

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2014



NineStar CONNECTION

VOLUME 3
ISSUE 6

POWER MOVES SAVINGS AHEAD

Incentives coming for residential and business.

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NERD'S NIGHT

Valuable information and presentations for area.

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SEASONAL GIVING





OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR GEORGE PLISINSKI.

"I AM VERY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR STAFF 'S ATTENTION TO DETAIL, RETURNING PHONE CALLS TO INSTALLATION OF THE POWER LINES, CABLE AND HIGH SPEED. SO OFTEN IN BUSINESS ALL WE HEAR IS SOMETHING BAD. THIS TIME YOU AND YOUR STAFF SHOULD BE COMMENDED. OUTSTANDING JOB!!! THANK YOU AGAIN!"

JOHN G.

STORY IDEA?

Contact David Spencer at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com

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

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ADDRESS: NineStar North Campus 2331 E. CR 600N Greenfield, IN 46140

NineStar South Campus 2243 E. Main St. Greenfield, IN 46140

PHONE: (317) 326-3131 (765) 533-4303

EMAIL: dspencer@ninestarconnect.com www.ninestarconnect.com

NineStar Connection

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David Spencer

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4-H ENROLLMENT KICKS OFF

This year's 4-H Open House took place on Oct. 26 at the Hancock County Fairgrounds. This was earlier than recent years. The implementation of an online enrollment process and changes in registration deadlines have created a need to start planning earlier. Open enrollment to participate in the 2015 Hancock County 4-H Fair is now underway.

NineStar's Energy Advisor Darrin Couch serves as superintendent for the Hancock County 4-H Electric Project. Darrin was on hand at the open house to talk to parents and 4-H participants. Each year the open house allows parents and 4-H participants the opportunity to speak to project superintendents and see many examples of projects that are available. Displays included electric circuit boards, insect collections, model airplanes as well as animals such as rabbits, pigeons, cats and ponies.

The holidays are a great time to start planning for the 4-H Fair. With a little time away from school, participants can use their time to get a good start on some of the projects they plan to display at the fair next summer.

Open enrollment is available online through Jan. 15, 2015. If you would like more information about 4-H, you can visit www.JoinIndiana4-H.org or contact the Purdue Extension office in your county. If you would like more information about the Hancock County 4-H Electric Project, you can contact Darrin Couch at dcouch@ninestarconnect.com or (317) 323-2715.



