



FIBER UPDATE

Ryan Bewley updates the status of the network backbone of the Blue River fiber construction.

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ENERGY SAVERS UNITE

NineStar is pleased to offer access to 20 percent off best-quality energy efficient products through EnergySavers.coop.

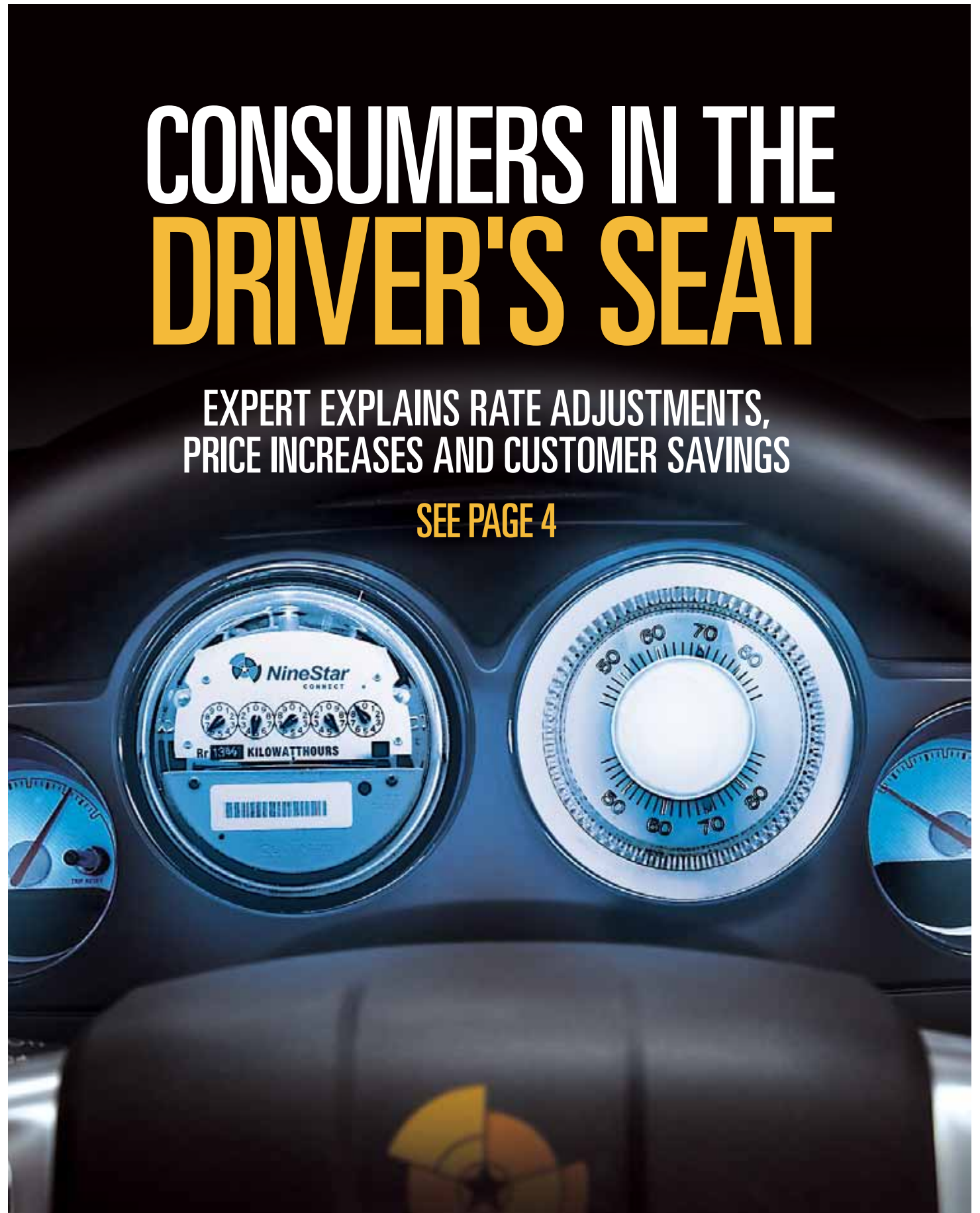
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CONSUMERS IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

EXPERT EXPLAINS RATE ADJUSTMENTS,
PRICE INCREASES AND CUSTOMER SAVINGS

SEE PAGE 4





OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR OUR SERVICE REP. SUZY.

"I CANNOT SAY ENOUGH GREAT THINGS ABOUT SUZY! I WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH HER DUE DILIGENCE AND FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE SALE. I'VE TOLD NO LESS THAN A DOZEN PEOPLE ABOUT HOW GREAT THE CUSTOMER SERVICE IS. SUZY IS A 'ROCKSTAR!' I HAD CHOICES WHERE I LIVE AND AM GRATEFUL I SELECTED NINESTAR!" - JEFF C.

HAVE A STORY IDEA? Contact David Spencer at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com

COVER STORY: IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT PAGES 4-5 Expert wants NineStar customers to understand how their utility costs are determined, where their money goes and how they can save on their power bills by making savings driven choices.

RECENT RETIREMENT PAGE 8 After a little more than five years at NineStar and more than 43 years in the industry, Larry Knight has decided to retire.

NINESTAR AT GOLF OUTING PAGE 10 Check out photos from the 2012 Indiana REMC Golf Outing, hosted by NineStar Connect.

WHO'S READING RILEY PAGE 12 The Riley Home recently sponsored a contest to determine who is reading his famous works. Check out who from NineStar was captured on camera.

ENERGY SAFETY

NineStar Connect introduces electric safety program for fourth-grade elementary students as a valuable tool in promoting electric safety to students.

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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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COOPERATIVES: YOUR BUSINESS, YOUR BENEFIT

The month of October is here, and we once again marvel at the changing of the seasons. While the change is much welcomed after such a hot summer, it is important to remember October holds a special meaning for NineStar Connect and all cooperatives. October is cooperative month, and this year it is particularly special, as it is the pinnacle of the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives celebration.

