

MARCH - APRIL 2013



NineStar CONNECTION

VOLUME 2
ISSUE 2

ANNUAL MEETING

NineStar 60th annual event will include dinner, entertainment and the chance to vote for directors.

PAGES 6-7

MV STATE CHAMPS

Lady Marauders win first IHSAA state title.

PAGE 9



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**A CANDID CONVERSATION
WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD ON NINESTAR'S
STRATEGY & FUTURE** PAGE 4

STEVE VAIL



After the McCordsville donuts and coffee meeting on February 16, a couple examines fiber optic cable.



OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR OUR MULTIMEDIA INSTALLER, JON.

WE TRADED IN OUR SET TOP BOXES WITH A UPGRADE WE DID AND HAD TROUBLE FIGURING THEM OUT. WE APPRECIATE JON'S POLITENESS AND HIS KNOWLEDGE...HE REALLY GOT US THROUGH THIS. JUST WANT TO TELL HIM THANK YOU. WE REALLY APPRECIATE HIS HELP!

- TIM & SUE

HAVE A STORY IDEA?

Contact David Spencer at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com

COVER STORY

PAGES 4-5

NineStar Connect interviews Chairman of the Board Steve Vail on a wide range of subjects, including his view of the company and its future.

NINESTAR NEED TO KNOW

PAGES 6-7

NineStar Connect will conduct its 60th annual meeting and celebration, including a dinner event, business meeting and director elections.

IN THE NEWS

PAGES 8-9

NineStar Connect has launched its Co-op Connections Card, providing customers an easy way to save money on a wide range of products.

NINESTAR NEWS

PAGE 12

Read about Larry MacLellan, the newest member of the NineStar Connect sales team. MacLellan is big on Ninestar services and ready to sell.

DONUTS & COFFEE

NineStar Connect recently held a Donuts & Coffee information meeting in McCordsville to talk about fiber service.

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IMPROVED ANNUAL MEETING TO OFFER FOOD, WORKSHOPS

Suddenly it is that time of year again in Indiana. The weather is starting to turn, March Madness is in full swing and the NineStar Connect Annual Meeting & Celebration is upon us.

This year, our event will take place on April 5 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 e-mail at annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com by 4 p.m. March 29.

It is important that you RSVP. Last year we had several complaints that food ran out. This was because of two factors. First, more people showed up for dinner and the meeting than had RSVP'd and, secondly, people went back for seconds before some people had eaten the first time. You voiced your displeasure and we listened. As a result, when you register or check in at the meeting you will be given dinner tickets based on the number of people you RSVP'd for. So it is vital you let us know you are planning on attending.

In addition, we will be offering two workshops where you can learn more about your cooperative. If you attend both workshops, you will have a chance to win a drawing for a \$100 gas card.

Finally, we hope that you take time out of your busy schedules to join us on April 5. We have made improvements to the sound, and we have added large screens, so you will be able to better see the meeting and entertainment. It should be a wonderful night to celebrate the accomplishments of your cooperative.

PRESIDENT & CEO



TIM HILLS

MEET YOUR 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 5



RICHARD C. PARKER (A)



MARK EVANS (B)