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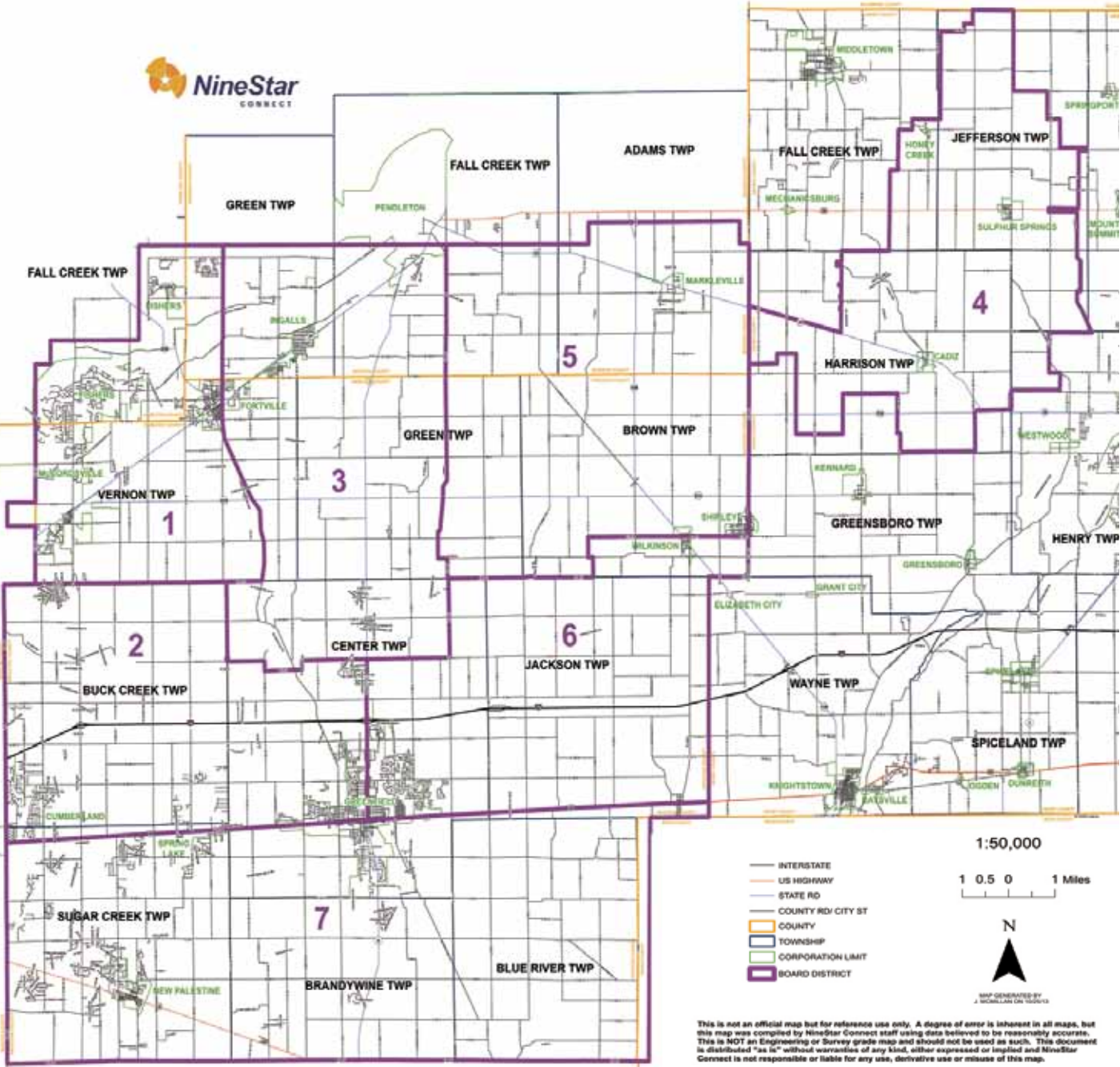
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NINESTAR
EMPLOYEES
SHARE THE
SPIRIT OF THE
HOLIDAY

WRITTEN BY
JULIE
YOUNG



SEASONAL GIVING

When Earl Shaw began his internship with NineStar Connect in 2003, he couldn't help being moved by the culture of community service that permeated the cooperative. "From day one, I knew how the company felt about giving back to the community. From the president down, folks at NineStar are always looking for an opportunity to serve others. This is something that is discussed, promoted and encouraged throughout the year," he said.

Shaw says about 89 percent of NineStar employees pledge money through their paycheck to the Ray of Light funds, which the co-op established with the community foundations of Hancock, Madison and Henry counties. The monies donated to these groups are used to help a number of private and public entities and enable NineStar employees to choose where their donations go and see that money in action. "I can't speak to every project that NineStar has been a part of, but I know that in my own community of Knightstown we helped improve some playground equipment and shore up the splash pad for the

local parks department and get some needed equipment for the volunteer fire fighters in the area. These are services that are important to me and my family, and it feels good to know that I had a hand in giving back in some way," he said. In addition to helping communities support their citizens with infrastructure and resources, NineStar employees are quick to help those less fortunate through food drives and toy collections at this most critical time of the year. Christa Riggs is heading up this year's toy drive for Hancock County's Toys for Tots. Throughout the season, if an employee brings in a new,



unwrapped toy each week, they can wear jeans on Friday. "Everyone is so proud to be part of this worthwhile cause," she said. "The Marines really need the help, and when you donate to Toys for Tots, you are actually doing double duty, and the best part is that all of the contributions stay right here in Hancock County." While NineStar does not handle the gift distribution itself, Riggs said she has met people who have been on the front lines and told her how important those contributions are to kids whose parents are struggling to get by. "We live in a difficult time and we all have those moments

when we need a little help now and again. Some people are only a paycheck away from having nothing, and NineStar employees feel really good about sharing our blessings with others. We believe that it shows the true spirit of the season," she said. In addition to donating gifts, NineStar employees also are providing for the community's most basic needs, such as food. Ryan Fox is currently organizing an employee food drive that will benefit the Hancock County Food Pantry, Hancock Hope House and Kenneth Butler Memorial Soup Kitchen. This is an initiative that began two years ago in the