A cooperative or co-op is different than most businesses in that it is a member-owned and controlled business that operates for the mutual benefit of its members. Co-ops operate across all sectors of the U.S. economy and include agriculture, food distribution and retailing, childcare, credit unions, purchasing, worker-owned, housing, healthcare, energy and telecommunications cooperatives.

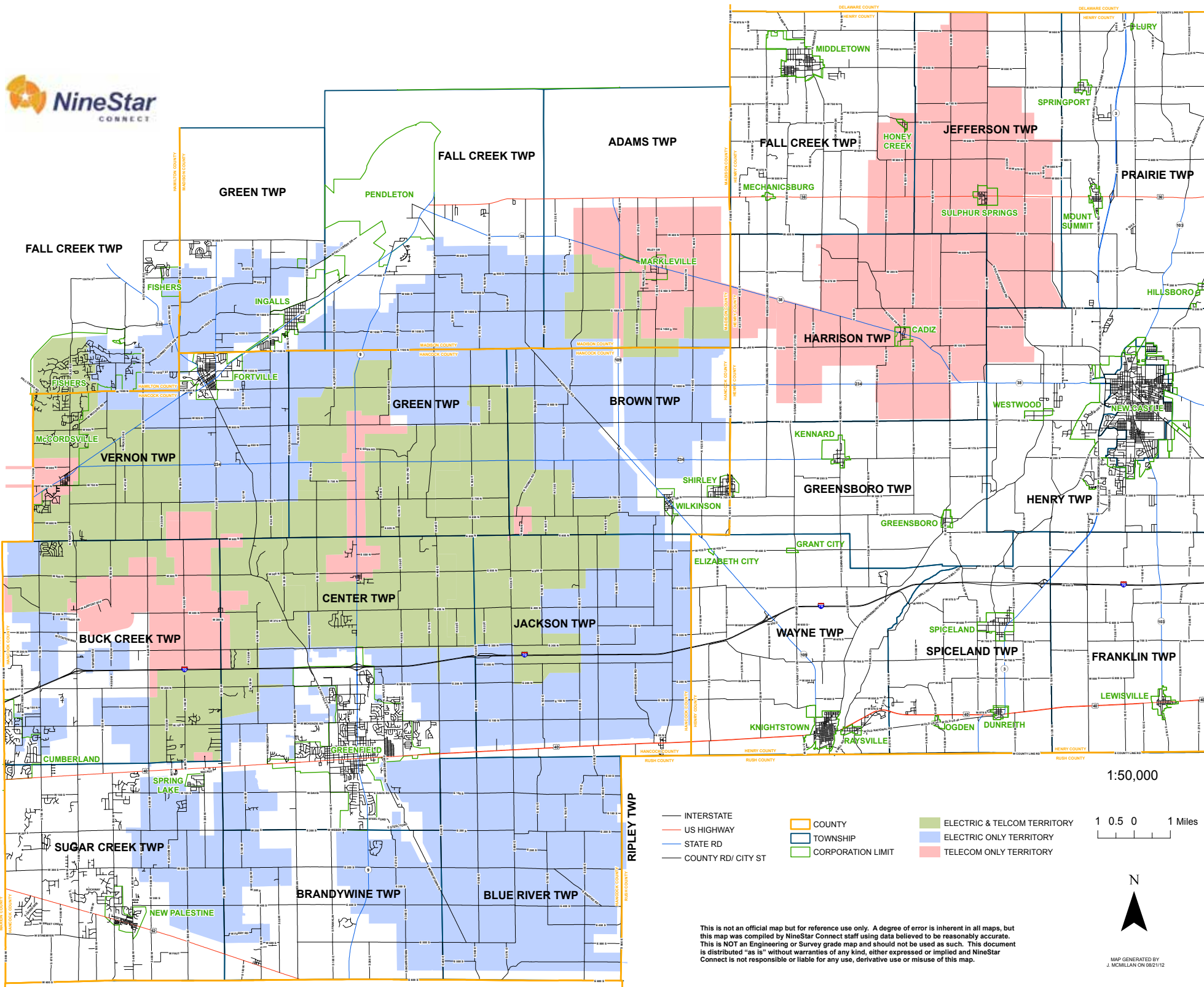
A few facts about cooperatives include: More than 29,000 cooperatives operate in every sector of the economy and in every congressional district Americans hold over 350 million co-op memberships. About 1.2 million rural Americans in 31 states are served by the 260 telephone cooperatives. More than 900 rural electric co-ops deliver electricity to more than 42 million people in 47 states. This makes up 42 percent of the nation's electric distribution lines and covers 75 percent of our country's land mass. U.S. cooperatives generate 2 million jobs and make a substantial contribution to the U.S. economy with annual sales of \$652 billion and possessing assets of \$3 trillion. The cooperative model is one of the many things that set NineStar apart; we are owned by our customers. Why would you not buy products and services from a company you own? If you are thinking of purchasing advanced communication services, such as voice, video and broadband, I urge you to take another look at NineStar and learn more about what sets us apart.

PRESIDENT & CEO



TIM HILLS

NINESTAR CONNECT SERVICE TERRITORY MAP





BLAKE EXPLAINS RATE ADJUSTMENTS, PRICE INCREASES AND CUSTOMER SAVINGS

Though no one likes to see it, consumers know that rising costs are a fact of life. It seems there is always something lurking around the corner ready to squeeze a household budget, such as rising gas and food prices. Utility cooperatives face similar rising costs from their suppliers and need to make rate adjustments to reflect those rising costs.