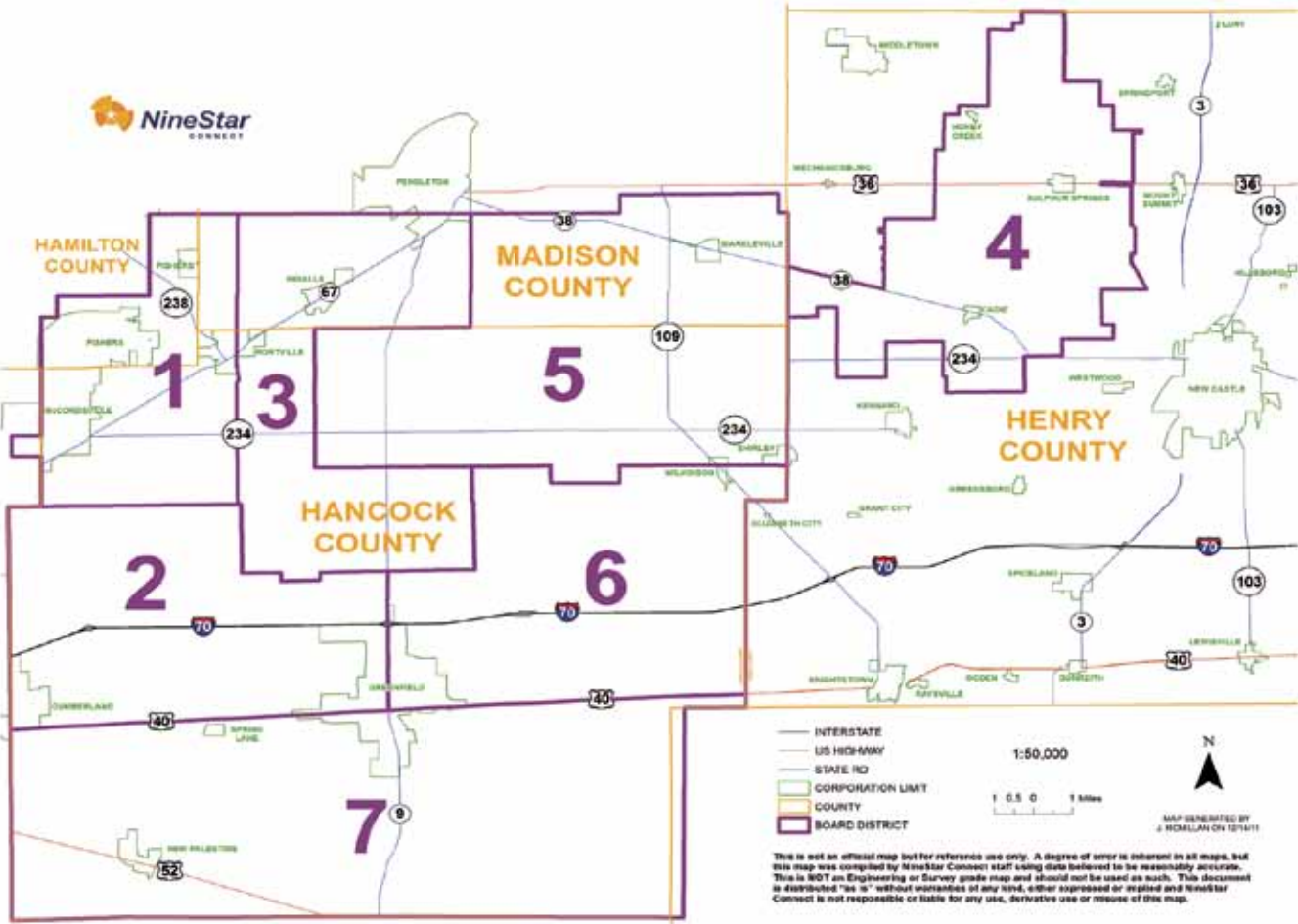
DIRECTOR DISTRICT 7



JAMES E. CHERRY (A)



JAMES GILLETT (B)



DIRECTOR DISTRICT 4



DON SHAW (A)



KIM CRONK (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 6



RONNIE MOHR (A)



PHILIP M. HAYES (B)

DISTRICT AT-LARGE



ROBERT GLAZIER

CONNECTION

NINESTAR HOSTS ANNUAL MEETING

Join us at the 2013 Annual Meeting of NineStar Connect April 5, 2013, at Greenfield-Central High School located at 801 N. Broadway in Greenfield. Both dinner and registration begin at 5 p.m. for NineStar Connect and NineStar Communications customers.

Join us for a free dinner, music and prizes!

■ \$15,000 in scholarships will be drawn

■ \$5,000 in cash prizes will be drawn (Must be present to win)

317-326-MEET (6338)

or email: annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com to RSVP by 4 p.m. March 29

ninestarconnect.com



WRITTEN BY
JULIE
YOUNG

NINESTAR CONNECTION INTERVIEW: STEVE VAIL

A CANDID CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD ON NINESTAR’S STRATEGY & FUTURE

Born and raised on a family farm, NineStar Connect Board Chairman Steve Vail’s roots run deep in Hancock County. After graduating from Mt. Vernon High School in 1977 and Purdue University in 1981, the self proclaimed “finance and numbers guy” returned home only to find himself ensconced in the farm crises of the mid-1980s. As a “special accounts manager” for Farm Credit, he was in the unenviable position of working through difficult financial situations with many farmers throughout the state whose farm operations had been their families’ livelihoods for generations. That experience took its toll on the young Vail but had a profound impact on his approach to life now. Despite his skill on a spreadsheet, Vail realized that what he really wanted to do was to find and develop the talents in others in order to help them realize their own goals and dreams. He served in multiple positions during 19 years at Hancock Regional Hospital including directing staff development and training. He is cur-

rently serving as the executive director of Hancock Hope House, a local homeless shelter. Vail is constantly on the lookout for ways to impact the lives of others. He says it is his calling. Together with Shelley, his wife of 32 years, and his three children, Vail lives by the philosophy that when you raise others, you raise the community, and nowhere is this more apparent than in his role as a director at NineStar Connect, where he truly believes that when you couple quality people with the right opportunity, big things will surely happen. On the eve of the 2013 Annual Meeting and Celebration, we sit down with the Chairman of the Board to get his thoughts about NineStar, its future and its place in the community it serves: **What makes NineStar Connect special?** The people. We have an extraordinarily diverse set of skill sets on both sides of our business, and the fact that we have brought these skill sets of two great companies into one is really something special. The impact that it has on the custom-

ers that we are reaching out to serve at a higher level than we ever have before is amazing. It really allows us to make a difference in the lives of the people in the community that we are called to serve. **How would you describe NineStar Connect to a family that just moved into Hancock County?** NineStar is a small, local company that can have a huge impact in the quality of your life. In the past, you always thought of telecommunications and power running parallel alongside one another. But today, those services are intersecting, and I think what NineStar is doing at the intersection of these two services is nothing short of amazing. Consider today how both electricity and communications impact our daily life, and NineStar is there. Tomorrow, you may sit around your house at night and wonder how much power your dryer is using, which you will quickly be able to find out, and NineStar will be there, too. NineStar has a little part of every

little thing that customers are experiencing. And our opportunity to help shape people’s lives in the future is so exciting. We truly are trying to be in a position as an organization in our community to go beyond being merely a service provider and instead be a solutions provider. We truly are bringing solutions to how people live their lives every day. **Why should people want to be a member or customer of NineStar Connect?** Not only because of the diverse services that we provide but also the opportunity to truly be a part of what NineStar’s future is going to look like. We do have a unique business model that allows our customers to not only be a recipient of services but also have a voice and a part in what we become as an organization. There are various ways they can take advantage of that, and I think that’s what differentiates NineStar from other providers. I also think our quality of service is better because of the customer’s ability to engage with us.

What does being a member of a cooperative like NineStar truly mean? You truly are a partner in shaping NineStar’s future. Our membership has allowed us, through their votes for directors, to be in this position. They have entrusted faith in our leadership, but we want to continually seek their input because we want our services to reflect what our customers want and need. The more we are able to do that, the more NineStar is going to be successful.

Name three (3) great things that the average customer of NineStar doesn’t know about his/her company? We are not beholden to investors like large service providers but rather to the community we serve, and that impacts the daily decisions that we make about the services that we are going to bring to you. As not only directors but also members ourselves, we have expectations for the level of quality of service that really can’t be compared to any other investor-owned provider. Our level of commitment to excellence as a local service provider permeates everything that we do. Our expectation and standard is to deliver a high level of value in all that we do for our members.

