

MARCH - APRIL 2014



NineStar CONNECTION

VOLUME 3
ISSUE 3

TIME TO VOTE

NineStar 61st annual event will include dinner, entertainment and the chance to vote for directors.

PAGES 6-7



INSTANT UPDATES

Power out? No internet or TV? Check NineStar's Facebook or Twitter page!

PAGE 10

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NINESTAR'S ANNUAL MEETING MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE **SEE PAGE 4**



OUR EMPLOYEES
MAKE THE
DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A
CUSTOMER REVIEW
FOR RYAN ROACH.

RYAN WAS HELPFUL,
VERY PATIENT WITH
ME WHEN I NEEDED
COMPUTER HELP.
WANTED TO GIVE
RYAN A PAT ON
THE BACK!

- KIM S.

HAVE A STORY IDEA?

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

COVER STORY	PAGES 4-5	NEW PROGRAMMING
NineStar Connect 61st Annual Meeting and Celebration will provide members a chance for a fun, informative evening.		NineStar Connect launched One on One Sports with Brian Harmon on NineStar's Channel 9, providing a new source of local sports analysis.
NINESTAR ELECTIONS	PAGES 6-7	PAGE 8
On the night of the NineStar Connect Annual Meeting and Celebration, there will also be director elections. Read about the candidates.		
NINESTAR RETIREMENTS	PAGE 8	
NineStar Connect's president and CEO Tim Hills retires, and a longtime board member Tom Kirby will step down in April.		
COMMUNITY DONATION	PAGE 10	
NineStar Connect works with Hancock Regional Hospital to provide new digital devices to help those receiving medical treatment pass the time.		

NineStar CONNECTION

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.

NineStar Connection, USPS

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NineStar Connection

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David Spencer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director District 1 Darrell H. Thomas (A) Thomas Kirby (B)	Director District 2 Doyle S. Baker (A) David G. Heller (B)	Director District 3 Stephen Vail (A) Joseph Paxton (B)	Director District 4 Don Shaw (A) Kim Cronk (B)	Director District 5 Richard C. Parker (A) Mark Evans (B)	Director District 6 Ronnie Mohr (A) Philip M. Hayes (B)	Director District 7 James E. Cherry (A) James Gillett (B)	District At-Large Robert Glazier
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COME ONE, COME ALL

As I am writing this, we are exactly one month out from NineStar's Annual Meeting and Celebration. Hard to believe it has been a year since we have all gathered to recap the wonderful things this cooperative and you — our members — have accomplished together.

The past year has been no different with a whirlwind of activity and accomplishments that we can all take pride in. I hope that you will take the time and join us at this year's meeting to learn more about where we have been and where we are headed in the future.

This year, our event will take place April 4 at Greenfield-Central High School. By now you have received your official notice, and if you have not already done so, please respond with your RSVP by calling 326-MEET (6338) or by emailing annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com by 4 p.m. March 28.

Please remember it is important that you RSVP if you are attending the meeting and having dinner. Last year we implemented a dinner ticket program that assigned tickets as you registered or check in at the meeting. You will be given dinner tickets based on the number of people you RSVP'd for. The system was put in place as a remedy for food running out in previous years. It worked so well we are bringing it back again this year.

Once again, we will be offering two workshops where you can learn more about your cooperative. The first is on our new Smart Connect home automation products and the second will focus on solar energy. If you attend both workshops, you will have a chance to win a \$150 gas card in a drawing.

Finally, we hope that you take time out of your busy schedules to join us on April 4. We have made additional improvements to the sound and we will once again have large screens so you will be able to better see the meeting. It should be a wonderful night to celebrate the accomplishments of your cooperative.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



STEVE VAIL

YOUR CURRENT NINESTAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 1



DARRELL H. THOMAS (A)



STEPHEN VAIL (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 2



DOYLE S. BAKER (A)



DAVID G. HELLER (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 3



RICHARD C. PARKER (A)



JOSEPH PAXTON (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 4



DON SHAW (A)



KIM CRONK (B)