accounting department and now includes other areas of the co-op pitted against each other in a friendly competition. Fox said the goal is to raise a ton of food and other non-perishables by Dec. 19. They have asked local agencies for the top five items that they need, which are used to determine the "item of the week." "Hope House asked for peanut butter and canned meat because those are a non-perishable source of protein, while other agencies have requested cleaning supplies or other foodstuffs," he said. "The employees have done a great job with this project and are really showing the spirit. When we announced peanut butter as the featured item, we collected 200 jars in a week!" Although the food collection typically begins after Thanksgiving, this year NineStar employees were keen to get a jump on the holiday season and begin bringing in donations right away. Fox said this enabled NineStar to make its first round of donations prior to Thanksgiving with more to come before the holidays are over. "It's exciting that we will get to make more than one delivery this year," he said. "We pride ourselves on being a community organization and that we have a responsibility to be good stewards to that community. Our employees are passionate about that and creating a healthy competition is a fun way to help others." Shaw agreed, saying that NineStar is a cooperative that takes seriously the need to care for others in the community, and it attracts employees who care about doing their part as well. "So many of these initiatives were in place long before I got here, but it is nice to see that they continue to flourish and that we continue to add others," Shaw said. "It's important to give when you can because you never know when you will need a helping hand."

GO PAPERLESS!

We want to make it EASY for you and save a tree in the process, SO GO PAPERLESS! Paperless billing is the easiest, cheapest way of paying your monthly bill. Unless you have tried it, don't knock it! It is simple, easy and no clutter. It also saves the environment. Instead of throwing away or shredding paper after paper, you are contributing to a much safer environment. If Americans saved all the paper and wood products we go through in one year, we could heat 50 million homes for 20 years!

And because you don't have as much clutter with stacks of bills, it allows you to have a healthier physical well-being. Studies show just the simple act of removing piles of paper could eliminate 40 percent of the housework in the average home. It also gives you greater security. You don't have to worry about whether your bill gets "lost in the mail." Identity theft is rising, and a portion of those thefts were due to a result of stolen mail and documents that have personal information on them. So why are you waiting? Just log onto ninestar-connect.com and go to My Account. Once you have signed up, we will begin to email your bill to you. When your bill is due, just pay online with a couple clicks of the mouse. It's that simple. So take the easy way out and go paperless!



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COMMUNITY EVENT



ANNUAL COOKING SEMINAR 2014

On Nov. 1, NineStar hosted a Cooking Seminar that featured special guest Executive Chef Scott Reifenberger of the Skyline Club. Reifenberger is a master at his skill as he has received four first-place awards for heart healthy cuisine from Dining a la Heart, four trips to the C.I.A. in Napa Valley for Club Corps' top chefs and taped numerous cooking segments for local television. He also hosts bimonthly cooking classes and participates in many community events. Reifenberger demonstrated and prepared several appetizing menu items to a full-room capacity crowd. With the holiday season upon us, I'm sure many of his tasty recipes will be on the dinner table this year.



LOOKING AHEAD TO NINESTAR POWER MOVES SAVINGS IN 2015

The weather has already turned cold and Christmas is just around the corner. Time flies when you are having fun, saving energy AND saving money! Looking ahead to 2015, Wabash Valley Power and NineStar Connect are excited to continue to offer incentives to both residential and business members through the POWER MOVES program. The 2015 programs are as follows:

FOR YOUR HOME

Fridge/Freezer Recycling

- \$35 incentive
- Call 877-395-5535 to schedule a pickup

Home Heating – Geothermal

- \$1,500 New construction
- \$1,500 Upgrading from propane, natural gas, fuel oil or electric-resistant heat

Home Heating – Air Source Heat Pump

- \$1,000 Upgrading from propane, natural gas, fuel oil or electric-resistant heat
- \$250 Upgrading from air-source heat pump

Water Heater – Heat pump water heater

- \$400 Upgrading from electric-resistance tank heater

Home Lighting – LEDs

- \$7.50/bulb – Must replace an incandescent bulb and the LED must be on the list at EnergyStar.gov

Home Lighting – CFLs

- \$1.50/bulb – Must be on the list at EnergyStar.gov

New Construction – Touchstone Energy Home

- \$1,500 Geothermal rebate
- Free Home Energy Rating System (HERS)

- One year heating and cooling cost guarantee

FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Lighting Retrofit

- For existing buildings including incentives for interior LEDs

HVAC Retrofit

- For existing buildings including incentives for chillers (up to 300 tons)

Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs)

- For process applications up to and including 200 HP

Schools

- Retrofit for existing buildings

Agriculture

- Retrofit of existing buildings including lighting plus HVAC, scroll compressors, night covers and room air conditioners.