In this age of mega-companies and huge utilities, how does a small company like NineStar Connect survive and thrive? By delivering a high level of value in all we do. I think we add value as a company in multiple ways. As long as you are creating value for your customers in all of your activities, you are doing the right thing. We are focused on that. In everything that we do, we are asking ourselves to put that customer hat on. We might come up with a multitude of new business opportunities, but you have to put that customer hat on each and every time you are faced with a decision and say, “Does this truly add value to those that we are trying to serve?” If it doesn’t, don’t do it. It’s respect for the resources we are entrusted with, and I think that’s why we are different. We are focused as a small company on our core businesses but yet remain broadly open to other opportunities as they come up.

Are fiber optics really that important to NineStar? Absolutely! It is the one thing that brought us together - the importance of that communication backbone and the quality of the services it provides. If we are going to deliver high quality services both on the electric and telecommunications side, NineStar is going to have to have that communications backbone to deliver that quality. There is no other option. I was one of those guys who had to be convinced that wireless wasn’t a piece of that, but I think that the wisdom several years ago to start down the path of fiber optics was key. So we continue to pursue the goal of having a level of penetration of fiber that reaches all of our customers... It’s critical.

Why does NineStar seem so preoccupied with smart grid technology? Smart grid technology is only going to be as good as our ability to have high speed communications to effectively manage the large amount of data that will be available. This information will be critical to our customers as they try to make better and more informed choices about the consumption of their power. Ultimately, from a dollars and cents perspective, that’s one thing they are

sure that you are creating value for the expenditure of those resources. We have to recognize the right opportunities and create value for the effort we expend in pursuit of those.

Why should the community care about NineStar Connect and where it buys power and communications? NineStar isn’t a national corporation headquartered in another state. NineStar is local. We support the community that supports us. We are an integral part of that community and believe in supporting organizations and groups that give so much back through what they do. We do this for all the right reasons and our community embraces that. I think that’s why we are successful in what we are doing.

Every time I turn around, NineStar is offering new products and services. Is there a strategy behind it? The services we provide are truly customer driven, and that is important to us. It is a reflection of what we hear and see from our customers. Again, we are trying to be progressive and look forward to see how all these services begin to fit together in ways we haven’t thought about yet. For example, the emergency generators we will begin offering for sale this spring are broadband-enabled smart devices. Someday they may be programmed to allow your home to go off the grid and generate its own power when electricity rates spike on a hot, summer afternoon. Of course, the strategy is always evolving. When you think about it, all of our services have intersections in this future communications-centric world, so our ability to be impactful to customers in the future is important. We are going to position NineStar to take advantage of the future desires and value that customers expect of this company, and that is what is so cool about the investments we are making today.

What would you say to our electric only customers who can purchase advanced communication services but haven’t thus far? “Give NineStar communications services a try, and I can predict with 99.99 percent accuracy that you will be pleasantly surprised.” Things are hectic in our busy lives, and we acknowledge that it can be a pain to switch a communication provider. But when you are ready to make that change, we are there to help make that transition very easy. We have done a lot of things to make that transition as seamless as possible. If you give us a chance and are able to experience what this quality company is all about, you will love it.

People are busy. Why do you think they should take time to attend NineStar’s annual meeting and celebration? It is their company. They can experience and meet the people who are behind the name. We are excited about our future, and the more that we can create awareness of what that future looks like, and have those that can help shape that future be a part of that excitement, the better. The future is what we can make it be, and this event celebrates the accomplishments of the company, as well as its successes, and creates excitement about what the future can be.

going to feel in their pockets: The ability to save some money. The impact that smart grid technology is going to have on a customer’s daily activities is truly phenomenal. With smart grid technology, I think we have only begun to scratch the surface of what we feel that future may be, and NineStar is trying to be in a position so that we can react quickly to the needs of our customers. I think we are going to be in a position to do just that with the infrastructure investments that we are making today.

Tell me the most unexpected benefit you have seen from the consolidation of Hancock Telecom & Central Indiana Power. I think we all knew why we wanted to do it - that core of how important communication was on the electric side of things. But I think possibilities have opened up beyond just electric and communications and it has opened our minds to what is possible. I think a lot of that is because of how well the two companies have come together. That transition into this new entity, and the possibilities of this new entity, have gone very well primarily because of great leadership throughout the organization, but also because of the willingness of employees to understand and make a conscious investment into that opportunity for the future. I think it’s opened up the idea that we can be more innovative and progressive than we ever thought possible. What we can do is only limited by our imagination.

NineStar is only the second hybrid cooperative in the United States. Is this a trend or something unique? It is still unique. As we have traveled around within the industry and at different meetings, recognition of the value of this collaboration was slower than I imagined it would be, but there is a lot of conversation now about what we are doing and a lot of interest. It’s an emerging trend. Business models may not look the same as ours, but definitely there is going to be a great need for collaboration between telecommunication companies and electric providers because that’s the future.

How is NineStar viewed by other electric and telecommunication cooperatives? I really do think that they look at us as a value-based pioneer in the industry – an innovative company that is willing to look at issues and develop solutions in progressive ways. **If you could get into a time machine and go to the year 2023, what would you expect NineStar Connect to look like?** I hope it would be a company that is integrated into our members’ lifestyle and is a relevant part of their daily existence. I really do believe that everything we do impacts our customers’ daily lives.

Have you embraced social media such as Facebook and Twitter? I do utilize Twitter on a daily basis to follow the news and other areas that I find interesting. I think it is a great way to create a community around your professional and personal interests and to stay engaged with what is going on.

What are the top 5 personality traits that you find most important? Honesty and humility are two traits that I try to work hard on each and every day, because I believe they form a great foundation for anyone to be successful in their life pursuits. Perseverance, respect for diverse opinions and adaptability would be three other traits that I hold important.



CELEBRATE WITH US!

NINESTAR HOSTS MILESTONE 60TH ANNUAL MEETING

On April 5, 2013, at Greenfield-Central High School, NineStar Connect will be celebrating its 60th 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. You should have received your official notice in the mail. Please RSVP by March 29th.

