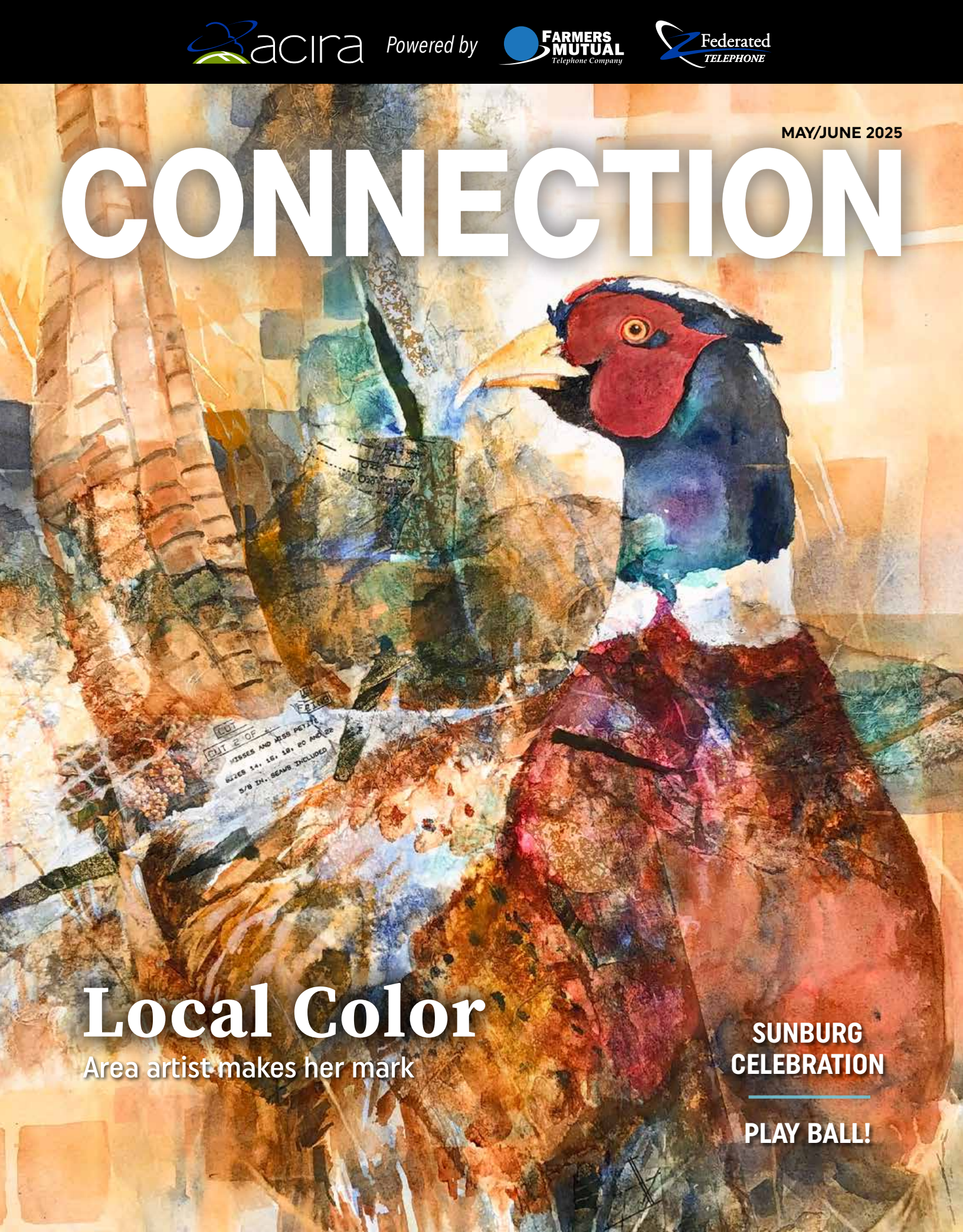


MAY/JUNE 2025

# CONNECTION



## Local Color

Area artist makes her mark

SUNBURG  
CELEBRATION

PLAY BALL!



By Shirley Bloomfield, CEO  
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

## The Journey to Connectivity

**N**TCA members create broadband networks so fast and reliable that it's easy to take for granted the effort and expertise needed to bring these services to homes and businesses. These professionals do amazing work, particularly when considering the intricate, multi-step journey to build, expand and maintain a network.

It begins with detailed research and careful planning. The broadband provider must learn exactly how many homes and businesses might want service, as well as the challenges posed by the landscape. Then, a thorough review of the numbers determines if the project makes financial sense. It's a puzzle where the pieces are population density, infrastructure costs and potential demand for the service.

Then there's the engineering—design, build and inspect. Detailed maps identify routes for cables, permitting, environmental regulations and access to land. Some of these projects can take two to four years from the first engineering drawing to the first connection.

