

APRIL – MAY 2018



NineStar_{CONNECT}

VOLUME 7
ISSUE 2

HOMESERVE TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

Chief Technology Officer, Ross Ferson, explains why NineStar has terminated it's relationship with HomeServe in hopes of helping clear up the confusion it has caused.

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POWER HOUR MEETING

The first meeting premieres the evening of June 6th at NineStar's South Campus Conference Center.

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NINESTAR HOSTS SENATOR YOUNG & FCC COMMISSIONER



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On page 6, read about the 3rd Annual Kid\$ville event.



OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR MATT YOUNG.

"MATT WAS NOT ONLY VERY POLITE BUT HE WAS ALSO KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PATIENT"

- CUSTOMER EPPLLE



Customer service is at the tips of your fingers. NineStar Connect's tech support call center is open around the clock. **317-326-help** ninestarconnect.com

STORY IDEA?

Contact **David Spencer** at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com

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NineStar hosts Senator Todd Young and FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr to learn more about how broadband connectivity and fiber optics are transforming industry and residents countywide.

ELECTRIC BUDGET OPTIONS PAGE 7
Learn about the 3 new Budget billing options available starting this May! *Don't worry, Variable Budget billing is not going anywhere...*

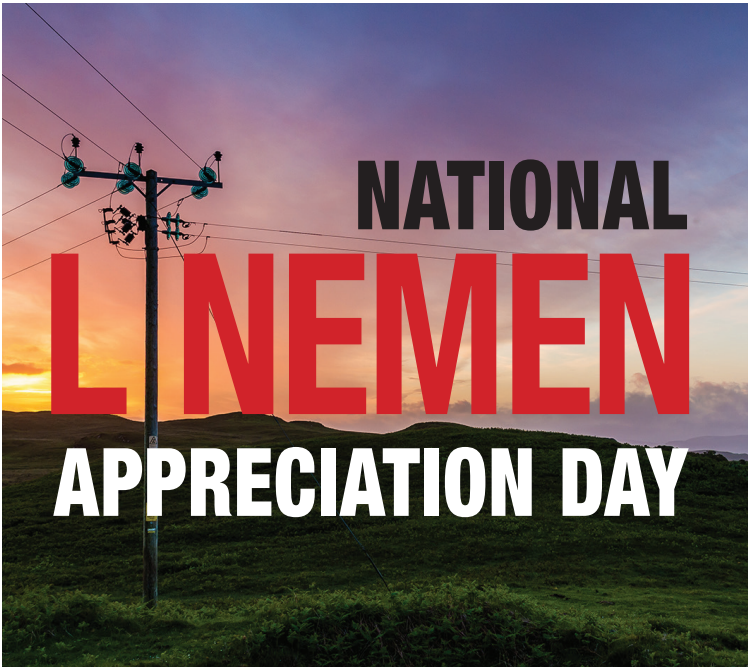
2018 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS PAGE 10
See the recipients of this year's scholarship winners who were announced at the 2018 NineStar Annual Meeting & Celebration.

THE RESULTS ARE IN! PAGE 12
See the results of the 2018 Director Election.

S2M SOFTWARE UPGRADE

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LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

Wednesday, April 18th marked another Lineman Appreciation Day and we can't express our "Thank You" enough to our line crew for their hard work every day. Whether they are in cold, blistery weather or the heat of the summer days, these guys risk their lives to make sure the power stays on for all of us. A big "Thank You" goes out to our NineStar team of Matt Spurling, Brian Potts, Justin Nolen, Matt Huck, Austin Gearlds, Justin Messer, Eric Truitt, Bryan Giddings, Kory Chapman, Levi Johnson, Derek Nelson, Bryan Smith, Jeremy Pike, Jon Splater, Rusty Hansen, Tommy Nance, Jamie Bell and Jeff Conley. To celebrate the day, breakfast was provided and each crew member received a NineStar Lineman T-shirt.



The *NineStar Connection* is a publication of NineStar Connect servicing retail and residential customers. Nearly 15,000 families and businesses receive this newspaper as part of their membership. *NineStar Connection* provides news, information and features about people, places and issues related to readers.