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES



JOE PAXTON

District: 3
Joseph William Paxton

Background: Joe Paxton has been a cooperative member since 1974. Paxton attended Greenfield-Central High School and attended a Purdue Agriculture Short Course in 1972. He is a self-employed farmer and owner of Paxton Enterprises. With addition to farming and managing 2,000 acres, Joe is a member and past trustee of Eden United Methodist Church, former member and past president of Green Township Fire Department, and currently is a member and on the board of directors for Farm Bureau Insurance and NineStar Connect. Joe and his wife, Patty, have a daughter and a son.

Candidate Statement: Over the past seven years, I have had the great pleasure to represent District 3 as a director. The knowledge and understanding I have acquired through being a director and member for 39 years has given me a great appreciation on how a superior cooperative should be run. I have experienced the importance the directors have in developing

growth through new technologies. Recently, I had a role in a successful merge with Central Indiana Power cooperative creating Ninestar, which is one of the first cooperatives of its kind combining power and communications. I have truly enjoyed my role as a director and look forward in serving the next three years to lead an even more exceptional cooperative.



MARK EVANS

District: 5
Mark Evans

Background: Mark Evans has been a cooperative member since August of 2000. He and his wife, Laura, have two children, Andrew and Gabrielle. He currently is the Manager of Ameriana Bank in Middletown and is the Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Markleville. He previously worked at Regions Bank also as the Bank Manager. Mark attended Ball State University and received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration and attended Mid-America College of Funeral Service where he received his associate's degree in Applied Science in Funeral Service. He is a member of Pendleton

Christian Church and a member of Markleville F&AM Lodge No. 629. Mark has also volunteered for the 500 Festival Education Day and is a volunteer coach for Pendleton Youth Basketball and Football.

Candidate Statement: I take pride in representing my local community by serving as Director for NineStar Connect. Having started my director position under the former Hancock Telecom name, I have an understanding from one point of view how the current organization operates, reasons the consolidation occurred and direction the company is looking. I believe the education on both the telecommunications and electric industries I have received have given me a great opportunity to serve my community. I believe that my background in finance gives me a good understanding of the company's financial well-being. NineStar Connect is a great organization and it is a great opportunity to continue to educate myself on the industries to be able to represent the community and educate the members as we have changes in technology or offering of new products/services.



RONNIE MOHR

District: 6
Ronnie Mohr

Background: Ronnie Mohr has been a cooperative member since 1969. He and his wife, Sarah, have one daughter and two sons. He has been a farmer since 1962 but also served his country in Vietnam in 1968-1969. Ronnie attended Hancock Central and a short course at Purdue University. He has been a Green

Township volunteer firefighter and served on Hancock County Sheriff's Merit Board, Hancock County Drainage Board and Hancock County Community Foundation. He has had experience on other boards and realizes how they should work, and asking questions has always been something he has done. At the present time, Ronnie is serving on Land O Lakes board as First Vice Chairman and was a past director of Ag One and Country Mark Coop.

Candidate Statement: It has always meant a lot to me to give back to my community, people in need and my country. NineStar was a great coming together of two strong co-ops. We will continue to strive to be a better co-op. On the electric side, it has always bothered me that too often we act as a monopoly. I really get upset when the words are said we cannot do things our members want or need. For the past 10-plus years, I have been the co-op's director on Wabash Valley Power Association. That is where NineStar purchases 100 percent of its power. Power cost is right at 70 percent of your total electric bill. With that said, I really work hard at understanding, asking questions about our cost of electricity.



RICHARD WALKER

District: 6
Richard Walker

Background: Richard Walker has been a cooperative member since 1966. He is a farmer in Charlottesville, Ind. He graduated from Charlottesville High School and has lived in Jackson Township all his life. Richard has been on the Sheriff's Department Reserves for 25 years and worked security for 26 years at Hancock Memorial Hospital. He is a current member of Wilkinson Church of Christ. Richard's hobbies include restoring Farmall tractors and equipment.

Candidate Statement: I have lived in Jackson Township all my life and have been a member

of REMC since the late 1960s. I have been very impressed and intrigued with the recent merger to NineStar and the difference it is making in my area (District 6). I recently was able to take advantage of these services. I have been very pleased to have a phone that works when and after a rain as well as affordable Internet and cable all in one. This is a very much needed service for a rural area like District 6. As a director for NineStar, I would like to help expand the services to more people in my district so that they can experience the benefits I have been lucky enough to acquire. I know that getting expanded into all available areas that it will benefit both NineStar and local residents.



PHILIP M. HAYES

District: 6
Philip M. Hayes

Background: Phil Hayes has been a cooperative member since 1976. He and his wife, Pamela, live in Wilkinson, Ind. They have one married son, Brandon (Becky), and two granddaughters. Phil is a retired Business Manager of Manufacturing and Depot Operations from Raytheon Technical Services and previously worked for Naval Air Warfare Center as a Program Manager. He graduated from Greenfield High School and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Management at Purdue University.

He is a member of Willow Branch United Methodist Church where he serves as Chairman of the Pastor Parish and Finance committees and Vice-Chairman Administrative Board, Auditor and Sunday School teacher. He is a member of Prospect Lodge No. 714 F&AM, a life member of Purdue Alumni Association and finally, a former Treasurer of Prevent Child Abuse of Hancock County. He currently is Vice-Chairman of NineStar Connect and serves on NineStar Connect's Executive and Finance committees. Phil also serves on the NTCA Industry Committee,



which is instrumental in establishing Federal regulatory and policy guidance for over 500 rural telecommunications companies across the United States.