WRITTEN BY
JULIE YOUNG

“They [customers] can get rowdy on you,” said Dr. Martin “Marty” Blake, a Principal of the Prime Group, LLC in Crestwood, Ky., who serves as a rate consultant, cost of service expert and strategic planning facilitator for Prime Group clients, such as NineStar Connect. “Usually they understand the price increase once it’s explained to them,” Blake said. But therein lies the problem; it’s not always explained to them. Blake said he understands

customer ire when they call their utility provider and are told that their only option is to “use less.” He said that doesn’t help anyone, and he wants NineStar customers to understand how their utility costs are determined, where their money goes and how they can save on their power bills by making choices that put them in the driver’s seat.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

Blake has enjoyed a distinguished career in the regulatory area, including serving as a utility regulator. He has developed utility marketing programs for electricity and natural gas, facilitated utility strategic planning and worked on matters involving state and federal regulation. He said customers must think of their electric bill in two ways:

the money that goes to the power supplier and the money that goes to the local co-op for the installed infrastructure. Between 65 and 75 percent of your electric bill is spent directly on the cost of purchasing the power from the power generation and transmission supplier with only 25-35 percent of the bill going to the local service provider to recoup the money spent to distribute that power from the substation to the transformer and ultimately to the meter on the side of the house or business. “Without this minimum amount of equipment, customers would not be able to receive electric service,” he said. “Unfortunately, the cost of the poles, wire, transformers, service drops, meters and substations necessary to provide a customer with access to the electric grid are not cheap.”



WHAT CUSTOMERS CAN DO ABOUT IT

NineStar customers who are concerned about future rate adjustments have several options that can allow them to save money and be good energy stewards at the same time. With peak and off-peak rates, customers have the ability to pay less while still enjoying the power they need each day. Blake said peak usage not only costs customers more, but local providers have to pay more to deliver that service to the end user. By cutting back on their peak usage, everyone saves a little something, and that savings can be shifted to the off-peak usage rates. “It’s a win-win situation for everyone,” Blake said. “Now, no one is going to want to turn off their A/C during a 100-degree day of course, but when there is a choice to do your laundry or other power related chores during off-peak [instead of peak] hours, everyone can be good stewards of their energy.” In addition, customers can opt to have a load control switch put on their A/C unit or electric water heater, which allows NineStar to “cycle off” their power for 15

Dr. Martin “Marty” Blake explains utility cooperative pricing and how customers can minimize increases.

minutes out of the day in order to conserve electricity and pay a little less each month. Providers often offer a credit to those who participate in these programs

that conserve usage and do not inconvenience the consumer in any way. NineStar is currently studying various programs to encourage use of load control devices and hopes to roll out a local program in 2013. Blake said these switches could be used on any appliance, but few customers would want their favorite TV shows suspended for 15 minutes every hour, making an A/C unit or electric water heater the obvious choice for a load control switch. “With so many programs in place, it allows people to save significantly per kilowatt hour,” Blake said. “Being conscientious about your time of use allows customers to be more diligent, and that’s why we are building programs designed to help our residents get the most for their money.”

TECH TIPS

SELF-HELP FORUMS AVAILABLE AT THE CLICK OF A MOUSE

NineStar would like to introduce you to the new NineStar Connect Self-Help forums and ticketing system, which can be accessed at <http://support.myninestar.net>. This new site will allow for enhanced communication, resources and trouble reporting for our members. The Self-Help tab provides many articles, how-tos and troubleshooting tips created by our staff. These articles provide step-by-step assistance for numerous services and solutions. Examples include setting up email on an iDevice and setting up parental controls on your NineStar-provided STB. The Submit a Request tab allows you to submit a help request if you’re unable to resolve the issue using the self-help service. To submit a request, you will be required to provide information in the fields designated with an asterisk (*). Once all the information is entered, you have the option of attaching a file you feel would be beneficial. Once complete, please click the submit button in the lower right corner. Once submitted, one of our Support Technicians will review and resolve your service request. If you would like to review previous tickets you have submitted or check the progress of an open ticket, please click on the “Check Your Existing Requests” tab. If you have already signed up to this site with an email address and password, please just log in to review previous requests. If you have submitted a ticket via support@myninestar.net in the past week or so, please click the “Get a password” link at the bottom of the page and follow the prompts. Once logged in, you can review your open requests by clicking the “Check Your Existing Requests” tab. If you would like to review recently solved or closed tickets, please click the link to the far right. Finally, if you would like to submit a help request via email, please email support@myninestar.net and please include the name on the account, phone number or agreement number, a description of the issue, and any other pertinent information you think may be helpful in resolving the issue. You will receive an automated email from NineStar acknowledging your request. If you prefer to speak with one of our Support Technicians, you can always call our 24/7 Help Desk at 317-326-4357 or 765-445-4357.

BLUE RIVER FIBER CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

In our last article, the status of the network backbone fiber construction was mentioned. As of Sept. 4, the construction and installation of the network backbone was complete and connectivity accomplished. The remaining portion of this project is comprised of individual service drop construction and connection of those service drops to the network backbone. Previously, we also

revealed the method in which we will be deploying this network by dividing this considerably large, township-wide area into seven smaller, more manageable serving areas comprised of 100 to 200 homes each. This method will have inherent efficien-

cies by allowing service drop construction crews to concentrate on the placement of drops from the network backbone fiber to individual homes in one serving area before progressing to the next. This will be immediately followed by the fiber-optic splicing crews working to splice, connect and test the network in preparation of service being made available. Once a serving area has been completed, it will be released to our Customer Service Representatives to begin taking orders for service.

WRITTEN BY



RYAN BEWLEY

POWER

TOP FIVE DEVICES THAT WILL INCREASE YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

Standby power or leaking electricity, refers to the electric power consumed by electronic and electrical appliances while they are switched off or in a standby mode. This only occurs because some devices claimed to be "switched off" on the electronic interface, but are in a different state from switching off from the plug, or disconnecting from the plug, which can solve the problem of standby power completely. Here are the top five devices that will draw standby power – increasing your electric bill.

1. Game consoles
2. Plasma TVs
3. Digital picture frames
4. Laptops
5. Battery chargers



NEED HELP SAVING?

FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO SAVE ON ENERGY

Have you ever wondered what it costs to operate the extra refrigerator or freezer you have in your garage or basement? Are you considering buying an electric space heater or maybe you already own one and you would like to know what it costs to operate? Want to reduce your energy usage but don't know where to start? NineStar Connects Energy Adviser is available to help you answer those questions.

WRITTEN BY



DARRIN COUCH

Not only is energy efficiency advice available by phone or email, but NineStar Connect offers FREE in-home energy audits for electric members. A home energy audit is simply a formal examination of how your home uses energy, followed by recommended steps you can take to improve your energy efficiency. The Energy Adviser will

perform a home energy audit to determine what types of energy consuming appliances and electronics are present in the home. Complete a visual inspection of the accessible portions of the home to evaluate the insulation and air sealing and make suggestions for effective ways of improving the homes energy efficiency. The energy auditor usually



GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE JUST GOT BETTER. NINESTAR CONNECT'S TECH SUPPORT CALL CENTER IS OPEN AROUND THE CLOCK. 317-326-HELP NINESTARCONNECT.COM

begins by asking questions about your home and family. They want to know how many people are in the house and when, what thermostat settings you use, and which rooms see the most activity on an average day. They'll also ask if there are problems with your house, such as rooms that never seem to get warm in the winter, or drafts that give you the chills.

Next, the auditor will use special equipment to study your home. For example, an infrared camera can help the auditor detect temperature differences that suggest air is leaking into or out of your home. The camera also shows whether doors and windows are properly sealed, pinpoints leaks in ductwork and detects attic areas that lack adequate insulation.

Once the energy auditor gathers all that information, the next step is explaining what it means to you. The auditor will describe your home's energy efficiency and call attention to systems and areas that are not as efficient as they could be. You'll learn about ways to eliminate air leaks and better manage operating costs for appliances and electronics. If appropriate, the auditor will offer advice about replacing or upgrading heating and cooling systems. Throughout, the focus is on providing practical, useful advice that will help you improve your home's energy efficiency and comfort.

If you'd like to know more about energy audits and how to arrange one for your home, our Energy Adviser will be happy to help.

Contact NineStar Connects Energy Adviser Darrin Couch by phone at 317-323-2715 or email dcouch@ninestarconnect.com.

NINESTAR'S OPERATION ROUND-UP GIVES FUNDS TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

NineStar Connect is proud of our Operation Round-Up Program (ORU) and the Central Indiana Power Community Trust. The purpose of the program is 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. This roughly includes the counties of Hancock, southeastern Hamilton, southern Madison and a small portion of northwestern Rush.

The source of these funds is NineStar Connect electric customers who voluntarily have their electric bills rounded up to the next 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.

The maximum amount available to any individual

who is a member (customer) of NineStar Connect is \$2,500 per request; and only one request per 12-month period is permitted. The maximum amount available to any group or organization that directly benefits a portion of the members (customers) of NineStar Connect is \$10,000 per request; and, only one request per 12-month period is allowed.

Those eligible to apply for funds include any individual that is a member (customer) of NineStar Connect electric division and any group, organization or charity whose primary mission benefits a significant portion of the members (customers) of NineStar Connect. For the most part, funds will be provided to meet applicant needs that aren't being met through other sources.

At their last meeting, the ORU Committee awarded grants to the Greenfield-Central High School Amateur Radio Club for the purchase of new



NineStar presents checks to the Hancock County Historical Society (above) and the GCHS Radio Club (below).



equipment, as well as the Hancock County Historical Society for roof repairs to the chapel in the park. If you would like to be considered for an ORU grant,

you can download an application form at www.ninestarconnect.com. Applications are due Oct. 19 to be considered at the Nov. 1 meeting.

LOCAL PROGRAM

ELECTRIC SAFETY PROGRAM

Electric safety education is vital to protecting the citizens of our community against the potential dangers of electricity transmission and distribution. NineStar Connects electric safety program for fourth-grade elementary students is a valuable tool in promoting electric safety to students. The program is available to all fourth-grade students within NineStar Connects electric service territory.

The Electric Safety Program is about 1 hour in length. The presentation is designed to appeal to students and focus their attention on the importance of electric safety. The presentation is delivered to groups of one or two classrooms rather than an auditorium full of



Energy Adviser at NineStar Connect Darrin Couch presents an Electric Safety Program for local fourth-grade students.

students. These small groups allow for better interaction between the students and the presenters to discuss questions the students may have about electric safety. The students also have better visual access

to the safety demonstrations.

Electric safety and energy saving habits are the topics of the program. Presenters of the program utilize an electric simulation board. The simula-

tor is complete with a meter base, breaker panel, lights, outlets, switches and high voltage power lines. The presentation explains to students how electricity is delivered to their homes and schools and the importance of being aware of electric distribution equipment in their surroundings. The safe use of electric equipment is discussed and demonstrated to students. Simulating the danger of a person coming into contact with electricity by "frying" a hot dog on simulated high voltage power lines is a highlight of the program for students as well as an effective educational tool.

Teachers or administrators should contact the Energy Adviser at NineStar Connect, Darrin Couch, to schedule the Electric Safety Program for their students. Darrin can be reached by phone at 317-323-2715 or email at dcouch@ninestarconnect.com.

TELEVISION

NINESTAR TV OFFERS SOLUTION FOR FRUSTRATED DISH SUBSCRIBERS

If you are a DISH TV subscriber, no doubt the month of September has been a frustrating time for you. With DISH TV in a heated battle with many providers over content cost, it has left you missing many of your favorite TV shows, newscasts and sporting events. NineStar offers a solution by offering digital television service with no interruption in current programming. If you want to catch some of the key matchups on the Big Ten Network in October, you need to call NineStar Connect today at 317-326-3131. Remember, some of the key match ups of the season, such as the Hoosiers taking on Ohio State and the Boilers matching up against the Wolverines of Michigan, is just weeks away. Don't miss a minute of the action with NineStar TV!

