

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2013



# NineStar CONNECTION

VOLUME 2  
ISSUE 5

## FURNACE SAVINGS

Ninestar Connect customers can save \$1,500 when they upgrade to a more efficient home-heating solution.

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## 4-H WINNER: BRIGHT IDEA

Ninestar congratulates local 4Her for receiving top honors at the State Fair.

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Ninestar's network operations manager Earl Shaw says the team is experienced in all areas of support.



# WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK?

NINESTAR'S SUPPORT  
CENTER IS AVAILABLE 24/7  
365 DAYS A YEAR

SEE  
MORE  
INSIDE  
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OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR JANET DECKER.

WE'D JUST LIKE TO SAY HOW VERY MUCH WE ARE ENJOYING OUR NEW FTTH TRIPLE PLAY SERVICE! IT IS SOOO MUCH BETTER THAN ANYTHING WE'VE HAD UP TO NOW. WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN PLEASED WITH OUR PHONE SERVICE WITH HRTC, AND ARE HAPPY TO HAVE ALL OUR SERVICES UNDER THE SAME UMBRELLA WITH NINESTAR!

- MARY G.

HAVE A STORY IDEA?

Contact David Spencer at dspencer@ninstarconnect.com

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When you look after your pennies, the dollars take care of themselves. Read about how Ninestar and its members are helping two local organizations.	

NEW OFFICE

Ninestar Connect's new office in McCordsville is up and running, and members are invited to come celebrate.

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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.

NineStar Connection, USPS

Volume 2 No. 5

Published Bi-monthly. Postage Paid at Greenfield, IN.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: 2243 E. Main St. Greenfield, IN 46140

Annual subscription price is \$3; available to members of NineStar Connect co-operative.

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NINESTAR SUPPORTS YOU

Ninestar Connect prides itself on the high quality customer service we provide all of our customers. It is one of the many things that separates us from our competition and makes us unique. Year in and year out, our team receives high marks on an annual survey we conduct. While our feedback is always positive and our marks are high, we never rest on our laurels and we are constantly looking for ways to improve how we serve you, our customers.

One way we do this every day is through our 24/7/365 support center. It is, in my opinion, truly one of the jewels of our company. The center is located at our north campus in Maxwell, Ind., and is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The folks who work in the center live in our communities they serve and know they are talking, in many cases, with their neighbors when dealing with issues.

Our support center is here for you no matter how big or small your issue may be. The beauty of it all is that it is an added benefit of being a Ninestar customer. It is a free service that can assist you no matter the time of day.

Our support center is yet another example of the difference between your cooperative and an investor-owned utility. We are able to provide award winning customer service because of our cooperative roots. We are local and employ local people who understand who we are. Our profits are not sent to corporate headquarters in a far off state but rather stay local, making a difference in all of our communities we serve.

In this issue of the Ninestar Connection, you will read more about our service center and the incredible people who staff it. Once you discover this service, you will never go back to the status quo. So, next time late at night, when you are struggling with your email or issues with your Internet service, try calling our support center at 317-326-HELP and get some assistance from a knowledgeable, highly trained individual who will be happy to assist you.

