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MARCH/APRIL 2012

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Plan to Attend the 62nd Annual Meeting

Annual meetings are important events in the calendar year at the cooperative. The meeting is an opportunity to meet the staff and directors and to learn what's happening at the member-owned company. 2012 has been designated International Year of the Cooperative and this meeting is one not to miss!

This year's meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 14, 2012, at the Sebeka High School Auditorium. The meeting will begin at 7pm. Bruce Kinnunen, representing the Sebeka exchange, intends to seek re-election; the Nominations and Elections Committee will meet mid-March and announce official candidates who wish to serve on the board.

Kai and Bridget Allen with Skalmusik will entertain the crowd before and after the meeting. There will be prize drawings, with a light meal following the business meeting. All members of the cooperative are welcome!



All High School Seniors Should Apply!

West Central is committed to the future of rural Minn., and therefore, invests in our youth. We believe that academic achievement in high school and service to one's community should be recognized. Our scholarship program has been established to encourage youth in our area to further their education after graduating from high school. We invite all area high school seniors to apply for a scholarship; a maximum of eight \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

The scholarship program is made possible through unclaimed capital credit checks. Because of our cooperative status, we are able to use these funds to benefit the scholarship program. At this time, there is over \$61,000 funding the scholarship program.

Our scholarship program is another benefit available to cooperative members. We would like to see more members apply—there are typically only 25 to 30 applicants each year. If you know a deserving high school

senior, please encourage him or her to apply. There are no income guidelines or GPA requirements to meet; simply complete the online application, write a brief essay on your chosen topic, and submit it by the deadline. **For more detailed information and applications, contact your area high school counselors. You may also contact Geri Salmela with additional questions at 218-837-5151 or by email at geris@wcta.net.**

Scholarship candidates must complete the application online and write a short essay on one of the recommended topics. Some tips to keep in mind are:

- Applications can be found online at www.wcta.net.
- Check your spelling and grammar usage carefully.
- Write what you know, and how you feel about the topic.

There is still time to apply—the deadline for applications is April 6, 2012. Good luck!



Need Help Paying for Telephone Service?

WCTA is authorized to provide two federally-funded and one state funded telephone service discount programs that were designed to promote universal service by providing low-income individuals with new telephone service installations and monthly telephone service discounts.

The Link-Up program provides a discount on connection charges when installing new telephone service. The Lifeline and Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) programs provide a monthly discount on your local service telephone bill.

For eligibility guidelines, please refer to the information pages in the West Central Telephone Directory. Call 1-888-830-6392 to apply. Once approved, you will receive the applicable credit(s) on your telephone bill. Please do not call the business office; you must call 1-888-830-6392 to apply.

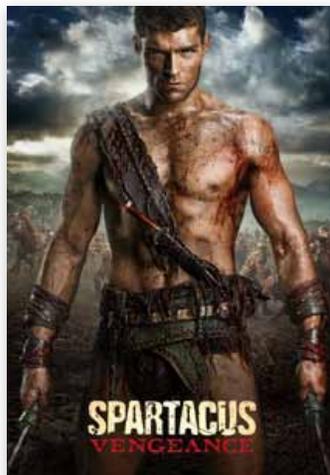


A STARZ Original Series **Spartacus: Vengeance**

On the heels of the bloody escape from the House of Batiatus that concluded "Spartacus: Blood and Sand," the gladiator rebellion continues and begins to strike fear into the heart of the Roman Republic in "Spartacus: Vengeance."

Showing in March only on STARZ!

West Central Telephone offers 15 blockbuster channels from STARZ® and ENCORE® in one package for only \$12.95 per month.



Visit starz.com for airdates/times. STARZ and ENCORE and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Spartacus: Vengeance © 2011 Starz Entertainment, LLC. All rights reserved.



Verndale Couple Wins the Big TV

On December 23, 2011, Betty Goche of Verndale, Minn., was randomly drawn as the grand prize winner in the WCTA TV Sweepstakes! Betty and her husband Romeo were very excited to learn of winning the Olevia 42" HDTV and rushed over to the West Central Telephone office in Sebeka to claim their prize. **Congratulations Betty!**

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.

