florida cousin, the Skunk Ape, it might be the wilderness of the forests or swamplands where they're believed to reside. In West Virginia, the dangers of munitions dumps often conjure sightings of the Mothman. Similarly, in Texas, stories of the Chupacabra are more likely to swirl when anxieties about uncontrollable livestock loss due to disease are at their height.

But that doesn't mean those stories are entirely false.

"A lot of skeptics think these claims are made for attention," Robert says. "But the reality is most people know they are vulnerable and subjecting themselves to potential ridicule. So, they're usually reluctant to talk about it and kind of careful about who they tell."

David Bakara, who owns the Expedition: Bigfoot museum in Blue Ridge, Georgia, has had much the same experience when people share their stories. Some people are still terrified of their experiences. Others are driven by curiosity. But they are all trying to confront something they know shouldn't exist.

"Almost all the Bigfoot researchers I know used to be just normal people that watched football and cooked ribs in the backyard. Then they saw one of these things, and it kind of happened on accident," David says. "Some things, the more you dig into them, the more boring they are. But that's not the case here. The more you look into Bigfoot, the more interested you become."

UNTAMED PLACES

That allure of the unknown is one of the reasons Charlie helped start the Red River Gorge Bigfoot Festival, which takes place in Stanton, Kentucky, each May. The idea originated with a drive-in screening of "The Legend of Boggy Creek," a 1972 docudrama about the Fouke Monster, a Bigfoot-like creature spotted around Fouke, Arkansas.

Now, the festival is an opportunity to gather researchers and cryptozoologists to speak to believers and naysayers alike. The celebration is one of many across the country focused on Bigfoot and other local cryptids that give enthusiasts a chance to gather without fear



Photos courtesy of Charlie Raymond



Photos courtesy of David Bakara

Sheepsquatch

A Southern variation on Bigfoot, Sheepsquatch is reportedly a large beast with shaggy white fur and curled horns similar to a ram's. The creature has been spotted in remote forests and hollows along the Appalachian Mountains and is said to be distinctive for its sulfuric odor.

If you would like to report a Bigfoot or cryptid sighting, in Kentucky or beyond, you can contact Charlie Raymond and the Kentucky Bigfoot Research Organization at info@kentuckybigfoot.com.

AI-generated image by Brandon Pomrenke/ChatGPT



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Charlie Raymond carries along a bat on Bigfoot investigations in hopes of communicating with the creatures through tree knocks. Charlie's wife, Lyndsey, is a fellow Bigfoot investigator and a police officer with experience in forensics and fingerprint analysis. David Bakara opened Expedition: Bigfoot in Blue Ridge, Georgia, in 2016. David built the museum in the style of the roadside attractions he loved as a kid.

of judgment. But Charlie's hope is that the experience can also open more people's minds and encourage them to ask questions.

Barring that, it's an opportunity to step away from technology and gain a better appreciation for all wildlife, whether it's the creatures we know or those yet to be discovered.

"There are lots of things in this world we don't know about. A lot of animals we discover every year," he says. "We like to say, 'Leave only footprints. Pick up your trash, stop and smell the flowers every now and then and respect the wilderness.' Just like Bigfoot." 🐾



Original AI-generated image by James Middleton/Adobe Stock

ON THE HUNT

Ready to track down your own Bigfoot sighting? The Bigfoot Mapping Project has you covered. The site tracks reported encounters all over the country, with filters for locations where footprints, vocalizations and tree knocks are part of the accounts. Visit bigfootmap.com to find the location of your next adventure.

Everybody, Check It Out!

Ardmore Public Library improves accessibility



Story by LAURA MCGILL

The opening message on Ardmore Public Library's website shares its mission to serve two states, four counties and one community. Thanks to recent grants, the library is now able to improve accessibility and extend vital services to more members of the local community.

Through an initiative from the American Library Association and the Association for Rural and Small Libraries, the library secured two \$10,000 grants to better serve people with disabilities. The library received the first grant in May 2025 and the second in April of this year.

"These grants will allow our library to improve services to those in our community with disabilities and sensory needs, affirming that they are welcome and supported in our library," Ardmore Library Director Tina O'Driscoll says.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Following the grant award last year, the library held a community forum on accessibility to seek input from the community on how best to use the funds. "Based on the feedback we received, we focused on a power-assisted front door opener with push-button access," says grant writer and library assistant Kymla Eubanks. "Additional improvements have included wheelchair-accessible computer desks and workstations."