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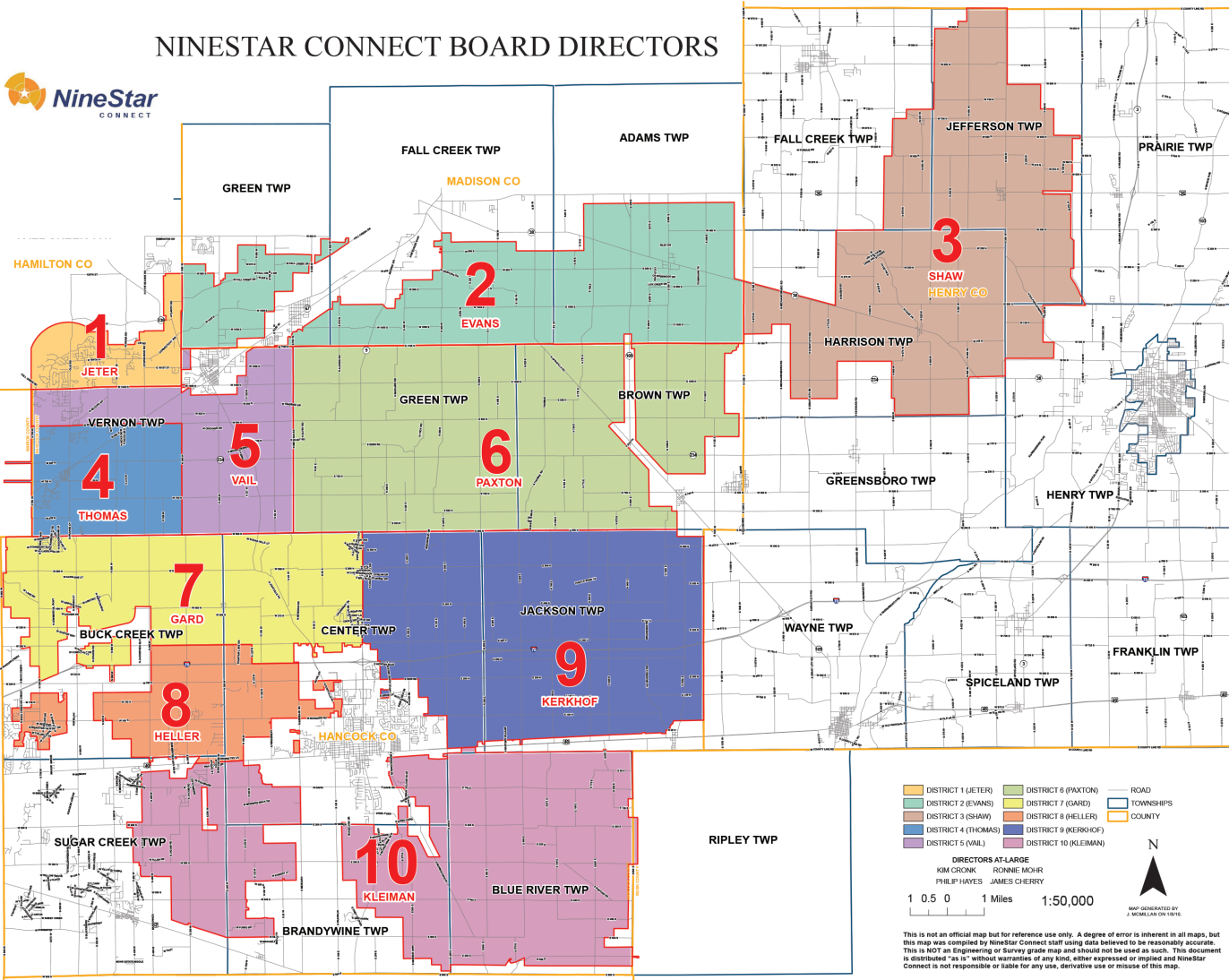


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GREENFIELD — Linda Muegge looked at the company sitting around the table and counted herself lucky.

It's not every day you get the opportunity to sit at a dining room table with a U.S. Senator and the commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, but that's exactly what happened to Muegge on the morning of May 2.

The Muegge family farm was one stop on a tour for Sen. Todd Young, R-Indiana, and FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr. They came to Hancock County to learn more about how broadband connectivity and fiber optics are transforming industries and the lives of everyday residents countywide. Their tour of Hancock County was just part of a day-long trip through Indiana. Young and Carr also made stops in Indianapolis and West Lafayette to hear about additional ways technology is changing life in Indiana.

From health care to agriculture, technology is rapidly evolving many different industries, but advances in technology are useless unless people are able to access that technology via the internet.

The driving force behind that connectivity is Greenfield-based NineStar Connect, a nonprofit utility

that offers internet in addition to several other utilities throughout the county. NineStar has been aggressive in making sure access to the internet is possible through fiber optics.

Young and Carr spent Wednesday morning in Hancock County, starting at Hancock Wellness Center in McCordsville and finishing in the Muegge's family dining room. The theme of the visit was learning more about how different industries are benefiting from increased access to fiber optics and the internet.

Young has started pushing what he calls the "My fair shot agenda" in Washington, D.C., which he said is a larger strategy geared towards ensuring everyone in Indiana, and the nation, has access to broadband.

"Technology is changing everything," Young said. "I want to make sure everyone has a chance at success, regardless of where they live."

For years, people in rural areas have had trouble accessing the internet where they live. Muegge told Young and Carr that 10 years ago, she couldn't access anything from her home.

"We were tickled to death when NineStar brought fiber optics out here," she said. "It has definitely helped out with our business as far as connectivity."

Her son, Chris Muegge, helps out on the family farm in addition to working as a nutritionist for Great Plains Livestock Consulting. Being able to connect with customers from New Mexico to Minnesota is crucial to his job. He said on a daily basis, he accesses data spreadsheets, watches videos of herds and sends emails, all from the farm in rural Indiana.

"Technology has really changed the agriculture industry," he said. "There's so much out there that can help farmers if we can access it."