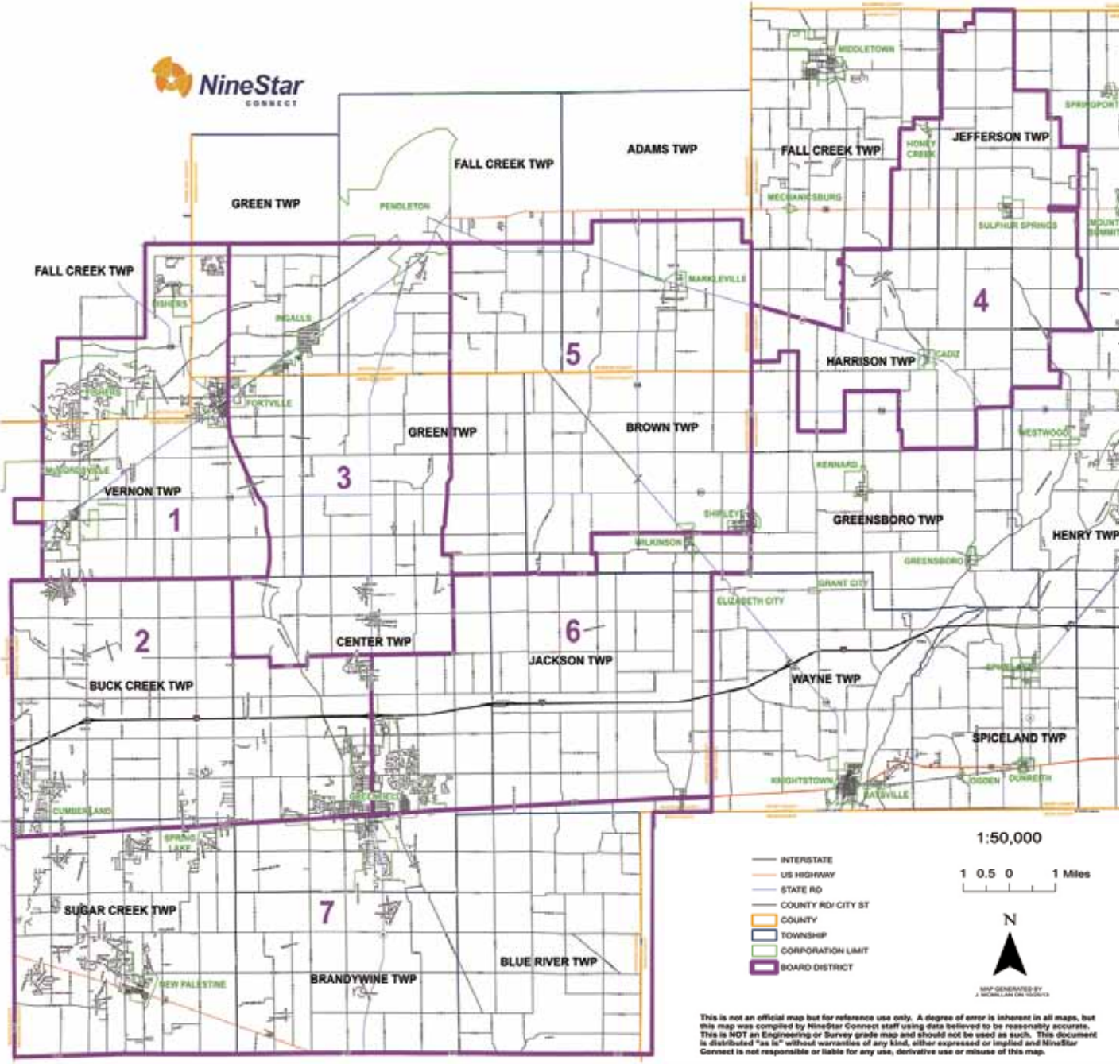
DIRECTOR DISTRICT 5



RONNIE MOHR (A)



MARK EVANS (B)



DIRECTOR DISTRICT 6



ROBERT GLAZIER (A)



PHILIP M. HAYES (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 7



JAMES E. CHERRY (A)



JAMES GILLETT (B)

RETIRING IN 2014



THOMAS KIRBY



NINESTAR'S
ANNUAL
MEETING
MORE THAN
MEETS THE
EYE

With fabulous prizes, informative workshops and food provided by the official caterer of the Indianapolis

Colts, NineStar Connect's Annual Meeting & Celebration is no ordinary business dinner. It is a great event that allows the membership to come out and celebrate the cooperative and all of its achievements over the past year.

"This is a huge community event that draws about 1,000 people, and our 61st year will be bigger than ever," organizer Christa Meadors said. "Attendees will get to see their co-op, give out \$15,000 in scholarships, attend workshops about new and exciting products, and hear about the state of the company."

WRITTEN BY
JULIE
YOUNG

Meadors has been working on logistics and details for the meet and greet, which will take place Friday, April 4, at the Greenfield Central High School Fieldhouse. Registration begins at 5 p.m. with dinner and the business meeting to follow at 7 p.m.

More than 100 NineStar employees have been assigned jobs to make this celebration a special event for all ages. The company will offer shuttle service from the parking lot to the door for those who don't feel like walking, and mobility equipment will be on hand for those who need it. There also will be free childcare for children ages 1-10; there will be pizza, enter-

tainment and a free NineStar Nerd T-shirt for those who pre-register.

"The kids go nuts for those NineStar Nerds T-shirts, and this year we have made up coloring books and other fun giveaways," Meadors said. "We added the childcare to encourage our younger members to come out and take part in the meeting, and it has proven to be very successful. Two years ago, we (had less than 20) kids and last year we had 40, so it's really growing."

Not to worry, though. Grown-ups will have plenty of fun, too. Those who register with a barcode will be entered in a draw-



ing for the evening's door prizes, which include a \$150 gas card. "The barcode really helps the registration process go quickly so that everyone can have fun and enjoy the rest of the evening," said Regina Bever, who is in charge of registration for this year's event.

