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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013

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May Your Holidays Be Sparkling & Bright

We hope you enjoy a wonderful season with friends and family. Remember that we're always here to help you stay connected and make the most of today's technology with updated communications services. Thank you for choosing us!

Our offices will be closed on the following days to allow our employees time to celebrate.

- Thursday, November 28, 2013, for Thanksgiving
- Wednesday, December 25, 2013, for Christmas Day
- Wednesday, January 1, 2014, for New Year's Day

In case of a service emergency, please call us at 888-207-6274.



You Live in a Smart Rural Community

Recently, we nominated our member communities for national recognition as a "Smart Rural Community" recognized through the NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association. We are pleased to share that we received the distinct honor of Paradigm Award recipients, and we should all be proud that our region has been named a "Smart Rural Community." The NTCA Smart Rural Community initiative is a program that intends to foster the development of Smart Rural Communities throughout the United States by providing a road map and resources for rural broadband providers, connected industries, and other interested parties such as educators, health care providers, public safety officials, and economic development bodies.



The communities of Sebeka, Menahga, Verndale, Aldrich, Nimrod, and Wolf Lake achieved this recognition in a competitive process conducted by NTCA this past summer. Applications from communities across the country were reviewed by a panel of experts from the fields of education, health care, telecommunications, finance, and rural economic development. Our region was recognized for using broadband to facilitate greater interconnection of the community's resources and to prepare and enable citizens' participation in the global economy.

Examples of how our communities have embraced broadband use include district schools that have eliminated bottlenecks in their network by upgrading their technology to include a 10 Gigabit network backbone. This has allowed flipped classrooms, virtual field trips, and unlimited online learning opportunities. Local governments have added Wi-Fi hotspots to public areas like Sebeka's city park and Menahga's Spirit Lake beach.

A Smart Rural Community relies not only on high-capacity broadband connections, but also on teams of highly motivated and collaborative leaders—the people behind the technology. Ultimately, the people who use broadband-enabled services create a smart rural community and encourage its continued development and evolution. We are pleased to be part of this effort, and proud of the accomplishments we have achieved with our local leaders. **To find out more about "Smart Rural Community" visit www.ntca.org/smart.**

Santa & His Reindeer Return!



'Tis the season—for open houses at the West Central Telephone offices. Santa's reindeer, Donner and Blitzen, will be at the Menahga office with a sleigh to greet kids December 6 from 2:30 to 4:30pm. The Menahga office is located at 14 Main Street SW in Menahga.

The following Friday, December 13 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm, Santa will join his reindeer at the Sebeka office to greet kids and give sleigh rides. The Sebeka office is located at 308 Frontage Road, Sebeka.

Cookies, hot chocolate and coffee will be served. Parents—don't forget your camera to pose with Santa and his reindeer!

Watch TV Everywhere

If you have TV programming through West Central Telephone and own a smartphone, an iPad or tablet with Internet connectivity, you can watch live TV and previous recorded episodes everywhere. Best of all, it's free! Register once at **WatchTVEverywhere.com** using your West Central Telephone account number, and access some of your favorite channels and programming.

WatchTVEverywhere.com includes live TV, as well as previously aired episodes of some of your favorite channels. This service is provided FREE for all West Central TV customers, although you may incur overage charges from your cellular carrier if you exceed your data plan.

To register, go to **WatchTVEverywhere.com** and select West Central Telephone from the drop down menu of TV providers. Click on "Register." Enter your account number from a West Central Telephone bill and the last name on the account. Next, you will be asked to:

- Provide an email address.
This will be your username.

- Provide a password.
- Select a password reset question.
- Supply the answer to the password reset question.
- Click on Register.
- Now, check the email address you just provided. You will find an email message with your **WatchTVEverywhere** activation link. Click on the link to complete the registration process.
- That's it! Now, you can start enjoying **WatchTVEverywhere**.

It is important that you keep your username and password confidential. Use of your credentials by others will result in loss of **WatchTVEverywhere** privileges.

To **WatchTVEverywhere**:

- Visit www.watchtveverywhere.com
- Click on Log In.
- Enter your username and password.
- Select the TV Network you want to watch. Click on the network and you will see a list of the available programs.



Oz the Great and Powerful
starz

A small-time magician and con-man finds himself swept into the fantastic land of Oz, where he is hailed as a wizard—but he must choose sides in a battle between three witches!

Visit starz.com for airdates/times. STARZ and related channels and service marks are the property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Oz the Great and Powerful © Disney Enterprises, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Holiday Color Contest

All children ten years old or younger are invited to take part in the West Central Telephone 2013 Coloring Contest. Stop by and pick up an entry form, then color or decorate to your liking. When finished, drop off or mail your entry to Coloring Contest, West Central Telephone, PO Box 304, Sebeka, MN 56477.

Entries must be received by Friday, November 29. Winners will be notified the following week. Official rules will be on the entry forms.

Holiday Spirit & Warm Family Traditions

Life is full of sweet moments, especially at this time of year. From baking with grandchildren to celebrating with family, there are countless experiences that add warmth to the season. As you gather together this Thanksgiving, West Central Telephone encourages you to remember the many moments that have contributed to your grand feast; phone calls to plan the menu, a lively day in the kitchen, the gathering of loved ones. It is an ideal time to give thanks for the many blessings we all enjoy, especially the simple things that mean the most to us.