In McCordsville, Young and Carr got a demonstration showing how technology is allowing health professionals to communicate in new ways. Dr. Mike Fletcher, chief medical officer at Hancock Health, demonstrated how leaders use GoToMeeting to hold quick conversations to discuss treatment options. From McCordsville, Fletcher was able to discuss CT scan results with a neurologist in Greenfield in real time.

"In the old days, we'd have to bring scans in and meet in person in a film room," Fletcher said. "This saves us time, and we can get answers to the patients faster."

This kind of ability wouldn't be possible without the broadband available through NineStar, Fletcher said.

Fletcher told the group



that more and more, health professionals are using the internet to treat patients instead of relying on face-to-face interactions. He said patients can now send him messages online asking questions, and he can send them treatment suggestions without the patients needing to leave their home. It's crucial everyone have the ability to access the internet so they can communicate with a doctor, especially if they have mobility challenges, Fletcher said.

Soon, Hancock Health will add the ability to livestream a meeting with a doctor over the internet, making virtual doctor visits a possibility, he said.

The county connectivity tour also took the group to a fiber station on County Road 500 North in the southern part of the county. There, Young and Carr got to try their hands at splicing fiber as part of a

NineStar construction project.

Ross Ferson, chief technology officer for NineStar, said these stations give the company the ability to connect to houses if development reaches that area of the county. It helps to be proactive when it comes to having fiber ready for potential users, Ferson said.

Carr said the trip was important for him to learn what can be done at the federal level to help people who live in rural areas have access to broadband. He mentioned the FCC's universal service fund, a \$10 billion program aimed at ensuring everyone in America has access to communications services, including internet. Under Carr's leadership, the FCC has been working toward directing a good deal of that money to rural communities.

"More and more, broadband is a key component to getting a fair shot in life," Carr said.



ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

NineStar's 65th Annual Meeting and Celebration was held on Friday, March 23rd at Greenfield Central High School. NineStar members came to the event and enjoyed a delicious meal catered by Jonathan Byrds along with learning more about NineStar services. New this year, was our partnership with Hancock Health and providing a Health Fair. While eating dinner, conversing with their neighbors or just hanging out until the meeting began, members

Also at the meeting, we acknowledged those employees with service recognition awards:

- 5 YEARS:** Justin Nolen, Kory Chapman, Dianna Hawkins, Andrew Cox, Ronnie Weston, Nick Shildmyer, Alan Martin, Larry MacLellan
- 10 YEARS:** Jeff Johnson, Brent Miller, Matt Layton, Karen Zettler, Jon Gerhardt, Shane Osborne, Jennifer McMillan, Perry Wilson and Board Director Mark Evans
- 15 YEARS:** Barry Becker
- 20 YEARS:** Jason Warrick, Regina Bever
- 25 YEARS:** Jarrod Beeson, Ryan Bewley, Julie Beauchat, Jamie Bell and Board Director Don Shaw
- 30 YEARS:** Janell Kinder, Linda Burkhart

Lucky winners of the night were:

- \$500 –** Sheralyn & Kenneth Stohler and Leonard Vogt
- \$300 –** AC Dickerson, David & Phyllis Ellis, John Glascock, James Glascock, Paul & Ruth Mills, Rex Mollenkopf, Rudy Nylund, Lillian Parrish, Ed Rippy
- \$100 –** Roger Beyers, Charles & Julie Callahan, Tom & Judith Collins, Harold & Jean Dungan, Bill & Connie Flanagan, Sherman & Frances Harvey, Dawn Hynds, Debbie Muegge, Howard & Lyndell Turner and Phyllis Vest.

Thank you to all who joined us and we look forward to seeing you again next year!!

could visit the Health Fair and learn about different programs offered by the hospital along with some free health screens.

Once the meeting began, a report from the Nominating Committee & Election of Directors, a report from the Chairman of the Board and a report from the Operation Round Up program was given. CFO, Scott Hiatt presented the Financial Reports from the previous year with President & CEO Mike Burrow following it up with

a message for those that attended. Other things on the agenda was the announcement of the 2018 scholarship winners, votes were calculated and the new term Directors of the Board were named, and we can't forget the ever popular door prizes that were given away. Free child care for kids ages 1-10 were also provided which included face painting and a magic show by Magician Daniel Lusk.



NINESTAR NERD NIGHT

Thank you to all of you who came to last quarter's NineStar Nerd Night. Several things were discussed with the focus being on Alternatives to Expensive PC's, WIFI Tips and Tricks and Latest Internet Threats. All that attended received a special giveaway along with those that were entered into a special drawing for donating a pet toy or treat to benefit Frenzy Animal Rescue in New Palestine.

For this quarter, the Nerds were at it again! This time their event was Wednesday, May 23rd at the

Mt. Vernon High School Auditorium. The topic of the night was "Social Media Basics & Security." Snacks were served along with a special giveaway. And like before, any pet toys or treats that were brought to the event were donated to the Frenzy Animal Rescue along with a special drawing that was held for those that contributed.

Look in your mail for the next NineStar Nerd Night which will be in August. Hope you are able to join us!