Once again, the celebration will include workshops showcasing the latest NineStar Connect products as well as future services that may be on the horizon. Brad Henderson said the workshops proved to be very successful two years ago and this year the focus will be on NineStar's NineStar Smart Connect and a new solar central station that is in the planning stages.

"Our NineStar Smart Connect is a brand new product that allows members to automate their homes and manage their properties even when they can't be there," he said. "The other workshop concerns a solar central station that we are looking into, which would mean the building of a solar array that would put electricity into the grid and allow members to purchase their energy directly from the array. It's a new concept that

NINESTAR CONNECT'S
61ST ANNUAL
MEETING
& CELEBRATION

WHEN: APRIL 4, 2014

WHERE: GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL (FIELDHOUSE)

TIME: 5 P.M. REGISTRATION
7 P.M. DINNER AND MEETING

FREE CHILDCARE AVAILABLE
FOR AGES 1-10

WORKSHOPS FEATURE A LOOK AT
NINESTAR'S SMART CONNECT AND
FUTURE SOLAR CENTRAL STATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL (317) 326-3131

could be coming down the road, but it is an exciting new thing the company is looking into and we can't wait to share it with our members."

Henderson said the meeting's workshops are well received by the public and offer members the chance to learn more about NineStar products and services that can benefit them.

"We live in a society that has so much information out there and we are all fighting for people's attention. This is one of the best ways for our members to find out what we are up to and focus on the information without a lot of extra noise," he said.

Of course, the highlight of the evening is the dinner, which will be served by Jonathon Byrd's Cafeteria. The meal will consist of fried chicken, glazed pork loin, smashed potatoes and gravy, corn, a garden salad and plenty of desserts to satisfy the sweet tooth. In addition, there also will be a Lenten option of cheese ravioli for those who can't eat meat on Friday.

"We wanted to make sure that there was something for everyone so that everyone can be part of this exciting night," Meadors said. "Our members constantly tell us how nice of an evening it is to come out, meet other members, enjoy a great meal and celebrate the NineStar cooperative."

ANNUAL MEETING WORKSHOPS

This year's annual meeting, which will take place April 4 at the Greenfield-Central High School Fieldhouse, will feature two workshops to provide more knowledge and education about two new services NineStar is or possibly will be offering in the near future.

The first workshop – with sessions scheduled for 5:15 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. – aims to educate customers about a new product: NineStar Smart Connect, Home Automation. A brief overview of this exciting and new product will enlighten those who attend the workshop with its innovative technology and corresponding devices. Some of the features include being able to unlock doors and gates, arm or disarm security systems, view live video, turn lights on and off, and adjust thermostats all from a computer, tablet or smart phone.

Additionally, people will find they can be a Smart Connect customer for very little money. Depending on needs and wants, there is the initial equipment charge for the devices people choose to have installed. Most devices are very reasonable in price. Subsequently, customers then pay monthly according to how many devices they have selected. For example, for five devices, they will pay \$25 per month or only \$20 per month for NineStar broadband customers. More information about the service and pricing will be available at the workshop.

The second workshop is called Community Solar Possibilities and will be starting at 5:45pm that night. This will be presented by the NineStar Member Services Department. This workshop is an introduction to a new twist on the concept of "central station" solar electric generation. The workshop will include a sample explanation of photovoltaic solar application and a description of the community solar options that are being considered by NineStar Connect. Attendees will be asked to provide a non-binding indicator of their level of interest in a possible future community solar project.

Attendees at the workshops will be entered automatically into a drawing for a \$100 gas card. A \$150 gas card will be drawn from those who attend both workshops. So, those planning on attending the Annual Meeting this year also should plan on attending one or both of the workshops. It's great knowledge to have and share with others in the community and could possibly change the way people live their everyday lives.



MEET AND GREET

NINESTAR PLAYS HOST TO 61ST ANNUAL MEETING

On April 4, 2014, at Greenfield-Central High School, NineStar Connect will be celebrating its 61st annual meeting and celebration. We hope you can join us that night and partake in the festivities. Once again, a delicious meal will be served and entertainment will be provided. Doors will open at 5 p.m. with the official meeting starting at 7 p.m. The meeting will include the business meeting along with director elections. Profiles and candidate statements are included in this newsletter. In the following weeks please be on the lookout for the official notice in the mail.