Energy audits available from Purdue University. The report provided will fulfill the requirements of the REAP grants.

New Construction

- Gut rehab and additions

REAP Grant/Loans

- Reduced fee to apply and free eligibility screening

Custom Incentives

- Lighting projects will be paid at 5 cents/kWh and non-lighting projects will be paid at 8 cents/kWh

All of these incentives for both home and business have specific minimum requirements and an application process. Take advantage and save by visiting the POWER MOVES website at PowerMoves.com, and by calling NineStar Connect energy advisor Darrin Couch at (317) 326-3131 for more information. Let's get saving!

12 Days of Holiday Safety

It's easy to make safety a part of your holiday with these tips. Tackle one a day and you're well on your way to a safe New Year!

Day 1 **What's that noise?** Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they hear them.

Day 2 **What a shocker!** Before use, inspect all electrical lights, decorations, and extension cords for damage.

Day 3 **Two's company, three's a crowd.** Do not overload outlets with too many decorations or devices.

Day 4 **Is it working?** Test your ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) to make sure they're protecting you.

Day 5 **Ouch!** Prevent trips and falls by keeping cords safely along walls and out of doorways and high traffic areas.

Day 6 **Kids eat the darndest things!** Avoid putting lights, metal hooks, breakable ornaments, and other small decorations within reach of young children.

Day 7 **Thirsty?** Keep your Christmas tree stand full of water. A fresh, green tree poses less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.

Day 8 **Make a wish!** Blow out the candles before leaving a room or going to bed.

Day 9 **Nice and warm.** Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn—decorations, trees, gifts, and curtains.

Day 10 **Can't touch this!** Consider installing tamper-resistant outlets/receptacles to prevent kids from inserting objects into the slots.

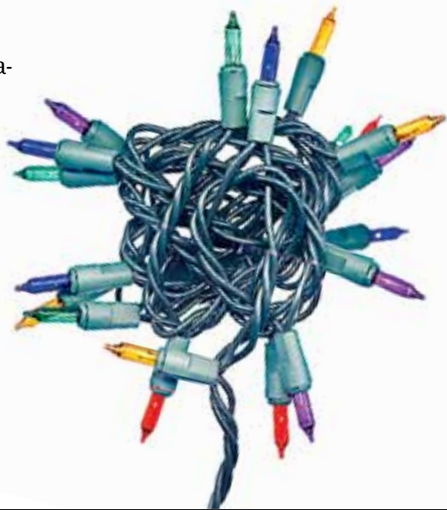
Day 11 **Escape Route:** Share your family fire escape plan with overnight guests.

Day 12 **Hot stuff!** Keep children away from cooking areas; use back burners and turn pot handles in away from little hands.

There's no greater gift you can give your family than a safe and happy holiday! Learn more at holidaysafety.org.

PRACTICE ELECTRICAL SAFETY THIS HOLIDAY

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is reminding those at home and in the workplace to keep electrical safety in mind when decorating for the holiday season: Before decorating, read and follow the manufacturers' instructions concerning installation and maintenance of all decorative electrical products. Use lights and other electrical decorations certified by a recognized independent testing laboratory such as CSA, UL or ETL. Outdoors, use lights and other electrical decorations certified for outdoor use. Carefully inspect each decoration before plugging into an outlet. Cracked, frayed, loose or bare wires, as well as loose connections, may cause electrical shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items.



Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing light bulbs or fuses. Do not mount or support light strings that might damage the cord's insulation. Never nail or staple light strings or extension cords. Do not connect more than three light string sets together.

Light strings with screw-in bulbs should have no more than 50 bulbs connected together. Do not overload extension cords – they can overheat and start a fire. Keep all outdoor extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water. Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights. Do not allow children or pets to play with electrical decorations. Even small light decorations can produce a fatal shock if they are misused. Turn off all electrical decorations before leaving home or going to bed. Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable GFCIs can be purchased wherever electrical supplies are sold.