The work doesn't stop when the network goes live. These networks require maintenance, technology upgrades and customer support.

These networks are lifelines connecting rural communities to telehealth, education, remote work and cutting-edge technologies. With the help of service providers like yours, we're building broadband to last and ensuring no community gets left behind in our increasingly digital world.

To learn more, check out the Foundation for Rural Service and JSI's latest report, "Delivering Broadband From Beginning to 'End,'" at [frs.org/delivering-broadband-beginning-end](https://frs.org/delivering-broadband-beginning-end). 



## Safe Searches

### Tips to avoid scams

When you need information fast, a quick check of Google is often the first stop. In fact, some people find it easier to search online for everything, including the addresses for a specific website like a bank, trusted repair service or health care provider.

Unfortunately, scammers know this, too, so they sometimes create bogus sites with addresses confusingly close to the real thing.

Google is aware of this trend, and it touts advanced systems that keep users' search results 99% spam-free. The company also offers a few tips for closing the final security weaknesses.

- Pay close attention to the URL—the specific web address—before clicking any unfamiliar link. Typically, in an email, hovering the cursor over the address will show the complete link. Don't click the link if it looks suspicious.
- The three dots next to the search results in Google can be used to find more details about the webpage, store or business you're considering. You can find clues indicating if the site is legitimate before clicking the link.
- When you're looking for official resources, watch out for unusual address formatting. For example, there's typically only one correct customer service number for a larger company. But not all businesses have customer service numbers, and searching for them requires you to be mindful. Watch for strange formatting in the website address, including unexpected symbols or emojis.

# A Rockin' RECIPE

## Hannah Dasher cooks up an online storm



Performer Hannah Dasher created a countryfied niche for herself on social media.

Photo courtesy of Jeremy Ryan Photography

Story by BRANDI DIXON

**H**annah Dasher is a blast of classic country and rock 'n' roll paired with social media influencer. Stepping into the home she calls “Honky-Tonk Graceland” and features on her social media is, as Hannah says, like going back in time to “your meemaw’s house.”

“Avocado green canisters, gold salt and pepper shakers, brass pots. I love my retro kitchen, and I love that the fans feel right at home,” she says, adding that she enjoys entertaining.

Music and songwriting are Hannah’s first loves. “I was rehearsing my acceptance speech for best new female vocalist of the year in my mirror at age 10,” she says. “I grew up listening to ’90s country radio, and knew I wanted to be an entertainer.”

Hannah pursued music professionally, taking her big hair and a heaping helping of Southern charm to Nashville, Tennessee. She started out writing songs for other artists, getting some big accolades thanks to collaborations with Brad

Paisley, Lainey Wilson and Ian Munsick, to name a few. She continued performing whenever she had the chance.

### STAND BY YOUR PAN

In 2020 during the pandemic, Hannah found herself stuck. “All the stages shut down, and I needed a stage,” she says. “Talking with some friends I learned a lot of girls my age couldn’t cook, so I stumbled into the world of social media, and it was the perfect storm.”

Hannah took to TikTok to share her

family’s beloved recipes and a few of her own, all while sprinkling in a bit of her signature rockin’ country flavor. The recipe produced the now-viral Stand By Your Pan social media accounts. More than 1.5 million followers join Hannah daily in her retro kitchen.

“I love that this brought country and noncountry music fans together,” she says. “It’s hard to pigeonhole into just one world, and I’m glad that I can be this representative of the past and the future via a semicelebrity chef.” 🗨️

### ALL THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS

When Hannah Dasher isn’t cranking out content, she’s picking up a guitar and writing music.

“God always sends it from the left side of the sky and out of my mouth,” she says of her process. “Sometimes it’s melody and lyrics simultaneously, but you just never know, and you always have to be looking for it.”

Hannah is on the road this year with her band on The Wanted Tour, featuring stops across the United States, the United Kingdom and Sweden. She encourages fans to spread the word and come see her and her “boys.”

# Unmatched Performance

## No technology beats our network's speed

There's something magical when technology becomes so advanced that it simply works, without muss, fuss or the need for advanced skills. Your smartphone is a great example, particularly whatever app you prefer for photos. Looking for an image of your cat or dog, a mountain or a beach? Just ask, and the search will likely provide shockingly good results.



**KEVIN BEYER**

Chief Executive Officer

That app simply does the job, and our internet service is much the same—it simply works. It's fast, reliable and resilient. Thanks to the long-term investments to create a fiber optic network supported by a team of local professionals, we can provide services that unlock the online world. If you consider internet access essential, there's no better option.

Whether you're working from home, attending virtual classes or binge-watching your favorite shows, fiber makes sure everything runs smoothly. Do you have multiple devices online at once, rely on video calls or enjoy challenging online games? No problem. The performance is there whenever you need it.