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES



DOYLE S. BAKER
DISTRICT 2 CANDIDATE

Background: Doyle S. Baker has been a cooperative member since 1988. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degree from Purdue University majoring in Industrial Technology. He retired from Eli Lilly and Co. where he worked in production, health and safety, and engineering. He then joined the teaching profession. He taught industrial technology (focusing on electricity, electronics, drafting, computer aided drafting and woods). Doyle has completed a credentialed cooperative director program and board leadership program from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He and his wife Rebecca are members

of Outlook Christian Church. Together, they are parents to six children; August, Stephen, Terry (deceased), Denise, Christopher and Douglas. Doyle and Becky reside in Greenfield.
Statement: I am committed to the future goals and past accomplishments of NineStar Connect. Since the merger in 2011, I have learned about the communications side of our cooperative and realize it is a never ending educational experience. With today's technology explosion, it seems only natural to be amazed at the competence of those who help our members. NineStar has provided fiber for hard to reach areas that previously had no cable services. The Smart Meter installations will help members to reduce their electric bill. NineStar continues to exceed expectations and remains one of the leading cooperatives in the United States. I believe the future holds an even better opportunity to expand service areas and offer affordable products to our members. I am proud to be a member of this cooperative and serve on the Board of Directors and I hope to continue serving its members for another term.



BEVERLY GARD
DISTRICT 2 CANDIDATE

Background: Beverly Gard has been a cooperative member for 26 years. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She also did graduate work at University of Tennessee and Memphis Medical Units. She is a biochemist and worked at Lilly from 1964 to 1967. She was also an Indiana State Senator for 24 years from 1988-2012. For more than a decade, she was chairman of the Indiana Senate Energy and Environmental Affairs Committee. As an active member of the National Conference of State Legislatures, she chaired national commit-

tees for three years that dealt with energy, agricultural and environmental issues and was considered one of the national legislative experts on environmental policy as it affects energy production. Additionally, her legislative work as an advocate for telecommunication and energy cooperatives required her to achieve a high level of understanding of the issues it faces and to acquire possible solutions that challenge cooperatives. She has also served on various charitable organizations, such as the Hancock County Community Foundation, Greenfield Chamber Board of Directors, and the Greenfield Revitalization Board of Directors. She currently is Chairwoman of Staff/Parish Committee with Bradley United Methodist Church, President of the Hancock County Public Library Board of Trustees, Chairwoman of the State of Indiana Environmental Rules Board, on the Board of Directors of the Hancock Regional Hospital Foundation, Vice-President of the Indiana Library Federation and member of Indiana Farm Bureau. Additionally, because of the position she held with the National Conference of State Legislatures, she has traveled to many places in the world to see new innovations and sources of energy production. She also was invited to have a personal conversation with President George W. Bush on environmental regulations and energy production and how proposals would impact Indiana consumers. Beverly and her husband, Don, live in Greenfield and have two grown sons, David and Doug.
Statement: During all my 24 years as State Senator, I served on committees that dealt with telecommunications and energy issues. Much of my legislation was on behalf of Indiana's electric and telecommunications cooperatives, including addressing anti-competitive policies of investor owned companies that were detrimental to cooperatives and their members. Additionally, I was the author of the legislation that allowed our electric and telecommunications cooperatives to merge. Of utmost importance

to NineStar members are the issues of reliability, affordability and transparency of operations and services. Poorly thought out environmental policy threaten affordable, reliable energy for NineStar members. Sound financial management and product diversification is necessary as loss of federal dollars threaten affordable telecommunication services. My educational background in science and my years of leadership on relevant public policy issues provide an opportunity for a unique and beneficial perspective in the oversight of NineStar as it strives to continue providing value to members.



DAVID G. HELLER
DISTRICT 2 CANDIDATE

Background: David Heller has been a cooperative member since 1965. He obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees from Ball State University. David retired from Mt. Vernon Schools as a teacher for six years and as an administrator for 28 years. He was an Educational Consultant for five years for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and represented various national committees for NineStar Connect. He is a Sunday School Teacher at Otterbein Church, a member of Hancock County Retired Teachers Association and a current board member of NineStar Connect. He and his wife, Shirley, are the parents of two sons, Trent and Todd (deceased), and live in Greenfield.
Statement: I am proud to be a board member of NineStar Connect, the merger of Hancock Telecom and Central Indiana Power. We have brought many additional services to the people in this community. This merger has been a culmination of two



companies, both with the highest cooperative spirit. To keep this forward-looking company moving in the right direction, I seek your support.



KIM L. CRONK
DISTRICT 4 CANDIDATE

Background: Kim Cronk has been a cooperative member since 1989. He graduated from Shenandoah High School and received his bachelor's degree in Education from Ball State University. He also attended the Law Enforcement Academy. He is currently Captain of the Henry County Sheriff's Department, Henry County commissioner and serves on the board at NineStar Connect. Previously, Kim served as Henry County

Sheriff for eight years, was a Henry County councilman and school board president of Shenandoah High School. He is currently a member of Indiana Electric Statewide, National Rural Telecommunications Association, National Sheriff's Association, Indiana Sheriff's Association and Fraternal Order of Police. He lives in New Castle and has two daughters, Lauren and Leanna.
Statement: During the past 17 years, I have served as a member of the Board of Directors for NineStar (formerly Hancock Telecom) and attended numerous conferences, which provided several hours of educational training in the ever-changing world of telecommunications. During my tenure as a director, I have always strived to be a progressive board member promoting the progressive business practices of NineStar. Also, the other board members and I also take pride in the fact that NineStar, being a cooperative, is owned by its members and is a not-for-profit organization promoting "customer service" and "quality of service" as our primary objectives.