PRESIDENT & CEO



TIM HILLS

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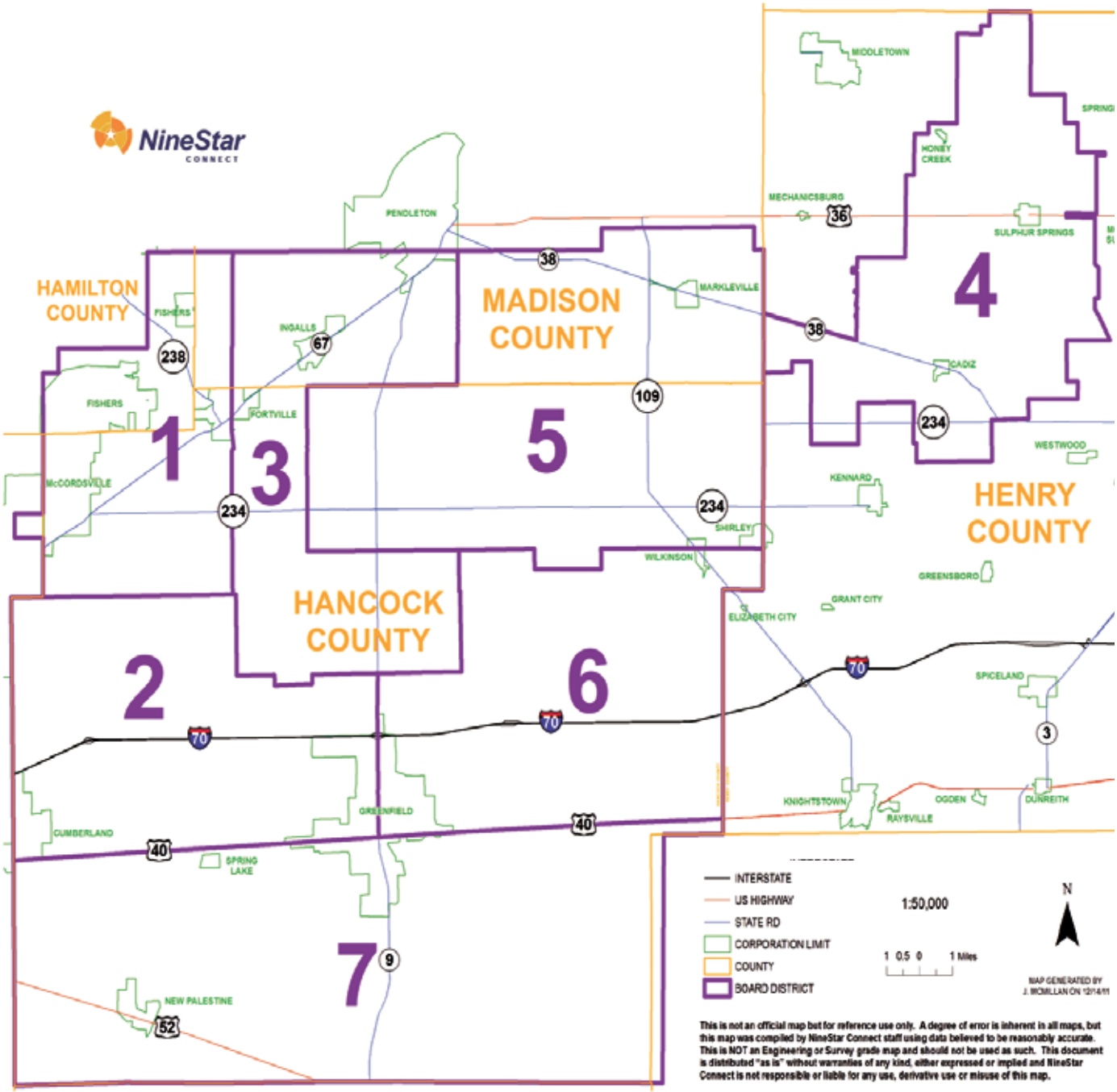


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# WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK?