Candidate Statement: I see NineStar as a pioneer, not only in deploying state-of-the-art IP enabled networks, smart meters, broadband services and IP video, but also in recognizing and developing the opportunities that arise by consolidating the technologies and staffs of two great cooperatives. NineStar will face challenges in the near future, from the potential cost of wholesale electricity to the FCC's reform of Universal Service and Inter-Carrier Compensation. I believe NineStar's future success will depend upon deploying new services, strategies and technologies that utilize our networks in ways not previously contemplated while maintaining our core value; putting our members first. I hope my business skills and critical thinking as a director not only contributed to previous successes, but are equally applicable to the challenges ahead. I am proud of what we have accomplished and I welcome the opportunity to continue representing the members of NineStar Connect.



JAMES BATKA, PMP

District: 7
James Batka, PMP

Background: James Batka has been a cooperative member since 2003. He lives in Greenfield and is a Product Consultant for Siemens. He previously worked at SDRC and SAIC. James has a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from The Ohio State University and a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Wright State University. His experience entails project management, customer support, product data management, business processes consultant; maintenance, repair and overhaul background. He also has an IT background in computer networking. He has worked as a consultant for Harley Davidson, Briggs & Stratton, Proctor & Gamble, GM, Ford, General Dynamics, Caterpillar,

Motorola, the U.S. Air Force and Rolls Royce Aircraft Engines, among many others. James's current area of consulting covers maintenance, repair and overhaul (and the management of the information surrounding these activities) of the Ford Class of nuclear aircraft carriers for Newport News Shipyards. James has volunteered for Kid's Play and as a USA Swimming official. James and his wife, Elizabeth, have three daughters and one son.

Candidate Statement: I wish to serve on the board so that I can use my experience and background to improve the NineStar community. My experience with computers and computer networks (both hardware and software) should serve NineStar in its endeavors to provide fiber optic Internet services to the region. My engineering background, both educational and professional, provides me with the ability to rapidly learn and understand industry technical terminology. My project management experience provides me with a thorough understanding of budgets, financials, reporting and metrics. It also provides me with an understanding of how requirements, risk schedule, subcontracting and human resources can influence these.



DENNIS M. DECAPUA

District: 7
Dennis M. DeCapua

Background: Dennis DeCapua has been a cooperative member since 1994. DeCapua attended Purdue University and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering; he went on to receive his Master of Science from Washington University. He is currently pursuing an Executive MBA degree from Indiana Wesleyan University. DeCapua has held the positions of Engineering Director at Stant Manufacturing Inc., and Senior Engineer at McDonnell Douglas. DeCapua currently holds the position as Assistant Chief Engineer at Cummins, Inc. He is a certified Six Sigma Green Belt and Design for Six Sigma.

Dennis is also Council Chairman at St. Michael's Parish, went on a summer mission trip with St. Michael's Youth Group and helps to coach the St. Michael's CYO Track Team. Dennis has two daughters and resides in Greenfield.

Candidate Statement: I would like to join the board to help ensure that NineStar Connect remains a profitable business while continuing to deliver high quality and low cost supply of services to its members. I would also like to help NineStar Connect expand its services to other nearby areas in an effort to grow its member base (for example: voice, broadband and video are not offered in my neighborhood). Additionally, I am interested in utilizing my skills to help NineStar Connect achieve its business goals and at the same time have the opportunity to develop additional/new skills of my own. Finally, now that my kids are getting older and more self-sufficient, I have some free time that I would like to use in the local community. I have lived in Greenfield for 19 years, but have always worked far away, and hence I have not had much opportunity to get involved locally.



JAMES GILLETT

District: 7
James A. Gillett

Background: Jim Gillett has been a cooperative member since 1976. He is retired from the Bell System after 38 years. He worked in the design, development and manufacturing of telephone products. He has an associate's degree in Tool and Mechanical Design. For the past nine years, Jim has been a small business owner of a Mechanical Design & Consulting Service. Jim is the incumbent Director of Region 7 currently serving as the vice-chairman of Central Indiana Communications, Inc. and is a credentialed cooperative director through the NRECA (National Rural Electric Cooperative Association). Jim served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He is a Member of Society of the 1st

Infantry Division, Veteran of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. Jim and his wife Pam have two sons and three grandchildren.

Candidate Statement: Continue to oversee the implantation of Smart Meters, countywide deployment of fiber optics and broadband internet while being sensitive of the cost to the membership. Work with other NineStar Directors to make NineStar Connect an efficient cooperative both for our customer and employees.



ROBERT L. MATT

District: 7
Robert L. Matt

Background: Rob Matt has been a cooperative member since 1995. Rob attended Indiana University where he received both his Bachelor of Science degree and his Master's Degree. He is currently a Vice President of Hancock Regional Hospital. Previously, Rob worked as the Plant Manager/General Manager at Avery Dennison Corporation (Greenfield) and was the CEO at Bosma Industries. Prior to his employment with the hospital, he resided on the board. He also has held many profit and non-profit leadership positions such as United Way chairperson, secretary/board member at Hancock Hope House and current board member of Hancock Community Education Alliance. For four years, Rob has been an adjunct professor at Indiana University. He and Marsha proudly attend Brandywine Community Church. He and Marsha have been residents of Hancock County for 19 years and have two daughters, Allyson and Emily.

Candidate Statement: I enjoy learning about new industries and using my past/present skills and experience to help one of the most exciting entities in our community. I enjoy participating in the strategic direction setting and support of exciting business/community assets. I would like to be a part of the next generation of growth for NineStar that will benefit the organization, its customers and our community.



NINESTAR SPEAKS AT GREENFIELD KIWANIS CLUB

On Feb. 19, David Spencer, Director of Marketing at NineStar spoke at Ponderosa for the Greenfield Kiwanis Club. Spencer's presentation focused on the cooperative's plans for fiber deployment and smart meter installation in the territory for 2013.

In addition, Spencer highlighted some of the company's new innovative offerings such as Cummins home generators, worry-free hot water leasing, Nest thermostats and the loveable NineStar Nerds. The evening ended with a drawing for VIP tickets to attend this spring's Riley Concert Series sponsored by NineStar and the Hancock Arts Council.