NFL ACTION ON NINESTAR TV

NineStar TV is proud to offer NFL Network in full High Definition! The new offering can be found in all bundled packages on Channel 939. In addition NineStar also offers you the ability to see every touchdown during the 2012 season in High Definition on the NFL RedZone on CH 946. Call 326-3131 today to sign up for NineStar TV!

ADDRESSES

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.

EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT



Larry Knight shakes hands with Ryan Bewley at the retirement celebration.

LARRY KNIGHT

To say Larry Knight was dedicated to his job at NineStar Connect would have been an understatement. While Larry worked in Greenfield, he lived in Richmond, Ind., which meant getting up at 5:30 a.m. every day and driving 50 miles one way. In fact, on some nights when it looked as if bad weather or an occasional ice storm was moving in, Larry would stay in a local motel to be close to the job in case he was needed through the night.

After a little more than five years at NineStar and more than 43 years in the industry, Larry decided to retire and his last official day on the job was Aug 31.

Larry graduated high school at

Hartford City High School in 1964 and completed 60 hours in Electronic Communications at Ivy Tech in Richmond, Ind. Upon completion, he started as an Engineering Assistant Jr. at GTE and worked his way to a Senior Engineer. In 2008, he started work for NineStar, and while at the cooperative, he held positions as Supervising Engineer and Outside Plant Manager. While at NineStar, Larry worked on FTTH, the home deployments throughout the territory. In all, Larry has spent more than 40 years in OSP Engineering and Construction.

Longtime Wayne County residents, Larry and his wife, Georgia Lynn, have two sons and five grandchildren. Dedicated to the community in which they live, Larry is very involved serving as a church

elder at Earlham Heights Presbyterian Church in Richmond, and he is currently chairman of the Wayne County Utility Coordinating Committee. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, gardening and oil painting. His plans in retirement include some elk hunting, and work around the house as the chief cook and bottle washer.

While he will miss the many friendships he has made at NineStar, Larry noted that he will not miss getting up at 5:30 a.m. and the 100-mile roundtrip drive each day. He appreciates and thanks Hancock Telecom/NineStar Connect for the many opportunities given to him throughout his years of service. In return, we wish him nothing but many years of happiness in his retirement.



ENERGY SAVERS: POWER OF COOPERATION

Many of our members want to save energy and money but are not sure of the best products to purchase. We are pleased to offer access to 20 percent off best-quality energy efficient products through EnergySavers.coop. You can easily access the energy saving products for your home, business and personal use through our main website. Just look for the EnergySavers.coop logo and find special savings on items like CFLs and other lighting products, weatherization products for your home, water conservation items, and other tested energy saving devices. This new service is just another way that we are looking out for you. Little Changes. Big Savings. Together We Save!

PUMPKIN PIE

A staple for every holiday dinner table, homemade pumpkin pie can be enjoyed year-round. This easy recipe will become a household favorite, whatever the holiday.

- INGREDIENTS:
- 1 9-inch pie crust
 - 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
 - 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1/2 teaspoon ginger
 - 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1/4 teaspoon allspice
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 2 cups pureed cooked pumpkin
 - 1 1/4 cups evaporated milk
 - 3/4 cup egg whites, whipped
 - 2 1/2 teaspoons vanilla

- DIRECTIONS:
- Preheat oven to 375°F.
- In a large bowl, combine sugars, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice, and salt.
- In a separate large mixing bowl, combine pumpkin, milk, egg, and vanilla; whisk until smooth. Pour dry mixture into wet mixture and mix until just moistened.
- Pour into prepared pie crust and bake 50 to 60 minutes, until crust is golden and filling is set in the center when jiggled. Cool and serve.

ROAST PUMPKIN LASAGNA

- INGREDIENTS:
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
 - 1 egg, scrambled
 - nutmeg
 - 1 sugar pumpkin or butternut squash
 - ½ medium-sized onion, white or yellow, chopped
 - ½ cup vegetable or chicken stock/water
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
 - Sage, dried 1/8 teaspoon or fresh
 - chopped ¼ teaspoon
 - ½ cup parmesan cheese
 - ¼ cup brown sugar
 - 2 cups shredded mozzarella
 - Olive oil
 - 1 box of lasagna noodles

- DIRECTIONS:
- Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- Bring water to a boil and then add the lasagna noodles.
- Meanwhile, while the noodles are cooking, peel, deseed, and chop up the sugar pumpkin or squash, half an onion, and coat all with oil, salt, and brown sugar, and ¼ teaspoon sage and spread evenly on a baking sheet. Roast at 375 degrees F for 10- 14 minutes. When the pumpkin is fully cooked, add
- Bake at 350 degrees F for 40



the garlic and cook for an additional 3 minutes. Take out and allow to cool a little.

Scoop the pumpkin into a blender filling half-way each time and pureeing until smooth. Empty the contents into a bowl.

Separately, combine and stir the two cups ricotta, the mixed egg, ¼ cup parmesan, 1 cup of the mozzarella, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg in a bowl with a couple pinches of salt and a sprinkle of pepper.

Drain the noodles when done cooking according to the directions on the package.

Begin layering the lasagna by putting some oil on the bottom of the baking dish. Then add a layer of pumpkin, then add a layer of noodles, then add a layer of the ricotta and mozzarella mixture, another layer of noodles, pumpkin mixture, and so on, alternating ricotta mixture and pumpkin layers. The top should be noodles, cover with the remaining shredded mozzarella and the rest of the parmesan and drizzle with oil. Cover with baking dish with foil.

Bake at 350 degrees F for 40

minutes. Uncover and bake for an additional five minutes.

PUMPKIN MUFFINS

A bit of applesauce added to recipe makes for an especially moist muffin.