Kymla says another forum will be held to determine how to best use the 2026 grant. "We want input from our local community members because this is their library," she says. "'Nothing about us without us,' is a guiding principle for increasing accessibility at the library."

In the fall of 2025, the city of Ardmore, along with support from a local donor,

provided materials, labor and funding to build an accessible circulation desk. The library also recently received a grant from the Tennessee Disability Coalition. These funds will be used to place new sensory-supportive furniture in the children's room including a Nook Immersive Sensory Pod.

The pod is an internationally certified autism resource which provides a portable, calming and safe retreat designed to reduce sensory overload, lower anxiety and improve focus for neurodiverse individuals, including those with autism, ADHD and other sensory conditions. The library staff hopes these additions, which will be available later this year, will allow more people to have a supported experience.

THE STORY CONTINUES

Thanks to a Plot Twist grant from the state of Tennessee Governor's Early Literacy Foundation, the library is planning a new story for its Storybook Trail, located along the walking trail in John Barnes Park. The new story is expected to be in place later this summer.

Also at John Barnes Park, the library will hold the third annual Scarecrow Trail Oct. 10-24, with the Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 24. All events are family-friendly and free to attend. 🗨️

ARDMORE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Ardmore Library patron Joyce Eubanks, left, sits at a wheelchair-accessible computer desk. She is joined by Library Director Tina O'Driscoll.



Joyce uses the library's automatic door.

Photos courtesy of Ardmore Public Library

Protected User Plan

Cybersecurity and home security in one powerful solution



Today's homes are smarter than ever. Video doorbells greet visitors, thermostats adjust automatically, lights respond to voice commands and appliances connect seamlessly to Wi-Fi. But as homes become more connected, they also become more exposed. Every device added to your network creates another potential entry point for cyberthreats and another system that needs protection.

For homeowners who want the convenience of a fully connected home without sacrificing safety, Cornerstone Connectivity has a unified approach that protects both your home network and your household security.

PROTECTED USER PLAN

Let Cornerstone Connectivity help you create a home that's safe, smart and secure inside and out. Enjoy ultrafast 2,000/2,000 Mbps speeds built for 4K streaming, gaming and remote work, with low-latency performance that keeps your important

video calls and competitive gameplay smooth and interruption-free.

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**Experiencing
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Summer Potluck Staples

Reliable, affordable dishes perfect for warm-weather sharing



Potlucks call for recipes that can handle travel, sit happily on a table and please a wide range of tastes.

These summer-ready dishes rely on ingredients readily available in July and August, use straightforward techniques and are developed for home cooks. All are budget-conscious, and none require special equipment. 🗨️

Photography by **Mark Gilliland**
Food Styling by **Rhonda Gilliland**

OVEN-BAKED BARBECUE CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

- 3 pounds chicken drumsticks
- 1 1/2 cups barbecue sauce
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 F. Pat chicken dry and season with salt and

pepper. Toss with oil and arrange on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake 30 minutes, turn, brush generously with barbecue sauce and bake 15 minutes more until cooked through and sticky. Serve warm or at room temperature.

EASY PEACH CRISP

- 6 cups fresh peaches, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

TOPPING:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, melted



LEMON HERB ORZO SALAD

- 1 pound orzo pasta
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 cups English cucumber, diced
- 1/3 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped

DRESSING:

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Cook orzo in salted water until tender.

Drain and rinse with cold water. In a large bowl, combine orzo, tomatoes, cucumber, onion, feta and parsley. Whisk dressing ingredients and toss with salad.

Chill at least 30 minutes before serving.



SLOW-COOKER PULLED PORK SLIDERS

- 4 pounds pork shoulder or pork butt
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 12 slider buns

Season pork with salt, pepper and paprika. Place in slow cooker and add broth. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours until very tender. Shred meat with forks, discard excess fat and stir in barbecue sauce. Serve warm on slider buns.



WARM DILL AND MUSTARD POTATO SALAD

- 3 pounds small red or Yukon Gold potatoes
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 cup celery, finely sliced
- 1/3 cup red onion, finely diced
- 1/4 cup fresh dill, chopped
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Boil potatoes in salted water until fork-tender. Drain and cut into bite-size pieces while still warm.

In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, vinegar, mustards and sugar. Add warm potatoes, celery and red onion, tossing gently so the potatoes absorb the dressing. Season with salt and pepper. Fold in dill just before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Preheat oven to 375 F.

Toss peaches with sugar and lemon juice and spread in a baking dish. Mix topping ingredients and sprinkle evenly over fruit.

Bake until golden and bubbly, about 40 minutes. Cool slightly before serving.



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