CHEMOTHERAPY CARE BAGS

The NineStar Billing Department of Darrin Couch, Nicole Shelp, Angie Freeman and Amy Wisehart worked hard at putting together care bags for Hancock Health's chemotherapy patients. Each bag consisted of a notepad, pen, chapstick and hand sanitizer. Each bag was also wrapped with a purple ribbon which signifies supporting the fight of all cancers. Unfortunately, the hospital sees up to 25 new chemo patients a week. Freeman, a cancer survivor herself, said "It's great to give patients something uplifting when they are going through

something so life changing. Anything positive helps when you are going through treatments. It makes it seem tolerable."

Upon receiving the gift bags, a representative from the hospital thanked NineStar for donating the gift bags. She said "I wish you could see their faces when they receive your gifts. It makes a difference!"



KID\$VILLE 2018

Saturday, March 3rd the NineStar Marketing Department David Spencer, Christa Riggs and Liz Rusche were at Greenfield Banking Company attending their 3rd Annual Kid\$ville event. Each kid that participated gets to choose the job they are wanting to work for the day. With occupations such as lineman, billing, reporter, pet caretaker and librarian to name a few; there was certainly a job that fits each child's personality.

This year, NineStar was honored to have 5 temporary employees for the day and all of them did a great job. We had two linemen, two billing managers and one public relations manager. They learned how to "string" power lines from building to building, read electric meters, write bills to other companies, take photos and write articles and they attended a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the new "library" that was an addition to Kid\$ville this year.

While doing these fun "role-playing" jobs, the kids learned to Spend, Save and Share. Each day they worked, they earned play money which they were able to Spend on snacks or fun trinkets, Save the money to accumulate their dollars earned or Share their money and donate to PAWS, The Hancock County Food Pantry or Imagination Library. So not only were the kids having a great time, they were also learning!

The play money that was donated by the kids was matched by GBC, NineStar and the Daily Reporter and a real check was awarded to the non-profit organizations that participated.



HOMESERVE TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

DEAR NINESTAR CUSTOMER-

I wanted to write a quick note to inform you that we have terminated our relationship with HomeServe. You talked and we listened! I wanted to give you some more information about how we got here and what went wrong. Transparency is important and we are committed to it in both our successes and failures.

NineStar is frequently contacted by members looking for someone to service items in their home (inside wiring, appliances, televisions, etc.). NineStar is not staffed to handle these types of requests and frequently must tell customers that we can't help them. We began working with HomeServe earlier this year with the goal of providing a value added service to our members and giving them a trusted third party to assist them.

A couple of weeks ago our members began receiving letters in the mail detailing the insurance coverage that HomeServe offers for exterior electrical coverage. Unfortunately, this letter was confusing and triggered many questions among our members. I want to take this moment to make this part clear: The NineStar electric member is responsible for the weatherhead and riser pole (if overhead service) only. If your service comes in underground, the member is responsible for anything on the "house side" of the meter. NineStar is always responsible for the meter and the meter base regardless of the way power is delivered to your home.

Clearly this optional, additional service didn't help and instead only caused confusion and we take responsibility for that. We feel part of that confusion was having the NineStar name connected with the marketing materials. HomeServe is a reputable company with a good product and for those of you who are taking advantage of this service for peace of mind, I want to assure you that this will not be impacted by NineStar's decision to discontinue our relationship with HomeServe. For those of you who might still be interested in purchasing repair or replacement coverage for your home appliances, you can still contact HomeServe directly at 855-336-2465 or at <http://www.homeserveusa.com>. We apologize for any potential confusion this caused any NineStar members. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at 317.326.3131 or email support@myninestar.net.

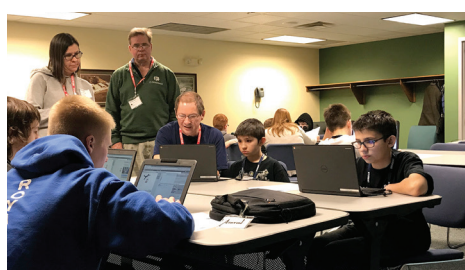
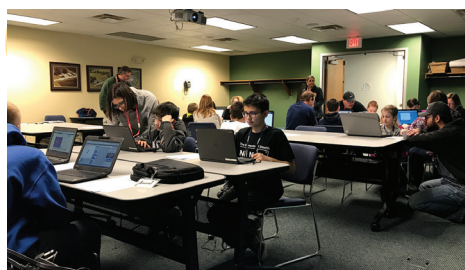
Thank you.

ROSS FERSON
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER
NINESTAR CONNECT



CODERDOJO 1001111000101001001

This past March, NineStar Connect started offering Coderdojo Classes for kids ages 7-17. What is a Coderdojo class you ask? It is teaching kids on how to learn computer code! The first "Dojo" was founded in Dublin, Ireland and has reached across the world with several Dojos opening each week. Indiana actually has a few Dojo's but none near Greenfield....until now! Classes are on the first Sunday of each month and class time is 1pm - 3pm at our North Campus Education Center (2331 East 600 North, Greenfield). It is a limited class size and a first come-first serve basis. Classes have been filling up each month so if you have a youngster that would like to attend, you can sign up by visiting: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/greenfield-coderdojo-tickets-45237816527>. If you have any questions, please contact Samantha Beauchamp at 317-323-2140 or email her at sbeauchamp@ninestarconnect.com



ELECTRIC BUDGET OPTIONS

NineStar Connect for many years has offered the Variable budget billing option to our electric members. The Variable budget bill amount varies from month to month. This allows members to pay a more leveled monthly payment throughout the year rather than experience the bill spikes that can occur during the heating or cooling seasons. The Variable budget option will continue to be offered along with some more traditional Budget billing options that may appeal to other members.