- INGREDIENTS:
- 2 medium eggs
 - 3 cups flour
 - 1 cup brown sugar
 - 1 cup milk
 - 1 cup pureed cooked pumpkin
 - ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
 - 2 tablespoons white sugar
 - 4 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
 - ¼ teaspoon cloves
 - ¼ teaspoon allspice
 - ¼ teaspoon ginger

- DIRECTIONS:
- Preheat oven to 325°F.
- Combine all ingredients in a large

bowl; mix until smooth. Fill sprayed muffin tins with mixture until ¾ full. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in a muffin comes out clean.

CHOCOLATE PUMPKIN PUDDING

Some traditional pumpkin puddings require several hours to steam over hot water. This recipe is as instant as they come - just stir and serve.

- INGREDIENTS:
- 1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree
 - 1 package instant chocolate pudding mix
 - 1/4 cup milk
 - 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 2 cups prepared whipped cream

- DIRECTIONS:
- In a medium bowl, beat together pumpkin, puddings, milk, and cinnamon until blended. Gently fold in the whipped cream and chill until serving.

PUTTING PUMPKIN TO DIFFERENT USES

Autumn is the season when pumpkins are ripe for the picking, and thousands of people flock to local farms and roadside vendors to select perfect pumpkins. Many pumpkins are turned into decorative jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween, only to be tossed in the trash come Nov. 1. That could be because many people are unaware of the various ways they can put pumpkins to good use.

Pumpkins are gourds and members of the squash family and have been grown and used for thousands of years. Evidence suggests that pumpkins date back to 7000 B.C., possibly originating in Mexico. Today they are widely used for decorating around Halloween, but there are many other things that can be done with pumpkins.

Create a food vessel. Pumpkins can be transformed into bowls to hold soup, punch, fruit, or even dips. Make sure the pumpkin has been cleaned well of its pulp and seeds, as well as the stringy flesh that is inside. Rub the inside walls of the pumpkin with oil to keep them from drying out and caving in, then fill with your food of choice.

Make pumpkin puree. Puree from a pumpkin can be used in all types of recipes, from soups to baked goods. The puree also can replace the oil in cake recipes. Cut the pumpkin and scoop out the seeds and stringy membranes. Then place it cut-side-down in a pan with a little water in the bottom. Bake at 350 F for around 90 minutes. The flesh will become tender and easily removable. Blend the resulting puree in a food processor and reserve flesh for recipes. Some pumpkins are sweeter or better to use as part of recipes. Check the variety you're purchasing.

Whip up a facial. Use some pumpkin puree with a little brown sugar and a dash of milk to create a vitamin-rich facial mask.

Get illuminated. Turn hollowed-out mini pumpkins into candles. Melt soy wax, beeswax or the gel type of candle wax that can be found at most craft stores. Add your favorite scent and place a wick into the bottom of the pumpkin. Then pour the wax into hallowed-out space and allow it to harden. Try the same thing with bumpy and multi-colored gourds for added decorating appeal.

MAKE PUMPKIN STOCK

While vegetable or meat-based stocks may be the standards, pumpkin can be used to make stock as well. Clean out the seeds from the stringy guts of the pumpkin and put the guts into a pot filled with water. Add celery, carrots or any other aromatic vegetables for extra flavor. Allow to boil for at least 30 minutes. The stock is ready when it begins to change color. Strain and reserve the stock for use in a variety of recipes.

UPDATES

NEW OFFICE HOURS
TO START IN NOVEMBER

Beginning on Nov. 1 the following office hours will take effect:

McCordsville Office
Monday through Friday: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m. to noon

Knightstown Office
Monday through Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

North Campus
Monday through Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

South Campus
Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

PHONE BOOKS AVAILABLE

NineStar Connect’s 2012 phone directories were delivered to houses earlier this spring. While every customer received one of the directories, we have had several requests for additional copies. If you are interested in obtaining an extra copy, you can drop into either our North Campus or South Campus locations and ask for one. Extra copies are free but will remain available only while supplies last.



SECURITY

NINESTAR HOME SAFETY TIPS

With summer vacations now seeming like a distant memory and fall weather upon us, many people are turning their attention to planning for the holiday season. While it is great to get away to visit friends and family, there is still worry leaving behind personal property and possessions. Below are some tips to help bring peace of mind while you are away.

- Temperature and flood monitoring from NineStar Security can alert you to emergencies.
- Let your close neighbors know you are leaving so they can keep an eye out.
- Keep a light on inside of the house.
- Have your neighbor park their car in your driveway so it appears someone is home.
- Make arrangements to have your mail and newspapers gathered so they do not pile up.
- For more tips call Matt Layton at 326-SAFE.



SAVING ENERGY, MONEY

AN AUDIT BY NINESTAR CAN IDENTIFY SAVINGS

As you may know, 2012 has been designated the International Year of Cooperatives. The celebration began last October when U.S. cooperatives traditionally celebrate National Cooperative Month. The International Year of Cooperatives’ theme, “Cooperative Enterprises Build a BetterWorld,” resonates with co-ops in the electric, banking, food, retail, housing and marketing arenas. Electric cooperatives are leaders, delivering power and light to 42 million members in 47 states, covering more than 75 percent of the nation’s land mass.

WRITTEN BY



DARRIN
COUCH

Locally, NineStar Connect offers a service that helps its members become better acquainted with their home and how it uses energy. Did you know all of the cracks, gaps and holes that exist in the average home add up to the size of a large open window or door? Your local electric co-op can help identify these issues by sending an energy adviser to your home to conduct an energy audit.

A home energy audit is simply a formal examination of how your home uses energy, followed by recommended steps you can take to improve your energy efficiency. Co-op energy advisers are trained

to determine a home’s energy use based on its construction and how the residents use energy. For example, a family of six will use energy differently than a single person.

An energy adviser usually begins an audit by asking questions about your home and family. He/she will want to know how many people are in the house and when, what thermostat settings you use, and which rooms see the most activity on an average day. He/she will also ask if there are problems with your home, such as rooms that never seem to get warm in the winter, or drafts that give you the chills.



GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE JUST GOT BETTER. NINESTAR CONNECT’S TECH SUPPORT CALL CENTER IS OPEN AROUND THE CLOCK.
317-326-HELP
NINESTARCONNECT.COM

Next, the auditor may use special equipment to study your home. For example, an infrared camera can help the energy adviser detect temperature differences, which suggest outside air is leaking into or out of your home. The camera also shows whether doors and windows are properly sealed, pinpoints leaks in ductwork, and detects attic areas that lack adequate insulation. Sophisticated thermometers can measure everything from the temperature inside refrigerators and freezers to the temperature of the air flowing through your home’s ductwork.

In some cases, the energy adviser may use a device called a blower door to reduce the air pressure inside your home. That makes it easier to identify air leaks so that the auditor can determine the cause of those leaks. A thorough audit typically includes examination of your home’s heating, air conditioning, water heating, appliances, doors, windows, insulation and caulking.

Once the energy adviser gathers all the necessary information, the next step is explaining what it means to you. He or she will describe your home’s energy efficiency and call attention to systems and areas that aren’t as efficient as they should be. You’ll learn about ways to eliminate air leaks and conserve heated water. If appropriate, the energy adviser will make suggestions for replacing or upgrading systems and/or offer participation in various POWER MOVES energy efficiency programs and rebates offered through your co-op. Throughout, the focus is on providing practical, useful advice that will improve your home’s efficiency and comfort.

If you’d like to know more about energy audits and how to arrange one for your home, contact NineStar Connect and ask to speak with Darrin Couch, our energy adviser.

NINESTAR AT
REMC GOLF
OUTING 2012

In August, NineStar Connect played host and placed first in the 2012 Indiana REMC Golf Outing. The event, held annually since the 1970s, took place at Arrowhead Golf Course just outside of Maxwell. In all, 14 four-somes made up of vendors, suppliers and REMCs participated in the Florida Scramble. Participating REMCs included: United, Wabash Co., NineStar Connect, Miami-Cass, Rush Shelby, Pulaski Co. and Carroll-White. After a fun yet competitive round of golf, the event wrapped up with dinner and awards for participating teams. A special thanks to Gary Oden, Heather Wooten and the rest of the staff at Arrowhead for making everyone feel welcome and for hosting a great event. In addition, we would like to thank all of our sponsors and organizations that supplied prizes.

- 2012 Indiana REMC Golf Outing Sponsors**
- Brownstown Electric
 - Parr Richey
 - Priority Press
 - Tanalus
 - WTHR 13
 - Great Deals Magazine
 - HD Supplies Utilities
 - Altec
 - Powertech Engineering

BUSINESSES
CAN HANG
UP ON PHONE
FRAUDSTERS



First Place – NineStar Connect:
team included Sue Layton, David Spencer, Randy Muegge and Scott Hasty



Second Place – Miami- Cass REMC (Team 1):
team included Rob Schwartz, Nicole Schwartz, M.J. Vrooman and Kevin Teulker



Third Place – Miami-Cass REMC (Team 2):
team included Mike Fross, Greg Millon, Brian Butt and Amy Millon

We have had a few cases recently in which it appears that a business customer’s phone system or voice mail system has been compromised. The hackers are able to find and exploit a phone system/voice mail unit that has weak security and then are making outbound international calls from that system. All of the fraudulent activity we have encountered has been tied to overseas numbers. The result can be a phone bill that has increased dramatically in a matter of hours. 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. By default, when we add long distance service to a line, international dialing is allowed unless customers specify they want it blocked. Whether your business makes international calls, we are asking that you take the necessary steps to secure your business phone and voice mail systems.

TERESA JOHNS
ANNOUNCED AS
NEW BUSINESS
SALES CONSULTANT

NineStar Connect recently announced that Teresa Johns has been promoted to Business Sales Consultant with the organization. While the role may be new, Teresa has been working with the telecommunications company for more than 11 years.

Teresa brings a wealth of experience and knowledge working with businesses of all sizes and providing telecommunication solutions that fit specific needs. In her new role, Teresa will work with business primarily in the Rushville area providing products and services such as



TERESA
JOHNS

Voice, Digital Video, Broadband, IT and Network Management, Cloud Based Solutions, Data Backup and Key Systems. While Rushville will be her main focus, Teresa also will be working in the Greenfield and Knightstown areas.