REALTOR PROGRAM WIN-WIN FOR NINESTAR

NineStar Connect has partnered with three local realtors to help spread the word that Fiber is Fastest! This summer, a team from NineStar talked with groups from Century 21, Remax and Berkshire Hathaway (formerly Prudential). We asked them how they can help us with relaying the message to potential home buyers about the qualities and benefits of Fiber to the Home. Realtors from each office expressed their interest and thought of ways that they could help us and vice versa. One of the ways we have helped each other is advertising. NineStar has placed ads every Saturday in the Daily Reporter with homes that are currently on the market that have or could have Fiber to the Home. We have also placed this ad in the monthly edition of Hancock Homes. We change the ad periodically, such as when a house has sold or there is a new listing. This helps the Realtors with advertising the homes they have for sale and helps us if the buyer takes our services. It's a win-win! Another way we are partnering with Realtors is creating material that can be left in a potential buyer's information packet. This packet may be left to very interested parties who are looking for information in the area and what choices they have as far as products and services. It can also be given to individuals/families who purchased a home and want information about services. We have tried to educate our customers and potential customers that Fiber to the Home is unique for various reasons. Some of those characteristics are:

- Future proofs your home
- Bandwidth is never throttled or capped
- Great for working from home/home businesses
- Better for online gaming
- No sharing of bandwidth with neighbors
- Perfect for streaming/downloading video and movies

We are excited about this partnership, and more importantly we are excited to bring NineStar into your home. Because when looking at purchasing a home, you consider features, commute and quality of schools, so why wouldn't you consider Fiber to the Home?



INSTANT UPDATES ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER

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



NINESTAR HOSTS NERDS NIGHT

On Oct. 13, NineStar hosted a “NineStar Nerds Night,” a fun community night full of valuable information and presentations. Several topics were on the agenda that night, including important tools and training for Windows 8 along with the significance of safe browsing. We also had our Engineering and Member Service departments on hand to discuss Smart Meters and our Time of Use program. With dinner catered and a question-and-answer session, we hope all who attended walked away with something new to take with them.

Be sure to look for future Ninestar Nerds Nights in the upcoming months and don’t forget to use the service when you get into a computer bind. If you have ideas for topics you would like to see discussed, call (317) 326-3131 and ask for Earl Shaw.



RETIREMENT

MIKE MCCARLEY SET TO RETIRE AT YEARS END

During the past two-plus decades, you have probably had the opportunity to run into NineStar employee Mike McCarley. And chances are if you did, you remembered him for his quiet folksy way; but, in fact, if you got him talking about the Cincinnati Reds the Cleveland Browns or his family, it would be an interaction you wouldn’t soon forget. After more than 20 years at NineStar Connect and a more than 40-year career, Mike is set to retire.

Mike started in the telephony industry after a four-year stint in the U.S. Navy, and shortly thereafter he went to work for AT&T Long Lines in Terre Haute in February of 1970. While there between 1970 and 1978, he worked in Long Lines central office maintaining various equipment that transmitted long distance phone calls across the United States.

In 1978, Mike was transferred to AT&T in downtown Indianapolis. During his years at this office, he again worked on various equipment that transmitted phone calls across the country. In addition, he also worked on what was referred to as test board, which was the data transmission of the day tele-type.

As technology changed and the advent of wireless became more and more prevalent, Mike started traveling across the Midwest maintaining microwave systems for AT&T, and in the 1980s he started installing AT&T’s new technology fiber optic cables across the United States.



In 1991, then-Hancock Rural Telephone Corporation President Dan O’Conner placed a call to Mike in need of someone to splice fiber optic cables, operate the digital mapping system, and teach fiber splicing testing to the construction department. Mike then started working in the engineering department, expanding into various towns outside of the existing cooperative boundaries.

When asked what the biggest changes he has seen during the past 45 years in the industry, Mike stated the introduction of fiber optic cables as a way of transporting voice, video and data, and the conversion from analog to digital technology were the two biggest game changers. He went on to add that with more and more people

having the opportunity to work from their homes, he will miss being able to engineer fiber networks to their homes so they can have the same technology as someone living in a city or town.