In the true holiday spirit, we invite you to start a new family tradition of helping others. There are many people in our area without warm winter coats. We hope to help by collecting gently-used coats, hats, scarves, and gloves to distribute to families in need. From now until mid-December, WCTA will accept donations at the Sebeka and the Menahga offices. Gently-used coats should be clean and in good condition. We are working with the Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership, Inc. to distribute the coats; if you are in need of a coat you should contact your county office.

We are also collecting new toys and gifts for those in need, working with The Empty Stocking Fund. All donations of toys, games, gifts, and money will be distributed to area families just in time for Christmas. Drop off your donations at either WCTA location by December 6 so that they can be wrapped, matched up, and delivered to families. The Empty Stocking Fund is a local organization that works with area churches and schools to help needy families at holiday time. Families in need may be working families with a lower income that just covers the basic needs, or a family that because of a tragedy can no longer afford Christmas presents. **Let's help make Christmas morning special for everyone in our communities!**



TECH THE HALLS

With Smart Home Apps

'Twas the night before Christmas, and no one was home. The door was unlocked and the lights were left on. Thank goodness, St. Nick — we have remote control; quick as a flash, I grabbed my smartphone, and logged into our home. I turned off the lights and locked the front door, all with just a few simple swipes.



It's a digital world, and your home can be digital too, at an affordable price. Starting at only \$9.95 per month, get total home control with Smart Home Monitoring products — sensors, cameras, locks, lighting and more. It's protection for your family and peace of mind for you.

Call 837-5151 today or visit www.wcta.net for more information.



Welcome, New Members

Aho, Marlin	538-5095
Anderson, Tom	538-7822
Andreoff, Charissia	564-2185
Berg, Rebecca	445-3371
Bungert, Joshua	564-6002
Carpenter, Dylan	837-6234
Cat Creek Auto	564-5984
Coats, Garrett	837-6223
Cypher, Mary	445-2480
Etter, John	538-8937
Funk, Maria	564-6015
Grotberg, Richard	837-3464
Haataja, Kara	564-8380
Haehnel, Verner	445-5940
Hays, Sally	564-0800
Heitkamp, Larry	837-6231
Hillstrom, David	564-2597
Hillstrom, Keith	564-8349
Hutzenbiler, Randal	472-0897
Johnson, Carl	564-5993
Johnson, Lisa	837-7917
Kiehl, Lisa	538-3041
Kumpula, Bryan	837-0817
Lang, Isaac	837-6235
Leeseberg, Nancy	564-8267
Lehto, Aaron	538-8567
Lepre, Samantha	564-3055
Maki, Naomi	538-6075
Marliere, Larry	564-5989
Meidinger, Eric	564-8533
Myllykangas, Brad	538-6030
Noland, Sheila	564-8237
Ochs, Brandon	445-5917
Ollmann, Jill	564-5990
Peterson, Tyler Lewis	564-0179
Pickar, Randy	472-3724
Pinoniemi, James	564-5991
Pouliot, Cindy	564-2590
Salo Manufacturing	564-7256
Schilling, Doris (Trinket)	564-5998
Schilling, Doris (Trinket)	837-6067
Swenson, William	564-0772
Thompson, Kenneth	564-8653
Voss, Dale	564-5981
Whitaker, Brandon	837-8158
White, Gene	445-3743
Willis, Sr., Michael	445-5911



Rick and Lyn Pinnick, owners of the bed and breakfast, The Jewel of the Northwoods.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: The Jewel of the Northwoods Bed & Breakfast

Rick and Lyn Pinnick of Menahga operate the beautiful bed and breakfast known as The Jewel of the Northwoods, located just north of Menahga on Twin Lakes Road. The Jewel, named after Lyn's mother, has three suites to accommodate overnight guests, a beautiful solarium for a cozy meal, a formal dining room for groups, and a menu that features items like Bananas Foster French Toast, Spinach-asparagus Quiche or Cheesecake Pancakes.

Intrigued with the idea of owning a bed and breakfast (B&B), the Pinnick's began researching the availability of B&Bs. After visiting their son at North Dakota State University in Fargo, they drove to the Menahga area and were struck by the beauty of the woods, and fell in love with the property that, for the past five years, has been known as The Jewel.

The B&B also hosts special occasion brunches, lunches and dinners, Christmas parties, bridge clubs, and a special gala after every opening night production at nearby Long Lake Theater. Everything they serve is made from scratch with the freshest ingredients by Rick, while the presentation and décor is handled by Lyn. They clearly make a great team, receiving rave reviews for both food and ambiance; however, they've also made many new friends along the way.

One of the challenges they face is that Lyn still works fulltime outside of the B&B, leaving Rick to handle large groups by himself. Fortunately, The Jewel is on West Central's fiber which provides phone, TV and super fast Internet—which allows Lyn to work from her home office so she's just a room away. This also allows guests to relax in the peace and tranquility of the north woods, with wonderful connectivity through Wi-Fi that the Pinnick's give to their guests free.

For an exquisite meal, a beautiful night's rest and wonderful people, look no further than Rick and Lyn Pinnick at The Jewel of the Northwoods. More information can be found on their website at www.jewelofthenorthwoods.com or call 564-6162.