It's important to remember, not all technologies have the same benefit. They may work, but not as well as fiber. With those other systems, storms might block signals or otherwise create interruptions. However, compared with other technologies, our fiber network is designed to not only stay online more reliably but also bounce back more quickly if there is an outage.

Not every community gets to enjoy this type of internet service. We designed our fiber network for today with features capable of handling future online tools and resources. Considering how quickly technology is advancing, an adaptable network is vital for our community to stay competitive in an increasingly online world.

After all, high-speed internet is more than a nice-to-have luxury. From telehealth services to online education, fiber optic networks give us access to essential resources that fundamentally improve our quality of life. Similarly, reliable, fast internet energizes our economy. From established area businesses to new entrepreneurs, the internet provides the tools needed to compete.

We're committed to bringing these benefits to every corner of our community. And please remember, Farmers Mutual and Federated Telephone are about more than the physical network. The dedicated professionals making up our team live here, believe in our area's future and are committed to providing unparalleled support.

So, let's celebrate the progress we've made and look forward to a future where everyone can enjoy the advantages of cutting-edge technology. Our goal is to ensure no one is left behind and that everyone has access to the opportunities high-speed internet provides.

Thank you for your continued support and trust. Together, we're building a brighter, more connected future. 

## CONNECTION

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POWERED BY FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY  
AND FEDERATED TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

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On the Cover:



Appleton artist Kerry Kolke-Bonk's body of work includes scenic watercolors, collages and a series of portraits of local veterans. See story on Page 12.

Photo courtesy of  
Knob Hill Arts

# SIMPLIFY for *Summer*

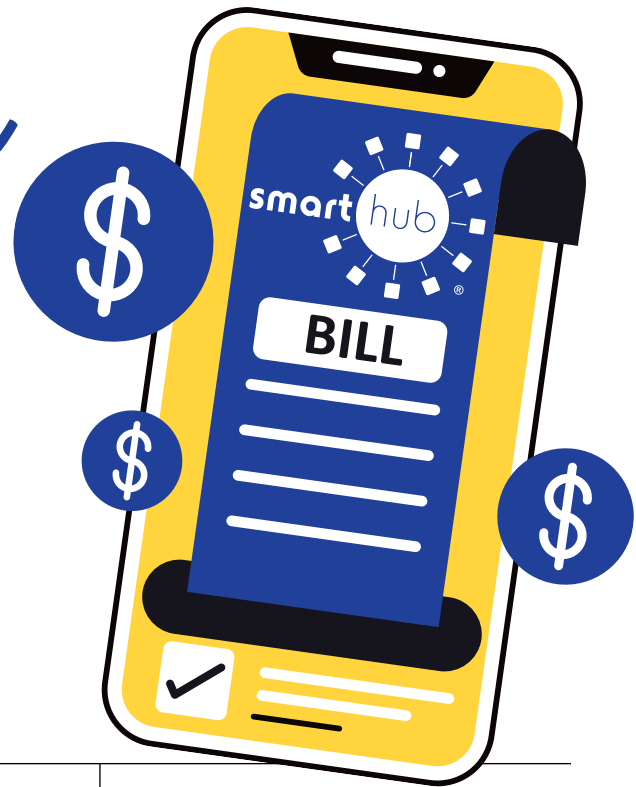


Before you set off on that road trip this summer, make monthly bill paying much easier with the Farmers Mutual and Federated Telephone's SmartHub app.

To learn more or to register go to [farmers.smarthub.coop](http://farmers.smarthub.coop) or [fedtel.smarthub.coop](http://fedtel.smarthub.coop). Members can also call our business offices for help.

Farmers Mutual can be reached at 320-568-2105. To contact Federated Telephone, call 320-324-7111 or 320-585-4875.

Smartphone users can download the SmartHub app from their app store. Have your account number and most recent billing statement handy.



ALWAYS  
CALL  
BEFORE YOU  
DIG



**HATS OFF**  
to the

**Class of**  
**2025**

Congratulations to all 2025 high school, college and technical school graduates. Enjoy this moment—your future is bright!

## REMEMBER Those Who Gave All

Farmers Mutual and Federated Telephone offices will be closed on Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day. Take time to recognize and remember the men and women who gave their lives while serving in the U.S. military so we can continue to live in freedom.



Road trip to  
baseball's most  
entertaining  
destinations

Story by JOHN CLAYTON

**R**ic Sisler admits he misses the annual spring-to-fall marathon of a baseball season. “When it’s in your blood, it doesn’t matter what you’re doing. You’re always going to be pulled toward that industry, and I’m certainly no

exception,” he says. “Going to the ballpark, the camaraderie and being around the yard was just a thrill for me.

“I certainly don’t miss tarp pulls and some of those types of things,” he says with a laugh, referring to the backbreaking

work of getting protective tarps on and off the diamond during rainy weather.