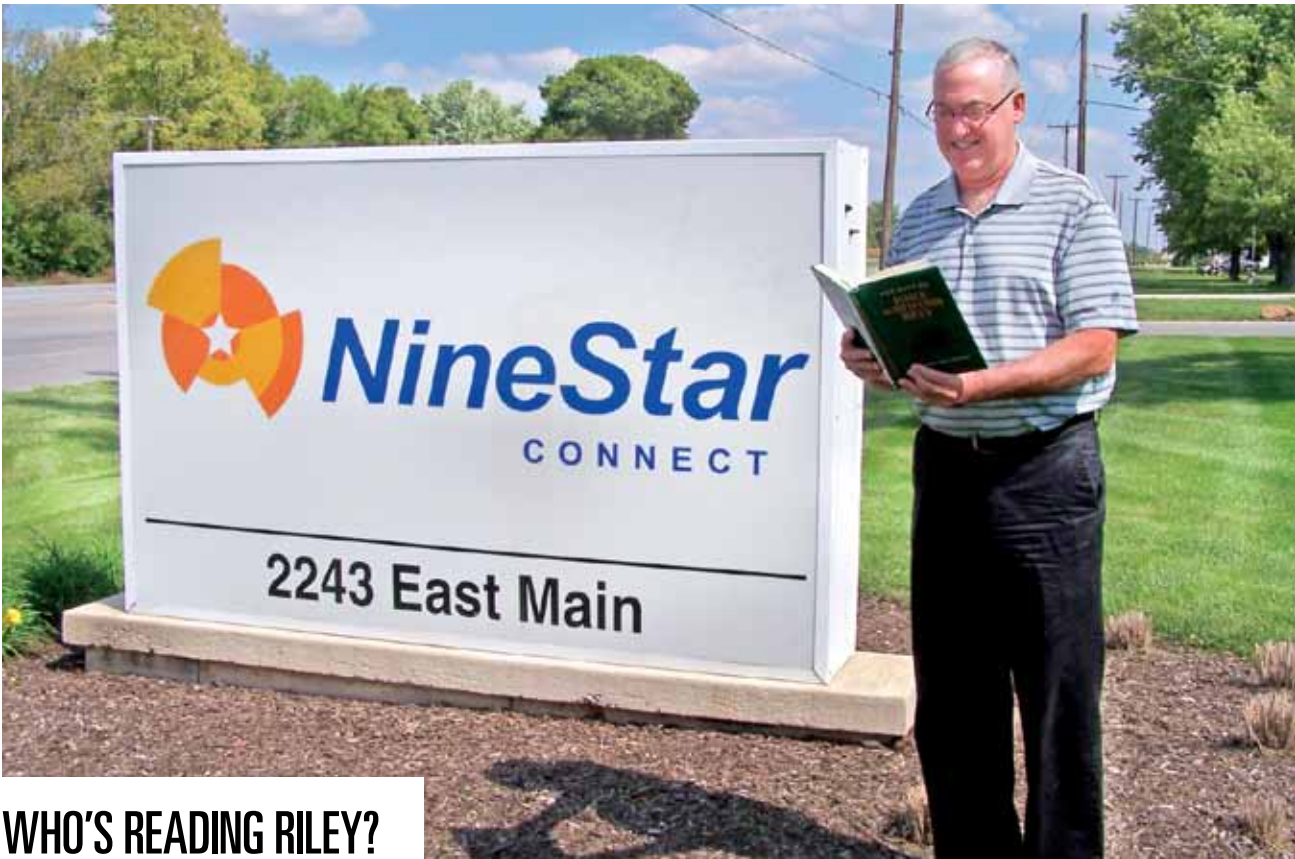
“I’m excited about this exciting opportunity and the chance to spread the story of what NineStar can provide to local businesses,” Johns stated. “We have made a significant investment in the areas we serve and we hope to partner with business leaders to provide advanced communications services to meet their needs in an ever-changing business environment.”

If you would like to learn more about how NineStar can help your small- or medium-sized business, you can reach Teresa directly at 317-323-2136.

A list of security tips can be found online at, www.ninestarconnect.com, under the “Communications” section. 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 info, call 317-326-3131.



WHO’S READING RILEY?

The James Whitcomb Riley Home located in Greenfield, Ind., recently sponsored a contest to determine who is reading works by the famous Hoosier Poet. The idea came about from a photo of James Dean reading from a book of Riley’s works in the 1950s. In the current contest, the Riley Home asked for photo submissions of recognizable people in the community reading a Riley book. NineStar Connect President and CEO Tim Hills took part in the contest by submitting a photo. The contest, running in conjunction with the annual Riley Festival, which runs Oct. 4-7 this year, will announce the top 10 photos from the contest based on community votes during the festival.

A FEW SMART METER FAQs

NineStar Connect began installing smart meters in portions of our electric territory in early 2011. By the end of the year we had converted more than 5,300 meters. Our initial deployment took place primarily in the areas served by both the electric and telecom divisions, where we already have fiber to the home. With the fiber construction projects NineStar is planning for 2012, we expect to be able to deploy another 2,800 smart meters. Included here is a list of frequently asked questions regarding the installation of smart meters throughout our network. If you have any other questions regarding smart meters, please call the NineStar office.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SMART METERS?

This innovative technology should encourage electric consumers to use energy more intelligently by giving them the ability to better monitor and manage their electric use more frequently and in greater detail. Smart meters make possible a new energy future:

- **Remote meter reading:** NineStar Connect will be able to read smart meters remotely, virtually eliminating the need to go house to house to read electric meters. This means trucks are dispatched less frequently, which in turn saves the company money and helps to better control the cost of electric power to the consumer.
- **Smoother transactions:** Remote connection and disconnection of electric service should reduce the time it takes to process service orders at most homes.
- **Automatic outage and voltage notification:** Smart meters will automatically notify NineStar Connect about power outages as well as sags and swells in voltage monitoring to help us restore and maintain power quality more efficiently.
- **Preventive maintenance:** Smart meters sometimes report anomalies to NineStar, which allows the company to dispatch line crews to fix a problem before it results in a power outage. Without this technology, the company would not have known of the problem until the

consumer reported the power was out.

- **Energy efficiency and savings:** Consumers can more closely monitor their electricity use to better manage energy costs by making small changes such as adjusting their thermostats.
- **Environmental benefits:** If consumers conserve energy, less power may have to be produced, which is good for the environment.

WHO’S RECEIVING SMART METERS?
All NineStar Connect electric customers will receive smart meters. This includes residences and businesses. This is a mandatory service upgrade; NineStar Connect is upgrading all customer meters and meter-reading technology. You’ll be notified by mail a few weeks prior to your smart meter installation.

WHEN WILL MY SMART METER BE INSTALLED?
Smart meter deployment began in March 2011 and will continue at least through 2013. To find out when your meter will be installed, visit www.ninestarconnect.com. You should receive a door hanger and a packet of information when your meter has been installed.

JOHN KOSINSKI
REMEMBERED BY
NINESTAR TEAM

We are saddened to announce the loss of one of our NineStar Connect team members, John Thomas Kosinski. John was a Business Sales Consultant with NineStar Connect since the Business Sales department was established four years ago. John passed away on Aug. 12. He was originally from South Bend and graduated from Ball State University. John loved the White Sox and the Chicago Bears. He interacted with a large number of our business customers and he made a significant contribution to NineStar Connect. John will be missed by us all.



John Kosinski

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 for last edition's solution.

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

Level: Beginner