Congratulations to Reed and Jan Tarwater for being the lucky winners. If you would be interested in having NineStar speak at your group's meeting, please call 317-326-3131 and ask to speak with the marketing department.

UPDATES

WEATHER DELAYS BLUE RIVER

Due to the late winter foul weather, NineStar fiber splicing crews have been delayed in the construction timeline in Blue River Township. As weather improves and overtime is scheduled, the company hopes to catch up with the construction timeline during the next month.

EYES ON DUPLICATE MAILINGS

NineStar Connect has been working diligently to eliminate duplicated addresses that result in members receiving multiple mailings. If you receive duplicate items in the mail, please call Julie Mitchell at 326-3131, and she will address the situation. We appreciate your assistance in helping eliminate these duplications.



PULASKI/WHITE VISITS NINESTAR

Recently, two members of the management team from Pulaski/White Rural Telephone Cooperative visited NineStar Connect. Director of Marketing Ashlee Siegle and Manager of Customer Service Kim Rehm spent the day on what can be called a fact finding mission to gather information on the cooperatives products and services. Of particular interest is how NineStar rolled out its Fiber-To-The-Home technology and what advanced communication services can be offered with the state-of-the-art technology. In addition, the duo spent time learning about NineStar's video product and the company's home security service. Pulaski/White is currently deploying fiber in its territory and is considering offering digital television service.

DID YOU KNOW

NINESTAR OFFERS MEMBERS NEW DISCOUNT CARD

NineStar Connect, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is proud to be an important part of the communities we serve. It is essential for NineStar to deliver its members-owners safe, reliable power and communication services that go beyond the average provider. It also is important that we offer additional value and benefits that our members can use in their everyday life. That's why NineStar Connect, along with other Touchstone Energy Co-ops serving 22 million member-owners nationwide, has launched the Co-op Connections Card.

The Co-op Connections Card is a savings card that will be mailed to all NineStar Connect members. This card can be used for discounts on prescriptions, automotive, dining and travel to name a few. Currently, there are more than 24,000 deals on products and services. One of the most significant benefits is the prescription discount that the card offers. With the Co-op Connections Card, members can

save 10-85 percent off prescription drugs at more than 60,000 locations, including national and regional pharmacy chains such as CVS and Walgreens as well as some independent pharmacies.

The card can also be used online and allows members to access partner sites for additional discounts such as Coupons.com, veterinary services from Pet Assure and money back on purchases from Target and Wal-Mart. And the best thing about the card, it is no charge to you! Just for being a NineStar member, you are automatically enrolled in the program. You can use it at your convenience — use it a lot or use it a little, it is totally up to you! However, the more you take advantage of the great deals it supports, the more money you will save.

And this program isn't just great for our members. The more the card is used, the more customer visits it brings to our local community. NineStar's goal

is to include more local businesses to be a part of this program so it will give you even more options to save money.

This April, detailed information about the cards will be sent in the mail to each member's home along with one Co-op Connections Card and two key fobs. You can also log onto ninestarconnect.com or connections.coop to obtain more information about the program.

As we all know, costs are going up everywhere, and this program can help take some of the burden away of those high expenses that we deal with on a regular basis. We are excited to spread the word and share this wonderful opportunity to our members.



CONGRATULATIONS TO NINESTAR DIRECTOR AND MV ASSISTANT COACH TOM KIRBY



As we all know by now the Mt. Vernon Lady Marauders won their first state title in program history, but what you may not know is that NineStar had a special connection to the team. Assistant Basketball Coach Tom Kirby has sat on the Lady Marauder bench for years and he also sits on the Board of Directors at NineStar Connect. Everyone at NineStar is proud of Tom and the role he played in bringing the title to Mt. Vernon High School. Congratulations!

PHOTOS BY TOM RUSSO/
DAILY REPORTER

NINESTAR NOW OFFERING FILTER CHANGE PROGRAM

Furnaces and air conditioning units are expensive but essential when it comes to heating and cooling your home. To maintain it properly, it is important for homeowners to regularly change their furnace filter to get the best use out of their equipment. Depending on what filter you use, it may be a monthly task that is easily forgotten. Did you know that by routinely changing your filter, you can save up to 15 percent on heating and cooling costs? Also, frequently changing your filter can extend the life of your furnace as well. To help you maintain this laborious task, NineStar Connect has just made your life a little easier with announcing the new FilterChange.coop.

FilterChange.coop is a program that allows the consumer to easily order filters online and delivers them to you in a matter of a few days. Also, a reminder email is sent to alert you when it's time to change the filter. In addition to saving energy, there is no shipping fee and you can save up to 50 percent on the price of the filters.

Save time, save energy, save money with the FilterChange.coop program! For more information, go to ninestarconnect.com and search for "Filter Change".