Looking back on his time at NineStar, Mike views his biggest accomplishment as having the opportunity to expand state-of-the-art networks into Wilkinson, Shirley, Kennard, Greenfield, New Castle, Rushville and Morristown. Because of this, it enables NineStar to supply the latest technology to underserved communities, helping provide more opportunities to those areas and leveling the playing field.

Mike and his wife, Betty, have been married for 28 years and have three children and seven grandchildren. As he looks to his retirement in a couple of weeks, he plans on volunteering. This includes joining the Hancock County Veterans Honor Guard, transporting veterans to various medical and personal appointments, and assisting at Nameless Creek Youth Camp. He also looks forward to having more time to spend with his three youngest grandchildren. And if that retirement schedule isn’t full enough, Mike plans to fit in some other passions, such as gardening, woodworking, golf, fly fishing and modeling on his Lionel train layout.

NineStar thanks Mike for his many years of commitment to the company, and wish him and his family the best in his much deserved retirement.

OUR INSTALLERS PROVIDE SUPERIOR SERVICE

Recently a customer called our office complaining the service he was receiving wasn’t working and he was at his wits end. Not fully knowing what the problem was, Hunter Johnson, one of our technicians, was dispatched to investigate the issue. Once he arrived, he quickly discovered that the Direct TV installer has cut one of NineStar’s home run lines and used it to run his wire during his install. Hunter offered to fix the issue, but the customer said Direct TV caused the problem and they can fix the problem. While this is rare, it isn’t unheard of to have a competing service provider cut corners and cause more issues than they solve. Always remember, with NineStar Connect, we will provide superior service than our competitors and will work with the customer until the problem is resolved. And in the case of Hunter, that sometimes includes problems someone else causes.

BE ON ALERT FOR PHONE SYSTEM HACKING

Business customers in Central Indiana are continuing to be victims of phone system hacking, called “phreaking” at a disturbing rate. NineStar Connect has had several of its customers hacked, including governments, schools, churches and businesses. The hackers are able to find and exploit a phone system/voice mail unit that has weak security and are then making outbound international calls from that system. All of the fraudulent activity that we have encountered has been to overseas and Caribbean numbers. The result can be a phone bill that has increased dramatically in a matter of hours, and the customer is liable for the long distance charges. This theft is classified as Cyber Fraud and is very disturbing to all involved. Residential phone lines are not likely to be targeted for these attacks since most customers do not have this type of system in their home.

Whether your business makes international calls, we are asking that you take the necessary steps to secure your business phone and voice mail systems. A list of security tips can be found at www.ninestarconnect.com under the “Communications” section.

For a quick start, here are three items to start with:

- Change all voicemail default passwords immediately and change passwords often
- Restrict 0+, 0-, and 10-10-XXX dialing out of your PBX
- Restrict all possible means of out-dial capability in your voice mail system

For more information call our office at (317) 326-3131.



REFLECTING ON SUCCESS, LOOKING FORWARD TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

This time of the year is one of my favorites. It is a time during which I can reflect on past milestones while also looking forward to the many new challenges that await in the upcoming year.

Of course, any reflection on the past is incomplete without acknowledging life’s many gifts. My life’s blessings are too numerous to list. I am who I am today because of a loving and supportive family and friends who have always been there my entire life. I get to live in a remarkable community and work for an exceptional cooperative company that has talented and dedicated employees. Our cover story this month reflects but a small slice of the community-focused culture that represents the core of NineStar Connect. How could anyone not appreciate being a part of such an organization?

This year, NineStar continued deploying fiber-to-the-home technology in our Markleville exchange, which will be complete next year when we finish that construction in both the Cadiz and Sulphur Springs communities we serve. In February, our network came under a concerted denial of service attack, which hobbled our communications network for the larger part of three days. This attack was carried out by people and organizations outside America for unknown motives. Lessons were learned, investments in training, hardware and software were made, and our network today is much more hardened and designed to mitigate instances of these types of attacks in the future.

Next year, you will see NineStar begin to roll out

“Gig-E” service to its fiber-to-the-home customers. It will be a game changer. Details will be forthcoming in the days and weeks ahead, so let me just say that our fiber customers will have access to the fastest broadband speeds available anywhere in the State of Indiana. Period.