ROBERT C. GLAZIER
DISTRICT 6 CANDIDATE

Background: Robert Glazier has been a cooperative member since 1990. He graduated from Tufts University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology. He also graduated from the Air Force Officers Training School and attained the rank of Captain while serving during the Vietnam War. He is a retired Director of Utilities (Chief of Staff) for the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, having served in that position for 15 years. He previously served as Chief Engineer for the IURC. Because of these positions, he has attended many training courses and seminars on management, and financial

and accounting issues related to utilities. Bob is also a former member of the board of directors for Meals on Wheels of Hancock County. He has delivered meals once a week for more than 12 years. He was the first recipient of the "Bob Glazier Volunteer of the Year Award" named in his honor. He is a former Chairman of the Indiana Council of Economic Education and presently serves on its executive committee. Bob is a recipient of the "Sagamore of the Wabash," the highest honor bestowed by the governor of Indiana. Bob and his wife, Carolyn, live in Greenfield and have raised three sons, Steve, Craig and Mark.
Statement: I have served one term as Director of Hancock Telecom and one term as Director of NineStar Connect. I am very proud to have been elected the first Chairman of the Board of NineStar Connect. I was a strong proponent of the merger of Central Indiana Power and Hancock Telecom and would like to serve another term on the NineStar board to help explore further opportunities that the merger provides. I

believe that my experience as Director of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission and as a board member of both Hancock Telecom and NineStar provide me with the tools needed to continue to be an engaged and contributing director. I understand utility management and financial matters and the unique accounting methods required for electric and telecommunication cooperatives.



RICHARD WALKER
DISTRICT 6 CANDIDATE

Background: Richard Walker has been a cooperative member since 1966. He is a farmer in Charlottesville. He graduated from Charlottesville High School and has lived in Jackson Township all his life. At one time, Richard was a deputy on the Sheriff's Department and a security officer at Hancock Regional Hospital. His training involves the Law Enforcement Academy, FEMA training and hospital security training.
Statement: I have lived in Jackson Township all my life and have been a member of REMC since the '60s. I have been very impressed with the merger to NineStar and the difference it has made in area (District 6). I have been able to take advantage of these services. I have been very pleased to have a phone that works when it rains and have an Internet and cable all in one. This is a much needed service for a rural area like District 6. As a director of NineStar, I would like to get services expanded for more people in my district so they can experience the benefits I have been lucky enough to acquire. I know that getting expanded into all areas will benefit both NineStar and local residents.



NINESTAR PRESIDENT AND CEO TIM HILLS ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT

Tim Hills, President & CEO of NineStar Connect, recently announced his retirement. Hills cited his desire to spend more time with family as the main reason for his stepping down.

“I’m about to celebrate yet another birthday and it has caused me to re-examine my priorities,” Hills stated.

Hills came to then Hancock Telecom in February of 2001 and has spent the past 13 years at the helm. Altogether, Hills has spent 38 years in the rural utility industry working at five different companies in Iowa, Oregon, Minnesota and Indiana.

Hills appreciates the time spent at NineStar and reflected on the innovative company.

“NineStar is poised to do some really great things for the communities it serves and my wish is for continued growth and success for NineStar in the future.”

Steve Vail, Chairman of NineStar’s board, thanked Hills for his leadership and all he has done for the company. “We thank Tim for his dedication to our organization and for the influence he has had for positioning NineStar for a bright future.”

Hills plans to relax and travel to visit his family, which is spread out across the country in Iowa, Minnesota and the Washington, D.C. area.

SPORTS HIGHLIGHT



The half-hour show, which began airing in January, already has had guests such as Grant Freking of the Daily Reporter.

HARMON SPORTS SHOW NOW SHOWING ON NINESTAR TV

Sports fans, if you are looking for a source for in-depth local sports coverage, you need look no further than NineStar’s Channel 9.

In January, NineStar launched One on One Sports with Brian Harmon. The show’s host, Brian Harmon, probably sounds familiar because he is also the Sports Editor for the Greenfield Daily Reporter. Brian brings years of experience, and his contacts and access in the world of local high school sports is almost limitless.

The half-hour show, which began airing in January, already has had

guests such as Grant Freking of the Daily Reporter, Johnny McCrory owner of 96.5 and 1520AM in Shelbyville, and most recently G-C girls basketball Coach Doug Laker.

When asked what drew him to participate with the show, Brian explained, “With 30 minutes and just one guest, the show gives me a chance to explore topics with more depth than what you normally get during a quick TV or radio sound bite.”

Harmon continued, “As a sports editor of a newspaper, I often have to leave interesting, detailed post-game answers on the cutting room floor, so to speak,

because they may not be relevant to the game at hand, or simply for lack of space. The same goes for random, off-the-cuff conversations that happen during the course of a sports season. Now, during One-on-One, we can take the time to delve into issues that are, hopefully, interesting to viewers.”