For More Information on the TED Program:
1-800-657-3663 (voice)/1-888-206-6555 (TTY) or www.tedprogram.org

Minnesota Relay

Minnesota Relay is a free service that uses a specially trained communications assistant (CA) to facilitate the telephone conversation between a person who has a hearing loss or a speech disability and the person with which they wish to speak. Calls can be made to anywhere in the world (long distance charges apply), 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. All calls are completely confidential.

To make a Minnesota Relay call, just dial 7-1-1. Once connected to the relay service, tell the CA the type of relay call you wish to make. Or, you may dial the specific toll-free number for the type of relay service.



Types of Relay Services

Captioned Telephone (CapTel™)

CapTel is an amplified telephone and relay captioning service that allows people who are hard of hearing to see word-for-word captions of their telephone conversation on a bright, easy-to-read display window built into the CapTel phone, while also listening to what is being said using their residual hearing (much like TV captioning). Requires a CapTel phone. If you wish to contact a person who uses a CapTel phone, dial: 1-877-243-2823.

Voice Carry Over (VCO): 1-877-627-3024

Allows a person who has difficulty hearing on the phone to voice their conversations directly to the other person on the call. The CA then types the other person's response to the VCO user. Requires a special telephone.

Two-Line VCO: 1-866-855-4611

Allows a VCO user to use one telephone line for speaking directly to the other person, while the second line is used to receive the CA's typed response from the other person. This enhanced feature provides a more natural flow of conversation without the pauses of single-line VCO calls. Additional service and equipment requirements.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO): 1-800-627-3529

Allows a person who can hear but who has very limited or no speech capability to make and receive phone calls. The HCO user types his/her conversation for the CA to read to the other person, and listens directly to the other person's response. Requires a special telephone.

Text Telephone (TTY): 1-800-627-3529

Allows a person who is deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled to use a TTY to communicate with the other person on the call.

Standard Telephone: 1-800-627-3529

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

Speech-to-Speech (STS): 1-877-627-3848

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 CA revoices the words of the person with a speech disability so the other person on the call can understand them. No special telephone is required.

Computer (ASCII): 1-800-627-3529

Computer users can also access Minnesota Relay. Set your communications software to the following protocols: speeds ranging from 300 to 2400; 8 Bits; No Parity; 1 Stop Bit; Full Duplex. When calling at a rate of 300 or below, follow the above using Half Duplex.

Spanish Relay: 1-877-627-5448

This allows a Spanish speaking person to use Minnesota Relay. The CA relays calls between a Spanish speaking person with a hearing or speech disability and a Spanish speaking hearing person.

900 Pay-Per-Call Services: 1-900-230-3324

Allows a relay user to connect to any pay-per-call service.

Important Information

Emergency Assistance

TTY callers should dial 9-1-1 directly in an emergency. All 9-1-1 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but this may delay the response to your call.

Billing Options for Long Distance Relay Calls

- Direct
- Collect
- Pre-paid calling card
- Carrier calling card
- Third-party billing

Filing a Complaint

If you would like to file a complaint regarding Minnesota Relay, please call 1-800-657-3775. You will need to provide the date and time of the relay call, the CA's identification number, and the nature of your complaint. To file a relay complaint with the Federal Communications Commission call toll free at 1-888-225-5322 (voice)/1-888-835-5322 (TTY), or file on line at <http://esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm>