The **VARIABLE BUDGET** varies from month to month. The budget amount is based on a 12-month history. Each month the budget amount is re-calculated when the current month is added and the corresponding month from the previous year is removed from the calculation. This is a rolling 12-month average. In most cases the monthly bill amount changes less than \$20. Historically this option did not include an annual recalculation. An annual recalculation simply takes the credit or debit balance and includes the amount in the calculation to determine a new starting budget amount. The Variable budget option will now have an annual recalculation in June each year.

The **FIXED BUDGET** option is still calculated on a 12-month usage history. But instead of recalculating each month the amount is fixed for 4 months at a time. The budget amount has a recalculation 3 times annually. April, August and December the budget amount will be recalculated and a new budget payment will be set.

The **MIXED BUDGET** option is also calculated on a 12-month usage history. The recalculation for the Mixed budget option only occurs 1 time each year and the member gets to choose which month that will be. This allows the member to choose a time of year that best suits their household budget to adjust the budget payment amount.

There are a few requirements to participation in any type of budget billing. First, there needs to be usage history that a budget amount can be based upon. So, new construction will not be eligible until there is 12 months of occupied history to calculate a budget payment amount. The Variable budget option requires a 12-month history from the current occupant.

Beginning in May 2018 electric members can now select from 3 different Budget billing options. Variable budget, Fixed budget or Mixed budget. All options allow members to level out their monthly bill payments throughout the year. But each budget type is a little unique and therefore allows the member to choose the one that best fits their needs. Let's look at each option and review the differences.

The Fixed or Mixed options are available if there is a 12-month usage history on the property. The account must be current without late payments in the last 12 months.

If a member is interested in signing up for Budget billing or if they have additional questions, please contact Customer Service at 317-326-3131.

PAPERLESS BILLING WINNERS



Each month we pick a new winner for just choosing to get your billing statement electronically. If you are drawn as a lucky winner, you have the option of choosing a \$50 Netflix Gift Card or a \$50 Amazon Gift Card.

Congratulations to our latest monthly winners:

February	Becky Knopp of Greenfield	Amazon Gift Card
March	Zach & Lana McDaniel	Amazon Gift Card
April	Denise Cook	Amazon Gift Card

Paperless Billing is the easiest, cheapest way of paying your bill each month. Please feel free to give one of our Residential Service Consultants a call at 317-326-3131 to help you set up if needed. It will be a call you are glad you made!

TOWN HALL MEETING

Thank you to all that attended this quarter's Town Hall Meeting that was held at Eastern Hancock High School on Thursday, May 10th. The main topic of the night was Telecom Operations Manager, George Plisinski's speech on "IoT (Internet of things) in the Utility World". Afterwards, we had several great questions from our NineStar members about various things from broadband speeds to electric's time of use.

Snacks and giveaways were handed out along with a drawing for a \$100 Visa Gift card to those members who brought personal care items to benefit Mental Health Partners of Hancock County and a drawing was held for just attending the meeting. Each lady that attended was also handed a rose for the upcoming Mother's Day holiday.

The next Town Hall meeting is planned for August 9th at the NineStar Conference Room located at the main office. More information will be sent closer to that time.



POWER HOUR MEETING

The first Power Hour Meeting is set to premiere on the evening of June 6th at NineStar's South Campus Conference Center. Several things are on the agenda to discuss such as: budget billing options, rate options, bill payment options and a SmartHub tutorial. A special giveaway will be given to all that attend and each person will be entered into a Grand Prize drawing at the end of the night.

Additionally, any member that brings new bath towels and/or socks to the meeting will be entered into another drawing.

All items donated will benefit the Hancock Hope House.

Look for your invite in the mail. Seating is limited so if you are wanting to attend, please RSVP by Friday, June 1st.



President's Message

Danielle Daugherty has been NineStar's Human Relations Manager for a little over a year now and she is doing a bang-up job. Prior to her arrival at our coop, she had worked as both a teacher in our local public schools and then with some of our community's non-profit organizations. This experience has allowed Danielle to really hit the ground running and has contributed to her early success.

Danielle came to us as a direct result of our board's strategic planning – something which I believe is critical for small companies like NineStar to do. Our strategic plan is remarkable for what it isn't. It isn't some 200-page tome that took three years to develop and then is placed on some shelf to draw dust. NineStar's strategic plan is a mere six pages long, designed to be easily read and more importantly, frequently referred to by all of our management staff as they make daily decisions impacting our coop and its members and customers. NineStar's strategic plan consists of six "pillars" which represent the foundational principles on which our cooperative is built. These don't change to fit a passing fad or an individual whim.