The national pastime is most certainly in Ric’s blood. He played for three seasons in the New York Yankees minor league system before running several minor league

## ART IMITATES LIFE

Crash Davis, a career minor league catcher, was a star-making role for a young Kevin Costner in the movie “Bull Durham.” Spence Harris was the real-life Crash Davis—and then some.

In the movie, Crash spends his final season as a player chasing an all-time minor league home run record. In reality, Spence holds a bevy of minor league records that will likely never be broken. A native of Duluth, Minnesota, he played 26 seasons in baseball’s minor leagues from 1921-24 and 1927-48. He also played 164 Major League Baseball games for the Chicago White Sox, Washington Senators and Philadelphia Athletics.

But as a minor leaguer, Spence—who was part of the 1937 trade that brought all-time great Ted Williams to the Boston Red Sox—appeared in 3,100 games. He holds the minor league records for at-bats with 11,377; hits, 3,617; runs scored, 2,287; and doubles, 743.

In his final season for the Yakima Packers in 1948, Spence batted .330 at the age of 47. He spent more than 50 years in the game as a player, scout and coach. He died in Minneapolis in 1982, just weeks before his 82nd birthday.



Photo courtesy of the St. Paul Saints

Fans wear hot dog hats during a St. Paul Saints home game. The formerly independent Saints are the Triple-A affiliate of the Major League Minnesota Twins in neighboring Minneapolis.

organizations as a front office executive and as vice president/general manager of the independent South Coast League based in Georgia. His father, Dick Sisler, was a Major League Baseball manager and All-Star player, and his grandfather, George Sisler, is enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Ric, who is still involved in athletics as director of corporate sponsorships at Western Carolina University, says many fans of the game come back season after season.

“Minor league baseball has been part of the fabric of our society in a lot of smaller towns,” he says. “It was kind of a binding agent for folks to come watch baseball with their friends and neighbors and just have a wholesome time.”

While the minor leagues are about family fun and community pride to many fans, the game is a balance of business and player development for the teams and their MLB affiliates. The minors have long relied on fan-friendly, creative promotions and player interactions to sell tickets, and all of that comes with an affordable price tag.

“I think people have always gone to minor league games because it’s affordable,” Ric says. “You had great entertainment and could see some potential big-league players there at an affordable

price. You’re very close to the field and close to the players. It was a different setting from the Major League parks. I don’t want to see that change.”

Planning a trip this summer—or maybe even a baseball pilgrimage? There’s a game, sports history and tradition, as well as a bunch of fun waiting for you. 📱

## FUN FACTS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

St. Paul is the hometown of four Major League Hall of Famers who all grew up within a couple of miles of one another—and all of them played for the Minnesota Twins.

Former Twins catcher Joe Mauer became the last of the four elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 2024, joining outfielder Dave Winfield, pitcher Jack Morris and infielder Paul Molitor.

### ‘THE WADE’

Wade Stadium in Duluth was the original home of the Duluth Dukes of the Northern League from 1941-70. Often referred to as “The Wade,” the stadium was built in 1941 by the Great Depression-era Works Progress Administration with 381,000 bricks removed from the Grand Avenue brick roadbed and reassembled.

The stadium is home to the Duluth Huskies of the summer wooden-bat Northwoods League, featuring collegiate players.

Notable Dukes alumni include: 1968 American League MVP and two-time Cy Young winner Denny McLain, who won 31 games with the Detroit Tigers in 1968; 11-time All-Star Bill Freehan; four-time All-Star Willie Horton; and five-time Gold Glove winner Mickey Stanley.

### GETTING THE CALL

Triple-A players who get called up to the major leagues by the Minnesota Twins have a short drive to get there. The 11-mile drive down I-94 from CHS Field, home of the St. Paul Saints, to the Twins’ Target Field in Minneapolis takes 19 minutes.

# Syttende Mai Celebration

Sunburg's Norwegian festivities continue to unite small town

Story by JAMIE BIESIADA

**W**hen longtime Sunburg resident Miriam Peterson passed away more than two decades ago, she left her city with a long-lasting gift that still brings hundreds of community members together in celebration each spring.

Sunburg's annual Syttende Mai Celebration, which marks its 20th anniversary this year, offers everything from a baseball game to a tractor pull to a parade. It's been a mainstay for the local community every year, but its roots lie in Miriam's generosity. The name Syttende Mai comes from Norway, which celebrates the signing of its constitution with a public holiday every May 17 featuring parades, food and special outfits.

Sunburg City Clerk Nancy Feldman

says Miriam lived about a mile from town. While she wanted nothing more than to remain in her home, Miriam ended up in a nursing home at the end of her life. In her will she left behind a generous gift for the city—\$1 million. She wanted the city to create a community where the elderly could live out their lives in Sunburg.

"To honor her wishes, we built an assisted living building and a few apartments and a cafe, so the residents in assisted living could get out and visit with their neighbors and everybody else in the cafe," Nancy says.