In 2014, NineStar also continued to deploy “Smart Grid” technology, which gives our electric customers the ability to better control their power usage and save money by utilizing

our new Time of Use Rates. In 2015, we will complete the first phase of this deployment and begin a second phase focused on load control devices. NineStar has become a recognized leader in utilizing fiber optic technology in Smart Grid deployments, as is evidenced by a recent fact-finding visit from representatives of the Israel Electric Co.

We have to recognize technology can only go so far in controlling costs. As a rural utility, we are still faced with the daunting economies of scale – most notably the lack of density of population in our service territory. That’s why next year you will see NineStar join forces with Indiana’s other rural electric and investor-owned utilities to amend the state law that allows municipally-owned electric companies to simply take the service territories of both rural electric and investor-owned utilities when the municipality annexes territory. It is important to note state law is one-sided in that it does not permit rural electric nor investor-owned utilities to take the territory of a municipal electric company.

Two of NineStar’s members, Sen. Mike Crider and Rep. Bob Cherry, have been leaders in bringing this territory preservation issue before the Indiana General Assembly. We applaud their courage to address this issue because as Sen. Crider notes, “It is not a matter of taking sides. It’s simply a matter of fairness.” So why should this issue be important to our electric members? Quite simply every time a municipal electric company like Greenfield Power & Light takes a portion of our service territory, it keeps a new residential subdivision or large power user from being on our service and keeps NineStar from growing in both density and electric load. Those members that remain on our system do not benefit from any increase in customers to spread the fixed costs of running a utility and thus are left to pay more for their power. In the end, NineStar simply does not believe that a government-owned utility should be able to take away territory that is served by a privately-owned utility. So we are asking the state legislature to change the law that allows that to happen. I am sure our friends and neighbors at Greenfield Power & Light disagree with our position. That’s OK. Sometimes friends and neighbors just have to agree to disagree on certain topics. Territory preservation notwithstanding, NineStar will continue to work with the City of Greenfield and other municipalities in and around its service territory because, unlike the gridlock that occurs with partisanship in Washington, D.C., we recognize that it is vital to find common ground and work together to foster better communities for everyone. That’s what cooperatives like NineStar are all about.

PREPARING FOR WINTER SEMINAR

The Member Services seminar conducted in September offered another great learning opportunity for members. The topic of the seminar was “Preparing for Winter.”

Energy Advisor Darrin Couch and Member Services Director Brad Henderson offered expert advice about how to prepare your home for winter.

Air sealing and insulating are the No. 1 areas to focus on when it comes to trying to save energy. This can also be the best way to make your home more comfortable. Yes, you may have an older inefficient heating and cooling system, and planning to upgrade those systems with newer high efficient equipment is a good idea. But that equipment can be expensive. Even though it would be more efficient and therefore less expensive to operate, it is not a quick return on investment. The less expensive investment is in caulk and insulation. By caulking around windows, doors and other penetrations in exterior walls you are reducing the amount of air leakage or cold air that is getting into your home in the winter; that reduces the demand on your heating system.

You should also take a look at your insulation. The insulation in your attic should form a nice even blanket over your ceiling. Any voids or by-passes will reduce the effectiveness of the insulation in your home. Even in homes that have an adequate amount of insulation, the insulation may be poorly installed or it has been re-distributed over the years by people crawling or walking through the space. Again, a nice even blanket of insulation works best. Rather than trying to even out the existing insulation the best option may be to add insulation to the areas that have been disturbed. There are many different types of insulation available. Each insulation type offers a different R-value per inch (R-value = resistance to heat transmission). Attic insulation levels around R-40 are the typical recommendation for central Indiana. The amount of insulation it takes to achieve that level will vary depending on the type of insulation. Check the manufacturers R-value per inch to help determine what you have and therefore what you may need to optimize your insulation coverage.

Additional energy saving advice can be found at www.ninestarconnect.com or by contacting NineStar Connect's Energy Advisor at dcouch@ninestarconnect.com or (317) 323-2715.

AROUND THE WORLD

GROUP FROM ISRAEL LEARNS FROM NINESTAR

Israel is eyeing a national project that would take fiber optic broadband to virtually the entire country, and Wednesday, representatives were in Greenfield to see how NineStar Connect does it. “We are absolutely flattered,” NineStar President and CEO Michael Burrow said.