The show airs twice a week on Channel 9: at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. Saturdays.

Those who have ideas for show topics or guests they would like to see interviewed, please contact Harmon at bharmon@greenfieldreporter.com

FREE NINESTAR NERD T-SHIRTS FOR CHILDREN

A new addition at this year’s annual meeting will be free Nerd T-Shirts that will be given away to children who attend the meeting with their parents or a family member. All you have to do to secure for your child one of these highly sought after shirts is to attend the annual meeting with your child and at the time of placing your RSVP at (317) 326-MEET (6338) or annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com indicate your child’s T-shirt size. Children must attend the meeting to get one of the shirts. Once again, as in years past, day care will be offered during the meeting. Children will enjoy a bounce house, games, activities and pizza.



RETIREMENT

STEPPING DOWN

TOM KIRBY TO RETIRE FROM NINESTAR’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN APRIL

When Tom Kirby agreed to fill an empty board seat with the Hancock County Electric Co-op in 1992, he didn’t know it would be more than 20 years before he would say goodbye – or everything that would happen in-between.

“I have been board chairman, served on the Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) national board as well as a statewide representative,” he said. “When I took that vacant board seat, I was a selected

board member, but I have been re-elected ever since.”

Kirby grew up in Greenfield and is a graduate

of Greenfield-Central High School.

He attended Notre Dame University in South Bend and had plans to go to medical school, but changed the trajectory of his career by shifting his focus to the technical side of the healthcare industry. For 20 years he worked at St. John’s Hospital in Anderson and then aligned himself with a venture-owned company before becoming a nuclear cardiology tech for St. Vincent’s 12 years ago.

It isn’t the kind of field that goes hand in hand with an electric co-op or a telecommunications company, and Kirby said that when he was first approached, he didn’t even know what an electric co-op was. He said that once he realized it was operations management, he figured he could handle it, but it took him nearly a decade to understand the ins and outs of the company and how the processes work in order to help make the decisions he’s had a hand in over the years.

“That’s why we have so many long-term board members. It takes a while to learn everything,” he said.

Kirby has certainly been involved in a lot of crucial events over the years. He said he came into the co-op at a difficult time. The company was struggling with the Wabash Valley bankruptcy and unable to borrow



money to purchase equipment such as wires and poles. He was there when the Hancock Electric Co-op changed its name to Central Indiana Power, merged with Hancock REMC and eventually merged again with the Hancock County Rural Telephone Co-op to become NineStar Connect.

“That was a big deal because we knew we needed to attract a better customer base,” he said. “The electric co-op always has a steady flow of income while the telecommunications end has always been high risk with high reward. I think we have done a great job with the installation of fiber and reaching customers that had not been served in the past. Most for-profit entities wouldn’t consider doing that. It wouldn’t be worth it. We have put our customers first and concentrate on getting those services to them. It costs more, but we feel that it has been worth it in order to serve everyone.”

He has always been proud to be part

of the NineStar community, but never was that more apparent than during the recent outage that affected video, voice and Internet service. The system had been hit not only by inclement weather but also a hacker virus, and while electric power remained on, members were without their telecommunications services for 24 hours.

“Everyone worked tirelessly to get the system back, and because we are not known for significant outages, we made a point of sending out a letter to our members to tell them what had happened. We know our members and we felt that they had a right to know what had occurred,” he said.

Afterward, Kirby said the co-op received a letter from a member who praised the company for its exceptional service and felt that NineStar was the kind of company that employees want to work for because they don’t feel that their jobs are threatened everyday. Kirby said NineStar has always been the kind of place that knows its members, understands its members and employs members of the community it serves, but it is important to keep growing.

“You have to know your membership, but you also don’t want to be niched as nothing more than a rural co-op with nothing to offer more metropolitan regions. We are fortunate to have the unique customer base that we do, but we have to work harder to reach more urban areas who can see us as a preferred provider. That’s how the profits will go up,” he said.

Steve Vail, NineStar’s Board Chairman, said Kirby has been an asset to the cooperative and someone who has used his clinical skills to analyze and assess ideas in order to help make the best decisions moving forward.

“He’s a quiet guy, but when he does speak in the boardroom, he is always thoughtful, wise and spot on, which is tough when you have to understand not only the telecommunications component but the electrical side as well,” Vail said. “Our board members have a personal commitment to the cooperative and they make a significant investment of their time. Tom has been with us for many years and he will be sorely missed.”

Kirby said he still plans to represent the “yuppie” portion of the NineStar membership from his home near Geist but said he has no real advice for the cooperative other than to keep doing good things and reaching for the future.

“They will do that anyway,” he said.