**For More Information on Minnesota Relay Services
1-800-657-3775 or www.mnrelay.org**



Welcome, New Members

Abbott, Traci.....	837-5804
Aho, Jolie A.....	538-6054
Andersen, Jasen.....	564-5830
Bakke, Dustie.....	564-5749
Cardini, Ryan.....	837-6084
Carry, Brent.....	564-0035
City Of Nimrod.....	472-2489
Cole, Susan.....	564-5803
Collison, Cindy.....	472-3449
Cottrell, Christopher D.....	445-5669
Delaske, Ryan.....	564-5807
Drury, Pat.....	837-6088
Dunn, Brandon.....	837-6112
Eckenrode, Dave.....	837-6040
Eischens, Brandon.....	564-5770
Ellingson, Gary Ray.....	837-6051
Erickson, Faye.....	564-5771
Etter, Teresa.....	564-5788
Garrett, Sharon.....	837-6083
Gode, Craig.....	445-5711
Goeden, Aaron.....	837-6080
Hagen, Shawn.....	564-5736
Haverinen, Chrystal M.....	472-3160
Haverinen, Wayne.....	564-4860
Hayes, Jackie.....	837-6002
Hegbloom, Tammy.....	837-6106
Hess, Corey.....	445-5701
Hjermstad, Thomas.....	564-3226
Huhta, Jared.....	564-5747
Jensen, Wayne.....	564-2303
Johnson, Lynda.....	445-5702
Josephson, Mark.....	564-5759
Kircher, Penae.....	445-5714
Krause, Vicky.....	564-5744
L & W Putikka Farms.....	837-5330
Lepinski, Terry G.....	837-5698
Lincoln, Elisha.....	564-5470
Lynch, Kristine.....	445-5653
Maninga, Peter Jr.....	564-5251
Marjama, Michael.....	564-6065
Moeller, James.....	837-6078
Naturale Alternatives Inc.....	564-4549
Nordstrom, Hazel.....	564-1865
Ostlund, Carl.....	564-5880
Paurus, Gregory.....	837-6060
Pederson, Kim.....	837-2829
Petersen, Kendra.....	564-4884
Pickar, Trisha.....	837-6103
Plautz, Jason & Shawna.....	837-2369
Puttonen, Kayla.....	837-5888
Quenzer, James.....	445-5624
Rajdl, Michael.....	837-6047
Relitz, Angela.....	564-3834
Schmidt, Robert.....	564-5799
Schwartz, Michael.....	837-6053
Sherburne, Kathy.....	837-6407
Strayer, Zach.....	837-6052
Swanson, Aaron.....	445-5758
Tiede, Mark.....	445-3720
Torma, Jerry.....	564-5758
Turgeon, Erin.....	837-6071
Vetsch, Loren.....	445-5617
Walsh, Stephanie.....	564-5767
Wehmas, Matt.....	564-5746
Wisuri, George.....	564-5796
Wutzke, Bert.....	445-5705
Ziegler, Dave.....	564-5784

Social Media and Mobile App Webinars

Minnesota Extension is partnering with Ohio State and Penn State Extension to offer a series of webinars to help small business owners understand how to integrate social media and mobile applications into the company's marketing plan. Each webinar is one hour long, from 9am to 10am CST, and is offered on the dates below:

March 7 & 21, April 4 & 18, 2012
9:00am to 10:00am CST
Registration Fee: \$10 per person

Registration is required and is being handled by Penn State Extension. Visit the Community Education tab on the www.wcta.net site for more details and a link that will take you to Penn State Extension's website where you can register.



March 7 - Mobile Payment - 9am to 10am CST

Learn how you can accept mobile payments and make it easier for customers to pay for your local food. This webinar will provide information on the tools available to accept mobile payments for farm markets, farmers markets, roadside stands, and agritourism businesses. The webinar will share information about current tools and applications available to allow you to accept payment via smart devices. We will also share highlights about future trends in the payment industry.

March 21 - MarketMaker App - 9am to 10am CST

Get connected with the food industry's new online mobile web app. Make it easy for the increasing number of mobile users to find your farm, farmers' market, winery, retail store, restaurant, or other food business. Benefit from the latest technology available to you free through the growing Market-Maker network.

April 4 - Reputation Management - 9am to 10am CST

Anyone can say anything about a business or product at any time. Social media provides more outlets for sharing that message. This webinar will provide tips and best practices for developing and maintaining a reputation in the social media world. It's important to respond to positive and negative feedback, but responses need to be carefully considered. Learn more in this webinar.

April 18 - SM Integration Tools - 9am to 10am CST

Keeping track of one or more Twitter or Facebook accounts can be tedious. Thankfully, there are several tools that can be used to monitor what's being said about any topic or to post information for multiple accounts. This session will describe computer-based tools such as HootSuite and TweetDeck as well as mobile apps that can be used to manage a company's social media presence.

Information is available in HTML on the following website: <http://z.umn.edu/webinars>