Once the facility was completed, Sunburg held an open house offering attendees tours and food. "People said, 'Well, this is pretty cool—you should do this every

year,'" Nancy says. And with that, the Syttende Mai Celebration was born.

## HONORING SCANDINAVIAN HERITAGE

Many Sunburg area residents are of Scandinavian descent, Nancy says. The time of year was right, too, as Sunburg's Syttende Mai Celebration typically takes place the Sunday after Mother's Day. Throughout the years, the celebration has incorporated many nods to Norway, including cultural demonstrations and costumes.

The event has steadily drawn large crowds. Sunburg itself has a population of around 100, Nancy says, but anywhere from 800 to 1,000 people tend to turn out for Syttende Mai.



Sunburg's annual Syttende Mai Celebration is a nod to Norwegian traditions, with many in the area having Scandinavian roots.



One of several homemade floats makes its way along the parade route.



Firefighters and other local first responders ride proudly in their vehicles.



The KMS Marching Saints band performs in the parade.



Mayor Mike O'Leary rides in a vintage car during the parade.



Vendors share their creations with attendees.

"It brings people together," Sunburg Mayor Mike O'Leary says. "There's not a lot of businesses left in town, but it's just getting everyone together."

## PARADING AROUND TOWN

Syttende Mai is a daylong, family-friendly celebration in the city. Last year's event began with a pancake breakfast, before moving into a nondenominational church service followed by Norwegian treats and coffee.

The celebration's tractor pull is a popular event. Jeanine Bowman, president of the Sunburg Area Commercial Club, the community organization that hosts the celebration, says the tractors start rolling into town first thing in the morning.

Some other highlights include a baseball game—featuring the area's Norway Lake-Sunburg Lakers team, naturally—live fiddle music, a firefighters' supper and even a children's tractor pull.

Jeanine also organizes the celebration's

boutique, a vendor show held at the Community Center. Usually, 10 to 15 vendors are on hand, offering Norwegian treats, handcrafted items, jewelry and more.

"I try to get a variety of things," Jeanine says. "A lot of them have been coming since the beginning, and some are new."

Perhaps the celebration's biggest draw is its parade. Mike estimates the parade draws between 70 to 90 different entries each year. In some years, it's even topped 100, spanning everything from marching bands to tractors to floats.

One of the most fun parts of planning the celebration is choosing the grand marshal of the parade, Jeanine says. Organizers choose longtime community members who give back to Sunburg in some way.

## A TRUE COMMUNITY GATHERING

Sunburg has changed over the years. Several businesses have closed, including the assisted living facility originally built with Miriam's donation. However, Mike

says a local couple is working to get the proper paperwork and permits with plans to reopen it.

Through it all, Syttende Mai has held strong. Even Mother Nature usually smiles on the event. "The weather has been amazingly cooperative for pretty much the last 20 years," Mike says. "It maybe sprinkled one or two days, but it's been nice."

Syttende Mai offers community members a chance to spend time together. The Commercial Club uses its Facebook page to share information and photos from each year's celebration.

The mayor encourages residents and visitors alike to come out and enjoy the festivities, especially in the celebration's 20th year. It's great, Mike says, for "anybody that likes loud tractors, baseball. There's a couple of events for kids. It's just a fun time."

"It's really just community and people getting a chance to talk," Jeanine adds. 🗨️

# LOOK TOWARD THE

# Light

Whatever you call them, fireflies mesmerize

Story by SARA DIAMOND PATTERSON

Catching lightning bugs in a Mason jar with holes punched in the lid is a summer ritual for kids across the country. Watching their light show together is often a time for families to slow down, which is what Lynn Frierson Faust's family began doing in the Great Smoky Mountains during the 1960s.

They marveled for years at the unique light display, as the flying beetles blinked on and off at the same time for several hours after dark. When Lynn heard the August 1991 edition of *Science News* magazine featured an article on fireflies that blink in unison, she figured she would finally find out why and how they made their magic.

"I remember thinking, 'Oh cool, a lightning bug feature. It'll talk about our light show.' Only it didn't mention one thing," she says. In fact,

the authors said the Western Hemisphere had no species of fireflies that blinked synchronously.

Lynn let them know they were mistaken and invited them to come to the Smokies to see the show for themselves. The scientists did and agreed Lynn was right, lighting the way for her life's work.

## 'JUST SO DARN FUN'

As "The Lightning Bug Lady," Lynn is internationally known for her research on the ecology and habits of the more than 125 species of U.S. fireflies, helping

## THE LOWDOWN

**HOW:** Fireflies produce their magical flashes through bioluminescence, a chemical reaction.

**WHY:** Each of the more than 125 species of fireflies in the United States—2,000 worldwide—has a unique signature flash pattern the male uses to attract a female of his specific type.