NineStar's pillars include People, Customer, Community, Financial Stability, Service/Product Reliability and Growth. While no single pillar is more important than any other, it is nevertheless significant that the board chose to make "People" the first pillar. By "People," the board means the employees of NineStar Connect. The board intuitively recognized long ago that without a dedicated and focused group of people doing the yeoman's work of our cooperative each and every day, everything else simply doesn't matter.

And that's where Danielle comes in. She has begun to design and initiate programs to make NineStar one of the "preferred employers" in our community which allows us to recruit the talent we need to be

successful. With our proximity to and easy commute to Indianapolis, NineStar finds itself competing for talent in an area far larger than what it serves. However, don't think for a moment we settle for just anyone because the competition for talented personnel is intense. It takes a special individual to be a NineStar employee.

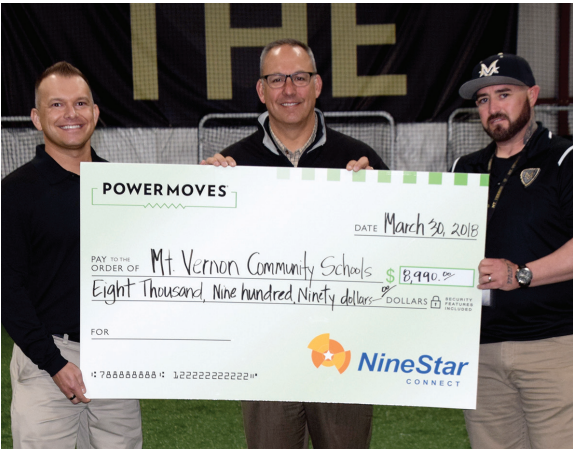
Strategically, our Board of Directors recognizes that what separates our coop from much larger, investor-owned utilities is the level and quality of service it's members and customers like you have come to expect. To continue to meet the high expectations of our members and customers, it is critical we have employees who understand the mission of our coop, are engaged in that mission and recognize individually and collectively they can and do make a difference each and every day in the lives of those we serve.

Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting for the first time Danny Curry who is the minister at Park Chapel Christian Church in Greenfield. We had occasion to share thoughts and talk about a variety of topics related to NineStar services as his church continues to grow and expand. As he explained their ambitious goals, I found myself becoming excited for his parishioners and the mission they are undertaking and told him that his optimism and vision were contagious. With a wisdom beyond his years, he simply replied to me: "People want to be a part of something bigger than themselves that is transformative." In that simple reply, Danny had captured the essence of what drives the very best of us – the desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others.



At our coop, we spend a lot of time talking about the "NineStar Way." I'm reticent to formally define the NineStar Way because it has a personal meaning to each of our employees. For me, the NineStar Way is how we go about serving our friends and neighbors, treating everyone as we ourselves would want to be treated. It is about making that positive difference in the lives of others and is the essence of what makes a NineStar employee special.

MT. VERNON COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION BENEFITS FROM NINESTAR REBATE PROGRAM



Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation was recently awarded an energy efficiency improvement rebate from NineStar Connect. The Power Moves Rebate Program offers rebates to NineStar Connect electric members for qualifying energy efficiency projects. The Power Moves Program is offered in cooperation with NineStar Connect's generation and transmission provider Wabash Valley Power Association.

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation received \$8,990 for upgrading light fixtures at their new

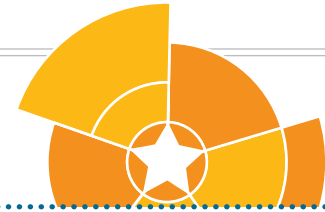
Performance Enhancement Center (PEC) located at the southeast corner of 200 W and SR 234. The upgrades included a combination of high efficiency LED and fluorescent light fixtures.

Matt Strahl, NineStar's Energy Advisor stated, "Once again we are thrilled to work with Mt. Vernon Community Schools. Anytime we can provide energy rebates to our members while at the same time creating ongoing energy efficiencies it truly creates a win win for everyone involved."

Dr. Shane Robbins, Superintendent of Schools for Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation shared, "We are always cognizant to maximize energy efficiencies and are pleased to partner with such great corporate stewards like NineStar."

Pictured from left to right are NineStar Energy Advisor Matt Strahl, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Shane Robbins and Maintenance Technician Rick Tucker.

