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Naomi Moyer of Verndale



Hazel Yliniemi of Wolf Lake

Moyer and Yliniemi Re-elected to Serve 3-Year Terms

The 61st annual meeting of the members was held at the Sebeka High School Monday, May 16, 2011.

Key officers, the manager, and the controller reported on the status of the cooperative and what the future holds. Naomi Moyer of Verndale and Hazel Yliniemi of Wolf Lake were each re-elected to serve an additional three-year term. Both incumbents ran unopposed, and there were no nominations from the floor. The candidates addressed the crowd at the meeting, each citing reasons to serve on the cooperative board, and expressing their appreciation to the members for allowing them to represent them at the board level. Because of the unopposed elections, President Kinnunen asked for a motion and a

second to cast unanimous ballots for each seat. There was a motion made, it was seconded and the members unanimously voted for the incumbents to serve an additional term.

Once the meeting was adjourned, door prizes were awarded. For the fifth year in a row, the cooperative gave a grand prize of one year of free local telephone service. This year's winner was Mary Clafin.

Kai and Bridget Allen performed with the Scandinavian folk music band Skålmusic before and after the meeting. Subway of Menahga provided the meal. Many door prizes were made possible because of the generosity of our vendors and business partners. Thanks to all who helped make the meeting a success!

Call Completion Issues Discussed at FCC Meeting

There is a nationwide and industry-wide epidemic going on that directly and adversely affects consumers — problems with the transmission and completion of calls placed to customers served by rural local exchange carriers. A survey of NTCA members showed that 80 percent of rural carriers reported termination problems.

Representatives of rural telco groups including the NTCA, the OPASTCO, the NECA and the WTA recently met with FCC staff to discuss these issues. Their concerns include:

- Calls that ring for the calling party, but not at all or on a delayed basis for the customer of the rural carrier.
- Calling parties who receive incorrect or misleading message interceptions before the call reaches the rural LEC.
- Calls that appear to loop between routing providers but never reach the rural carrier or its serving tandem.
- Incorrect caller ID that displays to called parties.

The rural representatives explained how difficult it is to identify such problems when they occur because they start with the calling party

and the called party might not be aware of missing calls. It is difficult to locate and resolve the source of the issue even once identified, because there are a variety of platforms on which the troubles arise and a number of logistical and operational barriers to troubleshooting problems on other carriers' networks.

Fact-finding efforts indicate that the problems appear to arise from how originating carriers choose to set up the signaling and routing of their calls. Are other carriers deliberately blocking calls? Considering the controversy regarding access fees charged to complete calls on local telephone networks — some of which are relatively high for rural markets — it's possible that some carriers might attempt to avoid paying those charges by failing to complete calls to those rural markets.

This issue threatens public safety and homeland security as well as degrades the integrity and reliability of the nation's telecommunications network. West Central Telephone is actively participating in industry efforts to stop these problems and will keep you informed of developments. If you have questions or want to report an incident, please call us at 218-837-5151 or toll free 800-945-2163.

Seven \$1,000 Scholarships Awarded

The WCTA Scholarship Committee recently awarded seven senior high students \$1,000 scholarships. They included Christina Ascheman, Amelia Pho, Megan Melander, Alison Yliniemi, Nathan Bart, Michael Wing, and Jennifer Swenson.

Area high school seniors are encouraged to apply for the WCTA scholarship. The application must be completed online, then printed and signed by the student's counselor. The online format has been really helpful with keeping the applicants consistent and anonymous. The applicants choose from various topics for consideration when writing their essay. The scholarship committee reviews applicants based on their essay and community involvement. The scholarship's purpose is to recognize students who have contributed to the quality of life in the communities they live in and to assist them in their educational pursuits.

Only students whose parents or legal guardians are cooperative members at the time of the application are eligible to apply. Children of West Central Telephone's employees or board members are not eligible.

Congratulations to the scholarship winners and to the entire graduating class of 2011!



Christina Ascheman



Nathan Bart



Megan Melander



Amelia Pho



Jennifer Swenson



Michael Wing



Alison Yliniemi