**WHERE:** Everywhere. Many Western species do not flash or fly, but they're out there.

**WHEN:** Warm summer nights.



AI-generated artwork by Firefly

## LEND A HAND

Pesticides and habitat reduction have taken a toll on firefly populations. Maintaining a "wild" area of your yard with a little water, native vegetation and undisturbed soil will make your home more firefly friendly. But the easiest way to help is simply by turning out the lights during their active period. Visit [xerces.org](http://xerces.org) or [firefly.org](http://firefly.org) for more tips.

Photo courtesy of Lynn Frierson Faust



A BBC crew takes a break from filming in 2019. Naturalist Lynn Frierson Faust examines equipment she and Mark Zloba, ecological manager at the Edge of Appalachia, use to gather fireflies at the preserve outside of Cincinnati.

to raise awareness of their unique life cycles and importance within ecosystems.

She scrambles to 14 states each year to catch them emerging during their eight-week active season, usually early June to late July. For 18 years, she has been the worldwide go-to on the subject, serving as on-site scientific consultant for BBC Earth, Discovery, National Geographic and other international film crews. Lynn's 2017 book, "Fireflies, Glow-worms, and Lightning Bugs," was the first-ever comprehensive firefly field guide and shared the results of her nearly three decades of research on behalf of museums, universities, state and national parks and nature centers.

"I'm not a scientist per se, but I've done the research, a whole lot of research," she says. "I'm just a regular person obsessed with these and fortunate to have the time and a little knowledge to build on."

Throughout history, fireflies have symbolized hope and mystery, serving as transient reminders that life is fleeting. In some cultures, people see them as their lost ancestors, a sacred connection between the earthly and spiritual worlds.

When she began, Lynn didn't have much research to start with. "There were just a bunch of dusty old scientific papers, but that's about it," she says. "There's just not been that much research done on them since they aren't harmful or helpful to people or crops."

They are, however, a great indicator species for the health of ecosystems. "When they disappear, we have to know why and where to look." And

## HERE THEY ARE!

No matter where you are, you don't have to go far to find the magic. You can look for lightning bugs anywhere from your backyard to wildlife management areas or wooded parks, avoiding light pollution and areas that spray for mosquitoes.

The Southeast offers the most variety of species. "Generally speaking—and this holds true for almost all living things—as you go south closer toward the equator, you get a greater diversity of species but maybe fewer numbers," firefly expert Lynn Frierson Faust says. "Whereas when you go north in latitude, you get greater numbers but fewer species." With late-season freezes and early frost, Minnesota's entire firefly season is compressed into the month of July.

"The species are programmed to come out all at once, mate and lay their eggs and go away before the first frost," Lynn says. "Minnesota is a super good place for them, but you have to get out there and find them real fast, and then they're gone."

Though fireflies' season is limited in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, their habitat is not.

"Minnesota has so much water," Lynn says. "Any time you have water and cattails and marshy stuff, you're going to have a lot of fireflies."

Lynn says they will always serve as a nostalgic reminder of days gone by.

"Lightning bugs are fantastic ambassadors leading people back into nature and to a better understanding of the connectedness of it all," she says. "Plus, they're just so darn fun." 🐞

## NAME GAME

Officially known as Lampyridae, worldwide fireflies are called blinkies, glowflies, moon bugs, peeney wallies, blinkin' bees, hoturu, fire beetles and candle flies. Here at home, "lightning bug" is more common in the South and Midwest, while "firefly" is typically heard in the West and large cities in the East. Some researchers attribute the differences to weather. While lightning is most active in the South and Midwest, the West sees the most wildfires.



ABOVE: Kerry Kolke-Bonk entered her watercolor painting, "White Petunias in Blue," into the 2020 Red River Watercolor Society National Show.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KNOB HILL ARTS

At the unveiling, Kerry met with family members of the service members depicted in the portraits.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MIRANDA SOLAND

# Creativity & Community

## Local artist's work includes portraits of fallen veterans

Story by JAMIE BIESIADA

Kerry Kolke-Bonk likes to say she inherited her artistic talent. Her late mother, DeVaughn Kolke, was a watercolor artist whose art education was a correspondence course with the Minneapolis Institute of Art. While Kerry studied professional photography for two years, she put art mostly on hold as she raised her children and worked as a clerk at Appleton's post office.

She took part in artists' workshops over the years, leading her to set up her studio, Knob Hill Arts, in 1995. "Knob" is Bonk spelled backward, and she lives on a small hill outside Appleton, hence the name. She painted watercolors of tractors in different seasons and sold prints at events like craft shows and tractor flea markets.

She's also contributed to art honoring war heroes—almost every street in Appleton is named after a fallen soldier.

### STREETS OF HONOR

Former Mayor Robert P. Miller started the roadway tribute in 1947 to honor soldiers who fought in World War II, and others have been added from the Korean, Vietnam and Iraqi wars.