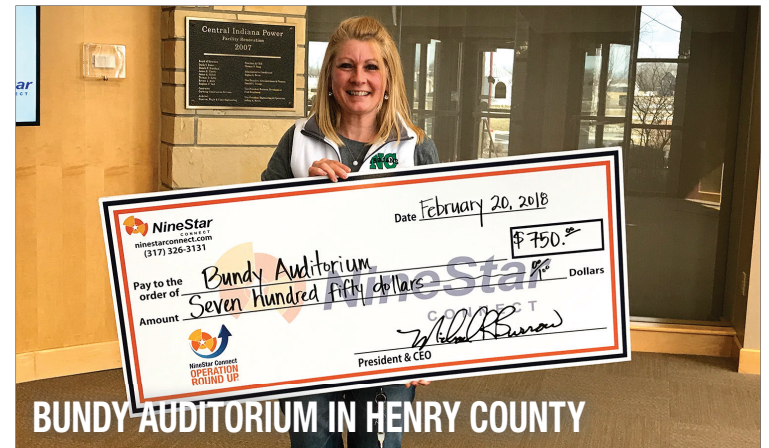
OPERATION ROUND-UP



NineStar Connect's Operation Round-Up Committee meeting was held on February 1st at the company's headquarters. Here are some organizations that benefited from the ORU fund this past quarter:

BUNDY AUDITORIUM IN HENRY COUNTY

» They received \$750.00 to help support their sound system and technology in the auditorium.



GREATER INDIANAPOLIS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

» They received \$3,500.00 for construction of a new home in Hancock County.



GREENFIELD CENTRAL SCHOOL CORPORATION

» They received \$2,000.00 for their partners in education program (academic excellence and student incentive).



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OF HENRY COUNTY

» They received \$4,000.00 for their new trail addition - four miles of Honey Creek Trail.



THE LANDING PLACE

» They received \$4,000.00 to help with starting up a coffee shop called "Even Grounds Café".



MCCORDSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

» They received \$4,000.00 to build a play area in memory of a little boy that died suddenly and who also attended their church.



MORE THAN CONQUERORS

» They received \$4,000.00 for their upcoming annual administration costs.



For ones that want to send in an application for Operation Round-up dollars, the next application deadline is July 13, 2018. Applications can be downloaded from our website at www.ninestarconnect.com under the Community tab.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS – 2018

At this year’s Annual Meeting, 15 names were announced for the 2018 Scholarship program for children of NineStar Connect’s members.

The students have to be a 2018 graduating high school senior and have a seven semester minimum cumulative grade point average of

2.75 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent at the time of the application. Each scholarship winner received \$1000.00.

HERE ARE THE NAMES OF THIS YEAR’S WINNERS:



JAY BLANCHARD
HAMILTON SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL



MATTHEW BOYLE
MT. VERNON HIGH SCHOOL



LIBERTY DURHAM
EASTERN HANCOCK HIGH SCHOOL



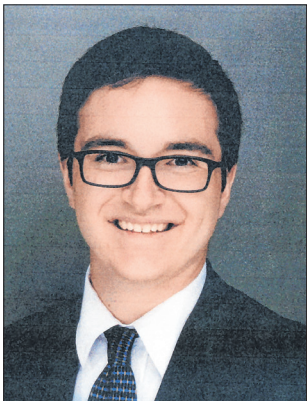
EMILY EBBERT
EASTERN HANCOCK HIGH SCHOOL



MARWA ELASSAL
GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



KRISTA FRANKLIN
MT. VERNON HIGH SCHOOL



NATHAN GRONOWSKI
MT. VERNON HIGH SCHOOL



MACKAYLA HUCKEBY
NEW CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL



IAN KOLESAR
HAMILTON SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL



KALYSTA LEE
CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL



JOSH MYERS
SHENANDOAH HIGH SCHOOL



TYLER REDDAN
FISHERS HIGH SCHOOL



ALAINA SCOTT
GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



KAYLA TURNER
GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



JENNIFER WHITNEY
MORRISTOWN JR. SR. HIGH SCHOOL

NineStar Connect strongly supports the youth of our community and is thrilled to sponsor and offer scholarships

for the next generation of professionals. Congratulations to all graduates of 2018!



S2M SOFTWARE UPGRADE

NineStar Connect recently completed a software upgrade for the Subscriber Information System (SIS) that houses all customer records and billing information for communications services. The Single to Multi (S2M) Agreement conversion took several months of preparation leading to the actual conversion on Feb. 1st and 2nd.

This was a major project that required coordination among several departments said Customer Billing Manager Darrin Couch. NineStar had for many years utilized the single agreement platform for all communications information. Simply put each service (i.e. phone, internet, video, etc.) was under a single phone agreement number for most accounts. A phone agreement is the 10-digit phone number for the service. For internet, video or other services a fictitious number system is used to assign a 10-digit agreement number to each of those services.

By updating to the Multi agreement platform the service order and workflow processes utilized to change or update customer information has been streamlined.

Since last fall we have been working with our software provider National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC) to re-create our catalog of services. A new numbering system was created to again assign a 10-digit number to all services. Amy Wisehart from the billing department and Julie Mitchell the Customer Service Manager spent a great deal of time developing the catalog. After the catalog was created then NISC created the new Multi-agreement platform that would become the information system we use today. By early January the platform was deployed to employees as

an isolated training platform. This allowed employees to train on the new platform while still conducting day to day business on the old Single-agreement platform. After weeks of training and adjustments to the system the new Multi-agreement platform was installed. The installation required an interruption of the entire customer information system for electric, communications, accounting, outage management, Smart Hub and bill payment systems.