MEMORIAM

FORMER HANCOCK TELECOM DIRECTOR PASSES AWAY

William “Bill” H. Paxton, 83, of Greenfield, passed away on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at Springhurst Health Campus in Greenfield. He was born July 30, 1930 in McCordsville to the late Paul and Ruth (Beaver) Paxton and graduated from McCordsville High School. Bill was a life-long farmer and a 30-year (1976-2006) member of the Board of Directors of Hancock Telecom. He was also a member of Eden United Methodist Church, where he had served as a trustee. One of his joys was his participation in the Hancock County Antique Tractor club and county 4-H fair parade as well as the Pioneer Village at the Indiana State Fair. He is survived by his wife Donna (Dinger) Paxton, whom he married at the Beech Grove Church of the Brethren north of Fortville on November 19, 1950; son Joseph (Patty) Paxton of Fortville; daughter Susan (Tim) Schultz of Greenfield; grandchildren: Michelle (Scott) Hasty, Joe (Chrissy) Paxton, Erika (Jason) Matthews, and Adam (Ashley) Schultz; great-grandchildren: Haley Arthur, Bryce Hasty, Kynsey Hasty, Caden Matthews, Ty Schultz, Gavin Paxton, and Coy Schultz; brother Raymond E. (Lois) Paxton of McCordsville; and sisters Donna J. Mattox of Fortville and Nila (Philip) Jeffries of Greenfield. He was preceded in death by sister Wilma Jean Edwards.



INSTANT UPDATES
AVAILABLE ON
FACEBOOK, TWITTER

Power out? No internet or TV? Check NineStar’s Facebook or Twitter page!

Social Media is exploding, and if you aren’t checking your laptop, tablet or smart phone for the latest and greatest fads, trends and updates, you are not living in the 21st century!

We have found that posting news about NineStar Connect on Facebook and Twitter has been a successful line of communication for all of our social media followers. Once you “like” our page, you will automatically be notified of any post we share whether it’s information about an outage, an event we are planning, local Channel 9 broadcasting or energy information to save you money. In fact, our “likes” have tripled from this time last year.

Additionally, if you have a question for us, send us a message. We will research and respond to your question as quickly as possible. We don’t want to “leave you in the dark” about any issues or inquiries you might have for us. Our Customer Service has always been a significant piece of what we do, and giving you the answers you need is imperative to keeping you knowledgeable and satisfied with our service. To add, when there is that unfortunate outage, your communication to us is just as helpful in determining where the problem is and who it is affecting, so we encourage you to share your thoughts.

So, if you haven’t already, grab your tablet or smart phone and “Like” or “Follow” our Facebook and/or Twitter page. We will do our best to keep you informed and post all the latest details about NineStar Connect news. But don’t forget, we still like to hear your voice! When you need answers fast and need to talk to someone, a phone call to our 24/7/365 Support Center is always just a dial away (317) 326-HELP.



TECHNOLOGY



NINESTAR DONATES IPADS TO HANCOCK REGIONAL

The Oncology Department at Hancock Regional Hospital recently received a gift of six new iPads from NineStar Connect. The devices were donated to the unit so patients, who are receiving treatments, can use them in customizable ways. The iPads are loaded with software that gives users access to the Internet, movies, games and TV shows.

Now patients have the ability to pass the sometimes long hours of treatment with entertainment options that suit them.

“We have set the devices up so patients have many options to pass the time, and once a treatment is finished the history is deleted,” stated Ross Ferson,

Director of Network Operations at NineStar. “In fact, if someone wanted to take care of their banking, they could do so knowing their information wouldn’t be compromised.”

Leslie Wickard, an RN in the oncology unit indicated that the devices have become very popular and are a staple of sorts in the unit. “Patients have really taken to them and they enjoy watching TV shows of their choice.”

No longer will a patient have to watch a community TV that is tuned to a show they could possibly care nothing about.

The idea to acquire iPads to help patients be entertained during treatment came from Jon Miller,

the Controller and Team Leader of Information Services at Hancock Regional Hospital. When the idea was first brought up to NineStar, the company jumped at the opportunity to make the idea work and offered the donation. Interim President Mike Burrow indicated the gift of the iPads demonstrated yet another way the two great organizations work together to help their customers.

“The relationship we have with Hancock Regional is important, and we value that they view us not only as a partner but as a solutions provider as well. We are always happy to assist them with their vision because ultimately it makes our community a better place.”

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Interim President Mike Burrow

NINESTAR SMART CONNECT

NineStar Smart Connect is a full-featured home automation system that enables members to control their appliances and lighting systems, lock and unlock doors digitally, manage HVAC systems to save money and energy, set motion and lighting sensors on exterior units, monitor the premises through video surveillance cameras and equipment, and receive alerts when a potential problem arises.

What is also a benefit is Smart Connect works with

any broadband. So for those of you that do not have NineStar broadband, you can still sign up for Smart Connect.

Best of all, it’s affordable! Members pay a \$300 equipment fee over three months in order to feel less of a pinch in the budget, and their monthly fee is based on the services they order. Members who order five features pay \$25 per month, and NineStar broadband customers receive a \$5 discount.