NINESTAR PLAYS HOST TO OSHA TRAINING

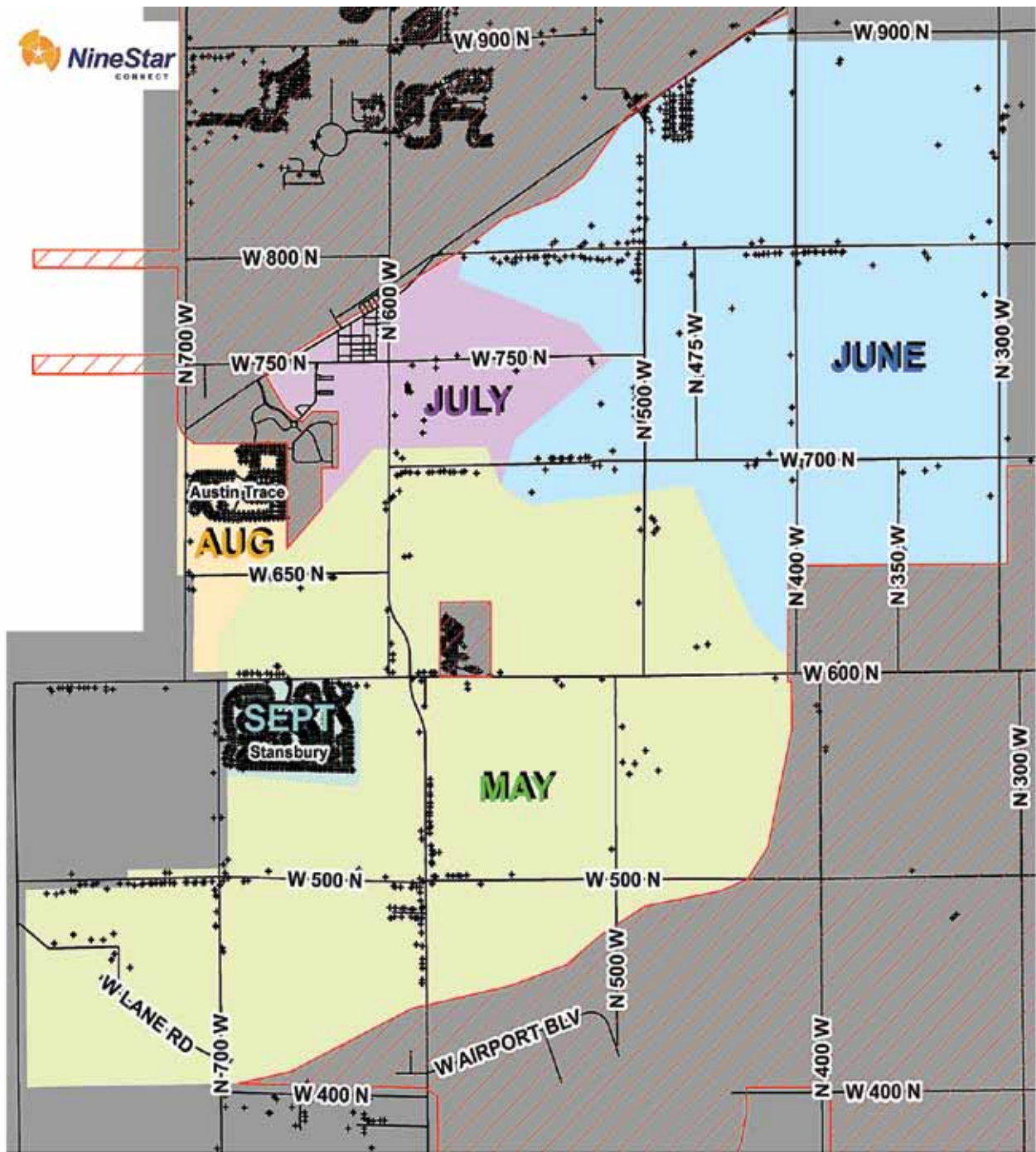
NineStar Connect played host and participated in a two-day OSHA training course last month. The training sponsored by Telecom Insurance was led by Craig Rapp of Utilicom Safety based out of Diana, Texas. The 10-hour course touched on several topics from compliance, record keeping, fire prevention, personal protective equipment, hazard communications, blood borne pathogens and safety and health programs. In addition to NineStar, other companies participating in the training included; Ligonier Telephone, SEI Communications, Endeavor Communications, Hendricks Power, Bartholomew Co. REMC and several others. Once completed, the course is good for three years.

EVENT

NINESTAR TO PARTICIPATE IN 4-H SAFETY DAY

An informative Safety Day will be held for all 4-H'ers who are wanting to learn new skills and strengthen some old ones. NineStar Connect will be in attendance as one of the informational stations that the 4-Hers will visit. We will be explaining the significance and impact of electrical safety. Each session will be 15-20 minutes long and set up in a rotation between the various stations. Pizza and soft drinks will be supplied, and awards will be handed out. Additionally, each participant will receive a farm safety T-shirt. The 4-H club with the most in attendance will also receive a free pizza party at its next 4-H meeting. So, all 4-H members are encouraged to attend! The event will be held at the 4-H Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall on Saturday, April 6. To RSVP, please call the 4-H extension office at 317-462-1113 by Wednesday, April 3.

FIBER UPDATE

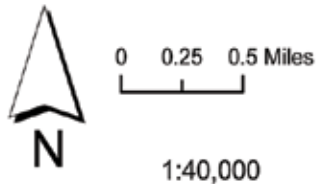


This is not an official map but for reference use only. A degree of error is inherent in all maps, but this map was compiled by NineStar Connect staff using data believed to be reasonable accurate. This is NOT an Engineering or Survey grade map and should not be used as such. This document is distributed "as is" without warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied and NineStar Connect is not responsible or liable for any use, derivative use or misuse of this map.

Fiber Conversion Schedule

- MAY
- JUNE
- JULY
- AUG
- SEPT

The above map represents the dates NineStar Connect will begin offering conversions from our current copper services to our advanced Fiber-To-The-Home (FTTH) services.



MCCORDVILLE: “DONUTS & COFFEE” MEETING HELD FEB. 16

On Feb. 16, NineStar Connect held an informational meeting for McCordsville “south of SR67” residents regarding deployment of fiber optics in their area. The “Donuts & Coffee” meeting allowed NineStar employees from several departments the opportunity to explain the process from beginning to end concerning the installation of fiber. These departments included engineering, installation and repair, marketing and customer service, and all shared information regarding packages that will soon be available.

In all, close to 40 people attended the meeting, and many great questions were asked during this time. Most people were looking for updates as to when they will be able to expect communication services to be ready. Depending on where you reside in the township, some residents will be able to take advantage of our services by summer, and the construction is scheduled to be complete by September, if weather allows.

NineStar has sectioned off the area into five (5) Serving Areas, with the last area to be able to utilize our services by September. It was stressed in the meeting that installation of this state-of-the-art-fiber optic network is a very complex and intricate process, and NineStar is working diligently to meet customer needs as quickly as possible.