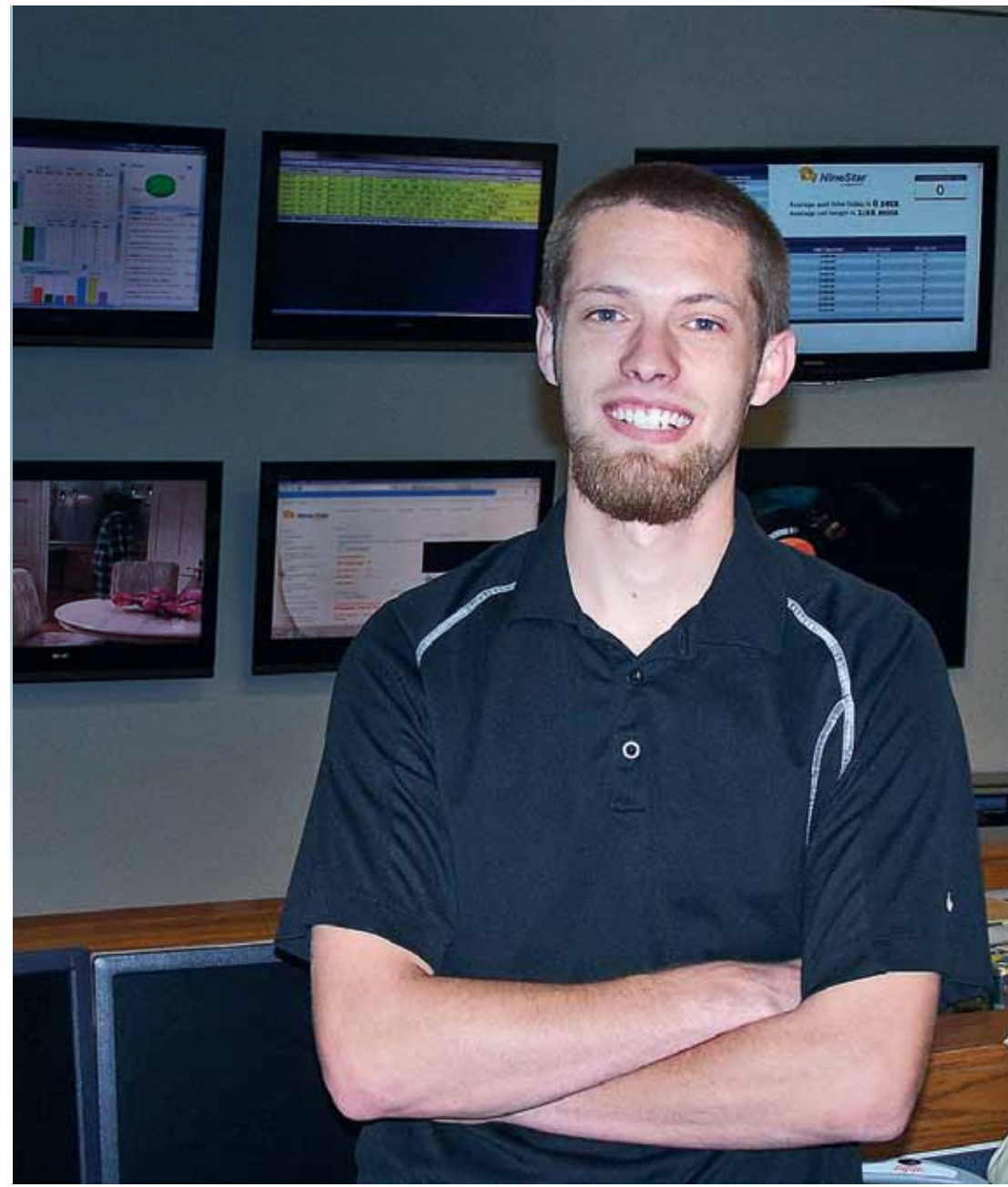
NINESTAR'S SUPPORT CENTER IS AVAILABLE 24/7 365 DAYS A YEAR

Reaching out to Customer Support often feels a lot like a trip down the Wonderland rabbit hole: After running through a number of “home remedies” to resolve a technical issue on their own, frustrated customers contact the support center in hopes of finding a solution to their problems. They endure an interminably long wait on the phone or in a chat room until customer service representatives in a far off land take notice and begin a dialogue about their dilemmas.

WRITTEN BY  
**JULIE YOUNG**

The customer answers a few diagnostic questions and begins to lay out their concern, but before they are finished, the company representative shoots back a textbook answer that has nothing to do with the issue at hand, asking pointedly, “Does this resolve your issue?” Before one can protest or clarify the advice, the representative wishes them well, thanks them for their business, logs out or hangs up, leaving the customer lost and alone once more.

“It’s a frustrating process,” NineStar member Bill Walters said. “With a lot of call centers, you wait forever for someone to help you and come away from



**NineStar’s network operations manager Earl Shaw says the team is experienced in all areas of support.**

it feeling stupid. Thankfully, NineStar Connect’s IT Support Center is nothing like that. They are a great bunch of people who have been there for me no matter if I need to make a change to my email or have a question about one of my other services.”

NineStar’s Customer Support Center is truly the hidden jewel of the company and one that sets them apart from the competition. Located at NineStar’s north campus and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, the professionals at the Support Center are ready to offer members free

technical assistance for every service NineStar has to offer.

“This is total tech support,” said Ross Ferson, NineStar’s director of network operations. “No matter if it’s voice, video, Internet or security, we are here to help,” he said.

Every member who connects with the support center, whether over the phone or online, can feel confident that their call is not being rerouted to an off-

shore call center. Every member of the team lives locally, speaks fluent “Hoosier” and has the knowledge to solve IT problems promptly, professionally and effectively.

Earl Shaw, NineStar’s network operations manager, said NineStar’s IT team is comprised of educated, certified professionals with experience in all areas of support.

“No matter if it is a smart phone, TV, tablet, laptop, Mac or PC, they can help and have all of our tools at their disposal so that they can help the first time a member calls,” he says.

NineStar has been working

hard to revamp its Support Center website in order to make it more user friendly based on customer feedback. It has consolidated its troubleshooting and FAQ help guides in order to keep them in one easy-to-find location. In addition, when members call or chat with a support center representative, they can be assured that they will get a customized solution that meets their needs.