I cannot express how impressed I was with our employees and NISC's ability to take down the old system and bring the new system back up with a minimal impact on our customers said Darrin. "Most of our customers were not even aware of the system interruption" and that can be credited to all the employees that prepared for the interruption and made sure back-up systems were in place to access customer information. Even though we were unable to make changes to customer information during the interruption we had access to customer information for inquiry.

To take a database that is utilized by nearly every department and replace it and bring all access back in service in less than 24 hours all the while minimizing the impact on the customer's experience was a great accomplishment.

Even though the improvements are mostly invisible to the customer, the Multi-agreement platform will allow NineStar to better serve our customers now and into the future with improved ability to access and change customer information.

JARROD TECH ADVANTAGE SPEECH

NineStar's Director of Special Projects, Jarrod Beeson spoke at the NRECA's Tech Advantage Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Jarrod talked about leveraging fiber to the home assets for smart grid and economic development.



ANNUAL MEETING

DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS

At the March 23rd NineStar Annual Meeting all votes were counted from early voting as well as the votes cast during the evenings meeting. The results of the voting resulted in the following directors wining election to a three-year term.

AT-LARGE
DISTRICT 3
DISTRICT 4
DISTRICT 5

James Cherry
Don Shaw
Darrell Thomas
Stephen Vail

Biographies of the winning candidates can be found below:



DISTRICT 3

DON SHAW

Don Shaw has been a cooperative member since 1960. He has owned and operated an Electric, Heating and Cooling business for many years. Don was a County Commissioner for eight years and was President for several of those years. He was President of the Indiana Association of County Commissioners and President of Three Rivers Solid Waste. Don is a member of the Jefferson Township Volunteer Fire Department and was chief for 25 years. He has had National Homeland Security training twice in Maryland. Don is a member of the Masonic, Scottish Rite, and Murat Shrine lodges. During his tenure on the NineStar board, he has been Vice President of Hancock Telecom (before the merger). He is also a member of the Indiana Statewide Electric Association and has been on the National Marketing Committee. Don and his wife Judy are proud parents, grandparents and great grandparents. They live around Sulphur Springs.



AT-LARGE

JIM CHERRY

Jim Cherry has been a cooperative member since 1964. He graduated from Hancock Central High School and has attended many Cooperative training classes through Co-Bank and Louisville Bank of Cooperatives. Jim is certified for Electric and Core Curriculum in Broadband and has previous Co-op board experience (of over 40 years) such as: Hancock County Co-op, Countrymark Co-op, Universal Co-op, Land O Lakes Co-op and Central Indiana Power. Jim is a retired farmer and has lived and worked in Hancock County; his family has been in Hancock County for over five generations. He is also a member of Willow Branch United Methodist Church, Greenfield Kiwanis, Eden Masonic Lodge and Greenfield York Rite. Jim and his wife Susan live in Greenfield.



DISTRICT 4

DARRELL THOMAS

Darrell Thomas has been a cooperative member since 1963. He graduated from Mt. Vernon High School in 1959, received his Bachelor's Degree from Ball State University in 1963, his Master's Degree from Ball State University in 1966 and Secondary Administration from Ball State in 1972. For 36 years, Darrell worked for the Mt. Vernon School Corporation as a teacher, coach, high school vice principal and high school principal. He also was the Executive Director of Hancock County Economic Development for 4 years and worked at Ball State University for 10 years supervising student teachers. Darrell has a lot of expertise working with people by virtue of his careers; ability to clearly dissect a problem before reacting; an extensive personal knowledge of the geographic area served by the co-operative; a good listener and years of experience as a board member. He is an emeritus member of the Hancock County Community Foundation; member of Sigma Chi Fraternity; member of the Indiana Retired Teachers/Principals Association and a member of the McCordsville United Methodist Church. Darrell has also served as Chairman of the Board of Hancock Telecom for ten years; vice chairman of TECO (a national PAC for the telecom industry); a committee member on various committees for the national telecommunications association; a member of various standing committees for our local co-operative; and a member of the Central Indiana Power membership committee for a number of years. Darrell is currently retired and lives in McCordsville with his wife Nancy and has three children and eight grandchildren.



DISTRICT 5

STEPHEN VAIL

Stephen Vail has been a cooperative member since 1983. With a focus in finance & economics, Steve received a Bachelor's Degree from Purdue University. He also has a Master's Degree from Ball State with a focus in Organizational Development. For 19 years, Steve worked in various administrative positions at Hancock Regional Hospital with responsibilities being primarily financial and operational efficiency. Currently, Steve serves on the Board of Indiana Electric Cooperatives and serves on their Executive Committee. He also chairs the IEC Government Relations Committee. He is a director on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) board. CFC provides over 24 billion in financial loans to rural cooperatives throughout the United States. Steve is also a 28-year member of the Rotary Club of Greenfield, serves as Commissioner appointee on the Hancock County Redevelopment Commission and the past Executive Director of the Hancock Hope House and continues to support their mission. His finance background, training in lean process improvement methodologies and facilitation skills in strategic planning are skillsets that have been beneficial to him and his role as a director of NineStar. Steve is currently self-employed with ETL Group and J & D Vail Farms Inc. Steve and his wife Shelley have three children and live in Greenfield.