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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017

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Wishing You a Season of Sweet Smiles

All of us at West Central Telephone hope your holiday season is a jolly one. Be sure to savor all the details that make this time of year so fun!

Thanks for choosing us as your communications provider in 2017. You make us smile.

Our offices will be closed to enjoy the holidays on:

- Thursday, November 23
- Monday, December 25
- Monday, January 1



TV Networks Pushing Local Limits

It's the time of year when West Central Telephone negotiates rates for some television networks carried on our TV system. Our main goal is to secure rates that keep the overall price of your TV service as affordable as possible. As we expected, some networks are asking for rate increases well beyond the rate of inflation. In fact, some networks are asking for over 50% increases in one year, even though primetime audiences are in decline.



"The logic is baffling," said Jean Edhlund, Video Product Partner with Cooperative Network Services in Menahga. "For networks to be charging more when fewer viewers are watching is unacceptable. Providers like West Central Telephone must be diligent for their customers and stand up to the networks if needed." Edhlund is hired by us to negotiate the best rates possible. She previously worked at Fox Sports and knows from the inside how networks operate.

"It's great to have an industry insider working on behalf of our customers," said Geri Salmela, Marketing Director at West Central Telephone.

According to the American Television Alliance, 2017 is on pace for having the most blackouts ever. (Blackouts are when networks force TV providers to stop airing their signals.) When this happens, consumers sometimes miss big sporting events and television shows.

West Central Telephone will be negotiating agreements that we believe are fair and reasonable with the following stations: KARE (NBC), WUCW (CW), KVLV (NBC), KXJB (CBS), KVRR (FOX), and WDAY (ABC). If we cannot reach an agreement by December 31, 2017, blackouts will occur.

Right now, simply keep enjoying your programming. There's nothing you need to do because we're hard at work behind the scenes. If anything changes, we'll send updates. Thank you for choosing West Central TV!



We're Changing Our Hours

Beginning Friday, December 1, our offices will be open from 8am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. We apologize for any inconvenience. As always, payments can be made anytime online with SmartHub or through Secure Pay-by-Phone (844-244-1501). Both locations also have drop boxes for your convenience.

The Help Desk remains available Monday through Friday from 8am to 8pm. For after-hour Emergency Repair, call 888-207-6274.

By Golly, Be Jolly!

Holiday Coloring Contest

We invite all children 10 years old or younger to take part in the West Central Telephone 2017 Coloring Contest. Stop by and pick up an entry form, then color or decorate to your liking. Drop off or mail your entry to Coloring Contest, West Central Telephone, PO Box 304, Sebeka, MN 56477. Thursday, November 30 is the deadline for entries. We'll announce the winning entries the following week. Official rules will be on the entry forms.

Holiday Open House Events

You won't want to miss West Central Telephone's holiday open house events! First, Santa will be in the house in Sebeka so bring the kids! The following week, we'll move the festivities up to the Menahga office. Watch for more information in your December bill.

Friday, December 8 from 2:30pm to 4:30pm

- At the Sebeka office, located at 308 Frontage Road in Sebeka.
- Don't forget your camera for pictures with Santa!

Friday, December 15 from 2:30pm to 4:30pm

- At the Menahga office, located at 14 Main Street SW in Menahga.

Enjoy cookies, hot chocolate, and coffee at both locations.

Holiday Giving

In the true holiday spirit, we invite you to start a new family tradition of helping others. We're working with The Empty Stocking Fund to collect new toys, games, and gifts for those in need. Cash donations are also welcome. Drop off your donations at either of our offices by December 8. They'll be wrapped, matched up, and delivered to area families before Christmas. The Empty Stocking Fund is a local organization working with churches and schools to help make Christmas special for everyone in our communities!

We're also continuing to collect gently used winter coats, hats, and gloves in cooperation with the Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership, Inc., which distributes the coats. If you need a coat, please contact your county office.



HBO **CINEMAX**

4-DAY FREE PREVIEW

NOV 17-20

NIGHT OF TOO MANY STARS
AMERICA UNITES FOR AUTISM PROGRAMS
HBO

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE
HBO

TARZAN **CINEMAX**

West Central
Telephone Association
We Connect You.™

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What You Need to Know About Battery Backup

Many of today's advanced home phone services require backup battery power to continue functioning during an outage. To avoid a disruption of service during an outage – and to maintain the ability to connect to 911 emergency services – West Central Telephone provides backup power for your home phones at no extra charge.

What Your Battery Can – and Can't – Do for You

Our backup batteries allow you to continue to use your home phone services during a power outage. Without a backup battery or alternate backup source such as a generator, you will not be able to make any calls, including emergency calls to 911. The only way to maintain the ability to use your phone is by using some form of backup power. Our backup battery does not provide power to any services other than phone. Home security systems, medical monitoring devices, and other equipment will not run on a home phone backup battery.

Replacement Options

West Central Telephone maintains and routinely replaces battery backup power. Our team will call you to schedule a time to swap out the battery backup power – at no charge to you.

Expected Battery Backup Duration

Our backup batteries are expected to last at least eight hours on standby power. The battery backup should give you six hours of talk time.

Proper Care and Use of Your Battery

These batteries are rechargeable and have an expected lifespan of two to three years. At this point, we'll contact you to schedule a time for replacement. If your device begins to beep loudly, it means the battery is depleted and needs to be replaced; please contact our office to arrange replacement.