Kerry knew the story behind the street names but realized several years ago a piece was missing—the veterans' faces.

She conceptualized a project that would further honor them in the form of 4-by-4-foot portraits of each veteran to be displayed at the intersection of Highways 7 and 59, Reuss Avenue and Hering Street.

"The town was behind it 100%,"

Kerry says.

She applied for a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board to cover the cost of 10 portraits. A mix of local organizations, businesses and individuals were eager to fund the rest. Fellow artist Katia Andreeva, of Minneapolis, got on board, and they began painting the 36 acrylic portraits in October 2023.

The space was dedicated on Memorial Day 2024, and the portraits will be on display indefinitely.

### A DIVERSE PALETTE

Kerry enjoys working with watercolors, encaustic, or hot wax, painting and eco-printing, using natural materials like leaves and flowers to make a pattern on fabric.

"Those three I like, because you never know what you're going to get," Kerry says. "They're more spontaneous."

She keeps a studio in her home and at Appleton Art & Culture in the Appleton Heritage Center. Kerry helped create Appleton Art & Culture as a community organization dedicated to art and history.

Kerry displays and sells her work in galleries and at the Meander Art Crawl, which features local artists from the Upper Minnesota River Valley. Her work has been featured in several juried art shows and at the Minnesota State Fair. She also maintains knobhillarts.wordpress.com and a Facebook page. 📱



LEFT: With a steady hand, Kerry paints facial features from a pencil sketch and a photograph.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIA ANDREEVA

Having trouble using the phone due to a hearing or speech disability?

# Minnesota Relay can help!



Minnesota Relay is a free telephone service with specially trained communications assistants to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. Calls can be made to anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are completely confidential.

To make a relay call, dial 711. Once connected to the relay service, tell the communications assistant the type of relay call you wish to make. Or, you may dial the specific toll-free number for the type of relay service.

## **Captioned Telephone (CapTel)**

CapTel uses a special telephone with a text display screen so a person who is hard of hearing can listen to and read captions of everything the other person on the call says. Speak directly to the other person on the call, and a relay communications assistant transcribes everything the other person says into captions, which appear on the CapTel phone.

## **Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS)**

Internet-based forms of CTS are available for those who would like to use CTS on a computer, tablet or smartphone. To learn more, go to [fcc.gov/ipcts](http://fcc.gov/ipcts).

## **Hearing Carry Over (HCO): 800-627-3529**

HCO allows a person who can hear clearly but has very limited or no speech capability to make phone calls. Using a special text telephone, the caller types conversation for the relay communications assistant to read to the other person and then can listen directly to the other person's response.

## **Hearing User: 800-627-3529**

A hearing person may use a standard telephone or mobile phone to place a relay call and speak with a person who is deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled.

## **Spanish Relay: 877-627-5448**

Spanish-speaking individuals with a hearing or speech disability are able to make relay calls. This is not a translation service—both parties must speak Spanish, and at least one party must have a hearing or speech disability.

## **Speech-to-Speech (STS): 877-627-3848**

STS allows a person who has difficulty speaking or being understood on the phone to communicate using his or her own voice or voice synthesizer. The communications assistant revoices the caller's words so that the other person can understand them and can speak directly to the caller.

## **Text Telephone (TTY): 800-627-3529**

This service allows a person who is deaf, deaf-blind or speech disabled to use a TTY to communicate with the other person on the call.

## **Video Relay Service (VRS)**

VRS allows a person who uses American Sign Language to communicate over the phone. The VRS user connects to the relay communications assistant via an internet-enabled device with a video camera. The communications assistant relays the conversation back and forth between the parties—in ASL with the VRS user and by voice with the called party. To learn more, go to [fcc.gov/consumers/guides/video-relay-services](http://fcc.gov/consumers/guides/video-relay-services).

## **Voice Carry Over (VCO): 877-627-3024**

VCO allows a person with a hearing disability to use his or her own voice to speak directly to the other party. The communications assistant then types the other party's response, which is displayed on the VCO user's text telephone.

Find the full list of resources at [mn.gov/commerce/consumer/telecom/mnrelay](http://mn.gov/commerce/consumer/telecom/mnrelay). 

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MINNESOTA RELAY SERVICES:**

[mnrelay.org](http://mnrelay.org)  
800-657-3775

### **Emergency Assistance**

TTY callers should dial 911 directly in an emergency. All 911 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but this may delay the response to your call.

To file a complaint regarding Minnesota Relay, call 800-657-3775 or email [mn.relay@state.mn.us](mailto:mn.relay@state.mn.us).

You will need to provide: the date and time of the relay call; the calling from and to phone numbers; the communications assistant's identification number; and the nature of your complaint.

You may also file a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission: [fcc.gov/complaints](http://fcc.gov/complaints).