Additionally, the future looks only brighter with

more automated services on the horizon. From home features to independent living technology and Smart Farm solutions, NineStar is committed to meeting the needs of the membership it serves. Families want to feel safe and protected, older adults want to stay in their homes longer, and the agricultural community is looking for technology to manage their farms effectively and efficiently for higher production.

At this year’s Annual Meeting on April 4, we will be

hosting a workshop highlighting NineStar Smart Connect. So for those of you that are interested in more information about this great product, come see us! We will also have a Customer Service Representative on hand if anyone would like to sign up on the day of the meeting. By doing this, NineStar will give you one FREE device! We know you will be as captivated as we are about all the services that are available by becoming a Smart Connect customer.

TOP TEN

NINESTAR SMART CONNECT HOME INTELLIGENCE DEVICES

- PROGRAMMABLE DOOR LOCKS
- PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTATS
- SECURITY CAMERAS
- ALARM INTEGRATION DEVICE
- APPLIANCE OUTLET CONTROL SWITCHES
- GARAGE DOOR SENSORS
- WATER SENSORS
- LIGHTING CONTROL PANELS
- DOOR/WINDOW SENSORS
- OUTLET ON/OFF SWITCH



BUILDING A NEW HOME?
WE HAVE AN APP FOR THAT!

The air is cold and the snow is still piled up on the sidewalks from the near blizzard that struck last month. Planning to build a new home may be far from your mind now, but once spring hits, new home construction may be part of your plan. If a new home is in your future, you should consider building a Touchstone Energy Home.

What is a Touchstone Energy Home? A Touchstone Energy

Home is a well-insulated, electrically heated and cooled home that is more energy-efficient, less expensive to operate, cleaner, safer and more comfortable than today’s standard building code models.

A home built to today’s standard energy code is rated 100 on the Home Energy Rating Scale (HERS). If a home used no energy it, it would be rated a zero. Touchstone Energy Homes have

been receiving an average HERS rating of 51. That’s 49 percent better than a code-built home.

Heating and cooling typically accounts for just 15 percent of energy costs in a Touchstone Energy Home, compared to roughly half of the average home’s energy bill. The average Touchstone Energy Home costs just over \$500 per year to heat and cool. Yes, you read that correctly. The AVERAGE Touchstone Energy Home costs just over \$500 PER YEAR to heat and cool.

Owners of a Touchstone Energy HOME receive a one-year heating and cooling cost guarantee, a performance report and a pewter medallion to display on the home’s exterior, which can

increase your home’s value.

The Touchstone Energy Home incorporates energy-saving features into building plans. The standards are broken into seven categories:

- Insulation standards for foundations, walls and ceilings
- Basements and floorings
- Building envelope/thermal bypass requirements
- Mechanical systems
- Water heating
- Lighting and appliances
- Fireplaces

Worried about the cost? The additional cost to build a home to Touchstone Energy standards on average is only 25 cents to \$1 more per square foot. And you will definitely save that in your heating and cooling expenses.

How do you begin building a Touchstone Energy Home? Simply talk to NineStar Connect and have your builder complete a training course before construction begins. The builder, NineStar Connect, member and home energy rater all work together to make sure the necessary steps are followed in order for the home to be certified a Touchstone Energy Home.

The Touchstone Energy Home program is available to all NineStar Connect electric cooperative members who construct homes to meet the program’s standards. To find out more about the program, please contact NineStar’s Home Energy Advisor Darrin Couch at 317-326-3131.

ANNUAL MEETING OF NINESTAR CONNECT

April 4, 2014

Greenfield Central High School
801 N. Broadway

Dinner & Registration begin at 5:00pm for
NineStar Connect & NineStar Communications Customers

Join us for Free Dinner, Music & Prizes!

\$15,000 in scholarships will be drawn

\$5,000 in cash prizes will be drawn*

Call **317-326-MEET (6338)**
or email: annualmeeting@ninstarconnect.com
to **RSVP by 4pm on March 28th**
www.ninstarconnect.com



* Must Be Present To Win

NINESTAR NEWS

SAMANTHA BEAUCHAMP JOINS SALES TEAM AT NINESTAR

Samantha Beauchamp recently has been added to the NineStar Connect team. She will be working in the Sales Department as a Sales Representative renewing contracts for businesses in the area.



SAMANTHA BEAUCHAMP

Samantha graduated in December from Ball State University with a degree in Business Administration. While in college, Samantha volunteered at a learning center and worked at Occazio Home Care helping folks with disabilities achieve everyday tasks.

Samantha is pleased to be working for NineStar, a company that cares for its employees and customers. The Sales Department has been helpful with assisting her in learning her new responsibilities and accomplishing everything she needs to be successful in her duties at NineStar.

S U D O K U

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes.

See ninstarconnect.com Facebook page for last edition's solution.

	3				6		5	
					4			6
		5		7		9		
1	8		2		7		6	
		2					4	
7			5	8				
	4	8		3		7		9
					1	3		