Two representatives from state-owned Israel Electric Corp. and one from Israel Broadband Co. toured a sampling of NineStar's fiber installation projects, looked at the company's technology and asked questions about the process.

Fiber optics, which is superior to traditional telecom cable, can transmit data at a much higher rate. NineStar began its network – starting with local schools – more than a decade ago.

“We want to learn about the methods that are being used and learn about the experiences of installing fiber optic broadband,” said Itzhak Shalom of Israel Electric Corp.

Whatever the contingent takes home with them from their five-state tour will come in handy as the ambitious Israeli Fiber to the Home project will make high-speed broadband service available to about 2.5 million customers.

The project is the first of its kind in the world to construct a national fiber optic network, said Mark Boxer, applications engineering manager for OFS Fitel, a fiber optic solutions company.

“Israel is known as a ‘start-up’ country with a lot of technology companies,” Boxer said. “There is a lot of very focused talent there, and this network will link those people up.”

With significant infrastructure hurdles, many of which revolve around Israel's abounding historical sites and artifacts, as well stringent permitting requirements, the project will take 15 to 20 years to complete, said Joseph Atias of Israel Electric.

According to a June 2013 Reuters report, the Israeli government gave the company the go-ahead to seek investors for the project in 2012. By 2020, two-thirds of the country could be covered by a network that



Officials from Israel Electric Company listen to a NineStar contractor describe deployment of fiber optics into residential areas.



The Israeli contingent said its fact-finding trip to the United States has been productive and spoke highly of the tour Wednesday.

“The hospitality has been very, very good,” Shalom said. “The cooperation and the information have been very good,” added Yuval Levy of Israel Broadband. “It's been amazing.”

During their lunch break Wednesday, the trio was presented with mementos of their visit to Hancock County that included a book of James Whitcomb Riley poetry and an Andrew Luck Indianapolis Colts jersey.

Atias plans to end his American tour in New York, said David Spencer, the company's director of marketing.

“Because we're so unique with having fiber optic and electric service in the same company, it made us a good choice to come see how we do it,” Spencer said.

“What's really exciting for me,” said NineStar board chairman Steve Vail, “is that our (NineStar) focus is so much on increasing quality of life, and if we can have some small part in helping your country, that's very exciting.”

Article by Jim Mayfield reprinted with permission from the Greenfield Daily Reporter.

LOCAL PROGRAM

OPERATION ROUND-UP

The quarterly meeting of NineStar Connect's Operation Round Up was held on Nov. 6, 2014 at the company's headquarters. Some of the organizations that benefited from the ORU fund this quarter were:

HANCOCK REGIONAL HOSPITAL SPIRITUAL CARE

Hancock Regional Hospital knows and understands the importance of an individual's emotional and spiritual well-being and how it can affect their physical well-being and overall healing. The staff of Hancock Regional's Pastoral Care department provides that support. Grief counseling, visits and follow-ups by the chaplaincy staff, and material that can be passed along to those in need, are just a few things this department handles on a regular basis. They also recognize the many different religions and faith systems people have and work closely with area clergy/churches to facilitate services for those in need.

ALTERNATIVES INC.

Alternative Inc. is a social service organization based in Anderson that assists and shelters victims of domestic violence. It offers specialized services for children, training and education for community groups, prevention services for dating violence and teens, and crisis response services for sexual assault victims, as well as treatment and intervention. The agency's primary service area covers the counties of

Hamilton, Hancock, Henry, Madison, Marion and Tipton.

EDELWEISS EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY CENTER

Edelweiss is a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to improving the quality of people with special needs. Through the rider and horse relationship, Edelweiss offers opportunities for people to encourage independence, gain confidence and trust in a safe and stimulating environment.



ALTERNATIVES INC.



HANCOCK REGIONAL HOSPITAL SPIRITUAL CARE



EASTERN HANCOCK FFA



FUSE INC.



EDELWEISS EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY CENTER



NINESTAR GIVES BACK WITH COOPERATIVE SERVICE DAY 2014

Cooperative Service Day 2014 was a success! On Oct. 10, more than 45 NineStar employees volunteered their time and expertise in helping five local area organizations with various projects. All projects were completed and the organizations seemed pleased with all of our efforts. A big “Thank You” to all employees who made this day a victory!

See more about NineStar’s community efforts on page 4.



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

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