We are excited to bring advanced telecommunication services to the McCordsville South area and we are encouraged by the excitement of all who attended the informational meeting. Those with additional questions regarding updates or the bundles NineStar will be offering are asked to call 317-326-3131.

NINESTAR OFFERS STREETLIGHT OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPERS

Central Indiana Power Inc. (CIPI), a subsidiary of NineStar Connect, is providing streetlights for residential, commercial and industrial developments in Central Indiana. The offering mainly targets NineStar Connect’s primary electric territory and surrounding areas within a 50-mile radius.

CIPI provides an easy and convenient way to enhance any development and has a solid background of experience. Streetlights are purchased through various suppliers that NineStar has worked with for more than 30 years, and installation labor is mainly contracted with local electric and underground installation firms that NineStar Connect knows and trusts. Together, these relationships provide CIPI with very strong and reliable distribution channels.

Another important strength of the program are the leasing

options that are available. The financing is very attractive to developers and provides CIPI with a strong advantage over many other streetlight vendors. It is important to note that most of the street lighting business from new developments coming onto NineStar Connect power lines are using CIPI mainly because of the financing options that it provides.

There are many options to choose from, but CIPI streetlights are decorative, distinctive and operate automatically from dusk to dawn. Leases include a low monthly maintenance fee, which covers routine maintenance and repairs, but this fee is small compared to the quality and service you will receive.

Streetlights are important for several reasons. They provide security, safety and can bring value and attractiveness to a neighborhood or commercial environment.



Keeping the streets, sidewalks and parking lots well lit is a necessity to keeping you and your family safe.

If you are a developer and

would like more information on NineStar’s offerings concerning street lighting, please contact Brad Henderson or Darrin Couch at 317-326-3131.

IN THE COMMUNITY

OPERATION ROUND UP

The quarterly meeting of NineStar Connect’s Operation Round-Up was held on Feb. 7 at the company’s headquarters. The committee decided on two applications and awarded \$10,500 to the following organizations.

KENNETH BUTLER MEMORIAL SOUP KITCHEN

This organization, located in downtown Greenfield, provides lunch and dinner for those needing a meal. Its mission is “to feed the Sheep of Jesus Christ regardless of their race, religion, gender, orientation, medical diagnosis, mental capacity or criminal history by providing their immediate need for nutritious meals.” It will be using the donation for some major renovations to improve its ability



to help serve its patrons.

INDY MANTRAILING K9 SAR

A non-for-profit organization, these special, hard-working volunteers train well-bred

K9’s with health guarantees to become search and rescue dogs to help find missing, lost or abducted persons. They are on call 24/7, assist law enforcement and their services can

extend all across the nation.

Operation Round-Up Program (ORU) and the Central Indiana Power Community Trust are established to accumulate and distribute funds for charitable purposes to individuals, families, groups and organizations located within the perimeter boundaries of NineStar Connect’s power service area. The source of these funds is NineStar Connect electric customers who voluntarily have their electric bills rounded up to the next highest dollar. This money is accumulated by the co-op and transferred to Central Indiana Power Community Trust. Each quarter these funds are distributed by a committee made up of members of the cooperative.

If you would like to be considered for an ORU grant, you can download an application form at www.ninestarconnect.com. Applications are due April 19, 2013 to be considered at the May 2, 2013 meeting.

And he sun, like a orange moon,
Beamed on it through the waving trees
With a golden moon,
For we have laughed in a crimson gleam,
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.
The night he came to sing
His love through the lavender hours,
And his eyes, as a
Night brought his palace down
But my rose bowed in a mockery,
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.
The hummingbird, like a courtier gay,
Was with a song to sing
And sang in the round
The round of love in
whole
e turned
on the fe
came
at rare.

SPRING 2013

The Riley
Spring Concert Series

Join us for an enjoyable
expression of music and renaissance of the arts.

JENNIE DEVOE
Saturday, April 6, 2013
8:00 pm



HOOSIER CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
Saturday, April 27, 2013
8:00 pm



CATHY MORRIS
Saturday, May 18, 2013
8:00 pm



Jennie DeVoe's voice is smoked honey on a sultry summer evening... smooth, sweet and warm, steeped in the kettle of blues/R&B - but with a rare and wonderful flavor all her own.

A group of Indiana's finest musicians will pay tribute to Crosby, Stills & Nash. Tim Grimm, noted actor and award-winning singer-songwriter, is behind the band's creative force.

Electric violinist Cathy Morris, combines contemporary jazz with latin rhythms, funk grooves, fusion, rock, blues and even cajun fun! Cathy calls her distinctive sound as "Party Jazz".

DOORS OPEN AT 7:00 pm. ALL SHOWS START AT 8:00 pm.
Ricks Centre for the Arts • 122 West Main Street • Greenfield, IN

GENERAL SEATING

For tickets: **317-477-SONG**

Visit rileyconcert.com or scan the QR code.

Proudly sponsored by: **NineStar CONNECT**

Benefiting: **Hancock County ARTs**
www.HancockCountyArts.com

LARRY MACLELLAN JOINS SALES TEAM AT NINESTAR

Larry MacLellan recently joined the NineStar Connect team. Larry will be working in the Sales department as a new sales representative selling NineStar's stable of offerings to businesses in the area.

Larry has experience in Client/Server, disaster recovery, project management, pre-sales, sales and process design and improvements.



LARRY MACLELLAN

Larry graduated from Lawrence Central High School and has a degree in Electronics Engineering Technology. He previously worked at Inland Paperboard and Packaging, Hewlett-Packard and most recently at Fry's Electronics.

Larry stated that he feels very fortunate to work for a company that truly cares about the employees and the employees care about the organization in the same way. He looks forward to hitting the ground running and meeting with businesses touting service offerings from NineStar.

Larry lives on the north side of Indianapolis with his wife Khadija. Larry is a big Colts fan, enjoys the outdoors, training dogs and spending time on the water.

SUDOKU

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 ninestarconnect.com Facebook page for last edition's solution.

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