Welcome, New Members

Aldrich Tractor Inc.....	445-2208
Genosky Justin.....	445-5750
Hepokoski Josh.....	445-2534
Kern Jerry.....	445-9210
Kern Raya	445-5023
Kimball Jessica.....	445-9254
Nice Gerald	445-1835
Rhoades Richard.....	445-9016
Verndale Auto Sales	
And Service	445-6288
Avelsgard Roger	472-2400
Bjergo Joel	472-8831
Guelcher Christopher.....	472-0557
Hillukka Jonathan	472-7481
Puttonen Wyatt.....	472-7183
Sowers Edwin	472-8795
Aho Tamar.....	538-7086
Looper James	538-8582
Andres Abigail	564-5608
Etter Robert.....	564-5788
Gustafson Misty.....	564-8215
Hagen Kelly	564-7135
Hidden Oasis Salon	
& Massage	564-3232
Hillukka Burton	564-1762
Honga Joyce.....	564-9331
Kallinen Brian.....	564-4565
Kyllonen Anthony.....	564-3348
Laber Joe R.....	564-9627
Matson Linda	564-2650
Mickelson Darien	564-0831
Murphy Gladys.....	564-9626
North Country Motor Sports....	564-2540
Pietila David.....	564-6414
Roth Shawn	564-4876
Saarela Jason.....	564-9563
Shoultz Nichole	564-0389
Stone Jamie	564-3026
Trombley Chris.....	564-3459
Wenzel Richard	564-9733
White Curtis.....	564-8147
Wray Charlotte.....	564-7806
Albright Ben.....	629-1365
Aldrich Mike Jr.....	629-1263
Ament Missy.....	629-1905
Ament Tom.....	629-1689
Becker Randy.....	629-1068
Benson Roger	629-1584
Watson Adam.....	837-9711
Flanagan Steven.....	629-1428
Gerhardson Gerald	629-1202
Haberman Leonard.....	629-1667
Huttunen Angie.....	629-1484

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Welcome, New Members

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Huttunen Ethan	629-1438
Huttunen Jamie	629-1800
Koppinger Kyle J	629-1290
Koranda Shawn	629-1274
Lindroos Steve	629-1988
Mcallister Kelly	629-1680
Momanigle Travus	629-1040
Melchior Chuck	629-1225
Nikkari Branden	629-1642
Nikkari Chad	629-1736
Oakland Greg	629-1797
Roggenkamp Luke	629-1810
Strayer Stephney	629-1469
Strom Aaron	629-1501
Thompson James L	629-1375
Ament Margaret	631-4234
Ash Lisa	631-1399
Christensen Rosemarie	631-1503
Cochran Patrick	631-3179
Geiser Dennis	631-2583
Guldseth Karla	631-7211
Gunn Donald	631-3596
Huttunen Mary	631-4407
Luoma Warner	631-3908
Malone Bill	631-9055
Roberts Chris	631-4614
Robertson James	631-4618
Roggenkamp Robert	631-3681
Rohr Mark	631-3771
Sailer Lois	631-4401
Schmitz Allen	631-2048
Schmitz Dale	631-3680
Schwartz Gary	631-7124
Spicer Aaron	631-5800
Vandenberghe Louise	631-2158
Vorderbruggen David	631-1668
Wanous Laura	631-1160
Arthur Jeannie	837-3154
Bergh Cheryl	837-6899
Broadway Welding Inc Of Sebeka	837-0013
Draper Dustin	837-2107
Goeller Stephanie	837-9731
Groshong Raymond Jr	837-4719
Hanson Mitch	837-3574
Hinkle Diane	837-5803
Huttunen Lindsey	837-8797
Jochum Elizabeth	837-9666
Kahlstorf Brianna	837-9301
Pickar Damien	837-7195
Rood Brian	837-7942
Warren Michael	837-2314

Business Spotlight: Community First Bank

Community First Bank (formerly First National Bank of Menahga and Sebeka) has been serving the area for 120 years. Its history traces all the way back to 1898, when it was the Bank of Menahga. Renamed the First National Bank of Menahga, it received its Bank Charter in 1922 and bought Security State Bank of Sebeka in 2005. Over the years, the bank has continued to provide customer service with the small-town, old-fashioned, and friendly attitude that people appreciate.

Community First Bank offers full-service banking including personal and business checking and savings accounts as well as loans, insurance, and internet banking options. Both locations have walk-up/drive-up banking available.

When asked about the reason for the success of Community First Bank, Loan Officer Justin Day said, "It's our good and faithful customers. We never lose sight of our mission to provide community-oriented service." The bank is also vigilant with fraud protections, regulations, and current technologies.

Community First Bank uses a wide variety of technology and business solutions from West Central Telephone. A business phone system ties the two locations together, and the internet service is used for marketing and online banking services. Community First Bank also uses a virtual private network (VPN) that securely relays information between the two buildings. In addition, West Central Telephone recently installed a speaker system at the Menahga location to pipe music into the building.

For all your banking needs, contact Community First Bank at 21 Main Street NE in Menahga, 218-564-4171; or at 115 Minnesota Ave W in Sebeka, 218-837-5171. You can also get more information at www.communityfirstbank.com.

Call West Central Telephone at 837-5151 to learn about our phone systems, internet services, network solutions, and other business technology.



Daisy Duel (left) and
Laura Schwartz



Penny Ollila and Justin Day