Voice: 888-225-5322

TTY: 888-835-5322

ASL via VP: 844-432-2275

## **TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION (TED) PROGRAM**

The TED Program provides free specialized telecommunications equipment to income-eligible Minnesotans who are having trouble using the telephone due to a hearing, speech or physical disability. Online: [mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing](http://mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing); Voice: 800-657-3663; ASL via VP: 651-964-1514.

# Fantastic Frying

Flavorful chicken with the finest sides

Many say munching on piping-hot, crispy fried chicken is a joy like no other. Whether it's juicy white meat from the breast or the wings or the deep, engaging flavors of the dark meat found in thighs and legs, when it comes to fried chicken, most everyone has a preference. But there are a few things that good pieces of fried chicken have in common—the skin must stay on, and it must be crispy.

That's not too much to ask, but it's something that many cooks cannot achieve. There's a knack to it that may take a few extra steps, but the endgame is well worth it.

Serve the chicken alongside a big spoonful of potato salad and finish with a bowl of banana pudding and you have a meal fit for a beautiful summer evening.



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Food Styling by **Rhonda Gilliland**

## CRISPY FRIED CHICKEN

- 1 (4-pound) chicken, cut into pieces
- 1 cup whole milk buttermilk
- 2 cups all-purpose flour for coating
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 quarts vegetable oil for frying

Dry chicken with paper towels. Put the flour in a large plastic bag. Let the amount of chicken you are cooking dictate the amount of flour you use. Season the flour with paprika, garlic powder, salt and pepper to taste. Paprika helps to brown the chicken.

Dip chicken pieces in buttermilk then, a few at a time, put them in the bag with the flour, seal the bag and shake to coat well.

Place the coated chicken on a cookie sheet or tray, and cover with a clean dish

towel or waxed paper. Let sit until the flour reaches a paste-like consistency. This step is important to ensure that the skin will be crispy and adhere to the chicken.

Fill a large skillet (cast iron is best) about 1/3 to 1/2 full of vegetable oil. Heat until very hot.

Put in as many chicken pieces as the skillet can hold. Brown the chicken in hot oil on both sides.

When browned, reduce heat and cover the skillet. Let cook for 30 minutes (the chicken will be cooked through but not crispy). Remove cover, raise heat again and continue to fry until crispy. Drain the fried chicken on paper towels. Depending on how much chicken you have, you may have to fry it in a few batches. Keep the finished chicken in a slightly warm oven while preparing the rest.



## LOADED BAKED POTATO SALAD

- 4 pounds russet potatoes
- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3/4 cup sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 12 ounces bacon, cooked, cooled and chopped
- 6 green onions, whites and green parts, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Place cleaned potatoes on a baking sheet and pierce four to five times with a fork. Lightly coat with olive oil, sprinkle with kosher salt and cook for 50-60 minutes or until easily pierced with a cake tester or skewer. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes. When cool enough to

handle, peel the potatoes and cut into 1-inch chunks, discarding the potato skins. The potato flesh may crumble and get shaggy, and that's OK—transfer it all to a large mixing bowl. While still warm, sprinkle the potatoes with the apple cider vinegar. Set aside for 15-30 minutes or until the potatoes are cooled.

Meanwhile, cook the bacon in a large skillet or in the oven, drain and let cool. Crumble into bite-size pieces.

In a small bowl, mix the mayonnaise and sour cream. Season with the kosher salt and pepper.

When the potatoes are cool, pour the mayonnaise mix over them with the crumbled bacon, green onion and cheddar cheese. Gently fold the ingredients together. Season with more salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate for 3 hours up to overnight before serving. Store in the refrigerator for up to four days.

## NUTTER BUTTER 'NANA PUDDING

- 8 ounces softened cream cheese
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 (3.4-ounce) boxes instant vanilla pudding
- 2 3/4 cups cold milk

- 8 ounces whipped topping divided
- 1 (1-pound) package Nutter Butter or other peanut butter sandwich cookies
- 5-7 ripe bananas, sliced



In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened cream cheese until smooth. Add the condensed milk and mix until there are no lumps.

In a second bowl, mix the pudding mix and milk together until smooth. Pour the pudding into the cream cheese mixture and mix until completely combined. Fold in half of the whipped topping.

Line the bottom of a trifle dish with a layer of Nutter Butter cookies. Add a layer of banana slices on top of the cookies. Spread a layer of the pudding mixture evenly over the bananas. Repeat 1-3 times, depending on the size of your dish.

Spread the remaining whipped topping on top of the pudding. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours but overnight is best.

Crush a few Nutter Butters on top of the whipped topping immediately before serving. 🍪

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**June 12**

Federated Telephone's Annual Meeting and Customer Appreciation  
Picnic at Morris Area Elementary School

**Bring your registration card for entry and receive a free gift!**

**Check the Farmers Mutual Facebook page & Federated  
Telephone Facebook page** for updates on meeting times.