



# inter face

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## Rural Sebeka Construction Update

Our technicians have prewired the majority of homes in rural Sebeka. Unfortunately, due to the high demand of fiber, our order is currently back ordered.

Once supplies are in, the construction crew will begin burying the cable. We hope to complete the project by year's end. At that time, faster Internet speeds and TV services will be available.

**If you have a neighbor who no longer has our service, please urge them to call us at 837-5151. This is the only time the construction crew will bring fiber in for free.**



*MTA President Brent Christensen, with directors Naomi Moyer and Bruce Kinnunen, General Manager Chad Bullock, directors Dave Pulju, Dave Kriens and Hazel Yliniemi.*

## New General Manager Heads 65th Annual Meeting

New General Manager Chad Bullock addressed members of the West Central Telephone Association at the group's 65th annual meeting on May 18. He introduced himself and his family, and talked about the milestone the co-op will reach once the fiber build is complete.

Key officers and the controller reported on the status of the cooperative and discussed future plans. President Bruce Kinnunen demonstrated Sidekick Assist, an emergency medical alert system that is worn as a pendant; it works even if the phone is in use or off the hook. Kinnunen also announced the capital credits retirement for the year, which amounted to \$250,000.

Running unopposed, Bruce Kinnunen was re-elected for another three-year term as president.

Following the meeting, employees drew names awarding door prizes. Among the prize winners were James and Ellen Palokangas, who won a Smart LED TV, and Donald Quale, who won a free year of local phone service.

The Scandinavian folk music band Skålmusic performed before and after the meeting. Subway of Menahga provided the meal. Many door prizes were available due to the generosity of our vendors and business partners. Thanks to all who helped make the meeting a success!



# West Central Telephone Association Awards Eight \$1,000 Scholarships

We recently reviewed applications from area high school seniors, awarding eight students each a \$1,000 scholarship. Anna Johnson, Michaela Hesse, Sarah Kuismi, Seira Goddard, Elizabeth Anderson, Tristan Palmer, Hannah Allebach and Andrea Korvela were this year's award recipients.

Every year, we invite area seniors to apply for a West Central Telephone scholarship. High school seniors whose parents or legal guardians are members of WCTA are eligible to apply. Children of West Central Telephone's employees or board members are not eligible.

Applying is easy. Students are asked to complete the scholarship application online. The online format helps maintain a consistent, and anonymous, application. Students include their community activities, sports and work experience and write a brief essay. Applicants choose from three or four topics to write their essay. The scholarship committee reviews applicants based on their essay and community involvement.

Congratulations to all award recipients and best wishes for your future success!



Hannah Allebach



Elizabeth Anderson



Seira Goddard



Michaela Hesse



Anna Johnson



Anna Korvela



Tristan Palmer



Sara Kuismi

## What to Know About Phishing, Vishing, and Smishing



To outsmart criminals, stay informed about common threats:

**Phishing** – It's an email that appears to be from your financial institution or another company with which you do business. It asks you to click a link that takes you to a legitimate-looking webpage, where you're directed to enter information such as your account number, password, or Social Security number. Don't bite! It's a scam to steal your personal data. Reputable companies never gather information this way.

**Vishing** – This is phishing over the phone — the "v" is for voice. The criminals call you, claiming to be from your bank or another institution you trust (such as the local court system calling about jury duty). As in phishing, they're after your personal information. Simply hang up.

**Smishing** – Short for SMS phishing, smishing uses text messages to lure you into clicking fraudulent links or download infected apps on your phone. Never respond to text messages or automated voice messages from unknown numbers on your mobile phone.

**For help with computer security, check out SecureIT Plus on [www.wcta.net](http://www.wcta.net).**