“At traditional call centers, employees read from a script, but at NineStar, our staff members complete an extensive training program that ensures they listen to our customers’ concerns in order to troubleshoot and resolve the problem immediately without passing the buck,” Shaw said.

Philadelphia resident Bill Tope said he has been impressed with the speed and service he has received at the NineStar Support Center.

“I called them at midnight one evening with a question about my email and the guy on the other end patched in and helped me take care of it in five minutes. If I had tried to do it myself, it would have been a six-month project. They are great.”

Walters said he has contacted NineStar’s Support Center at least a dozen times both online and over the phone and has never had to wait longer than four minutes for assistance.

When he is connected with a representative, he said he has always been greeted by a friendly professional that is at the top of their game and can explain things without being glib or making him feel technologically illiterate.

“I don’t know if it’s because they are a local company or what, but they are dynamite. They go above and beyond to give me the best customer service, and the solutions they provide always seem to work. They keep me on the straight and narrow and they will for you as well.”



NERDS  
KNOW  
BEST

While many IT problems can be resolved with a phone call, sometimes it’s not a software issue at all. If the Support Center suspects a member needs a more hardware-related solution, they will refer them to the NineStar Nerds.

The NineStar Nerds provide many network and PC installation and repair services by a group of highly qualified technicians. Whether you’re looking to have a new PC setup and configured, or a new wireless router installed, NineStar Connect has you covered. NineStar Triple Play members are entitled to 90 minutes of “Nerd Support” as well as a 15 percent discount on additional service (a \$99.95 value.) Broadband customers receive a 10 percent discount on NineStar Nerd service.

“Our Support Center is committed to exhausting every possible solution prior to sending in the Nerds,” said Ross Ferson, NineStar’s director of network operations. “However, when they are needed, the NineStar Nerds are happy to help!”





### NINESTAR HELPS OUT AT NEW PALESTINE GOLF OUTING

NineStar Connect was pleased to help sponsor the New Palestine Golf Outing that the New Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce hosted. The event was a great success and a lot of competition and fun took place. NineStar specifically sponsored the Putting Contest, where each golfer had a chance of making that all important shot. A big thanks to the New Palestine Chamber for the organization of this enjoyable event.



### MATT RANDALL FROM INDIANA STATEWIDE VISITS NINESTAR

On Sept. 25, Matt Randall, the Manager of Legislative Advocacy at Indiana Statewide Association of RECs, visited NineStar Connect. The purpose of the visit was to discuss with key staff and the board of directors issues facing the electric industry on the state and federal level. Matt also reviewed the previous Indiana legislative session and gave a preview of the upcoming session. Above, Randall discusses issues with NineStar Connect President & CEO Tim Hills.



# YOUR PAPERS, PLEASE

## DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR \$1,500 FURNACE REBATE

You may already know that your electric cooperative, through its PowerMoves program, offers homeowners a \$1,500 incentive to replace their electric resistance heat (baseboard heaters, ceiling cable heat or an electric furnace) with an air-source heat pump, a geothermal unit or a dual-fuel heat pump.

WRITTEN BY



DARRIN COUCH

But do you know what you need to claim that incentive? Maybe you've left it in your contractor's hands because he is the expert. Most contractors are good, honest people who truly want you to be happy with their service and new equipment and are glad to help you with the rebate application. Unfortunately, there are also some out there who will tell

you that you'll get \$1,500 from your electric co-op but then don't provide us with the documents we need to process your application and you lose out on the money. We don't like to see that happen. As a member-owned cooperative (that means YOU own US), we like to keep you happy. So, if you are applying for our residential heating incentives, please ask



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

your contractor these two questions BEFORE you sign a purchase agreement for your new equipment: Will you do a heat loss/heat gain calculation? I understand it's needed for me to receive my rebate from my co-op. Note: Sometimes this is called a "Manual J" calculation. According to ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America), this is the only CORRECT way to accurately size a heating/cooling system. Your new system cannot operate at optimal efficiency if it is not sized correctly for your house. If your contractor won't do it, can't do it or says it's not necessary, please remember we can't give you a rebate without one. On the flip side, a contractor who does take the time to perform this necessary calculation deserves to be paid for their extra care and attention. Can you give me the AHRI certificate for this unit? I understand that it is also needed to receive my PowerMoves rebate. The Air Conditioning Heating and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) tests many heating/cooling systems and certifies their efficiency. Each tested system is issued a certificate that states its efficiency rating. PowerMoves uses this to ensure that your equipment meets our minimum standards. That's it. Two pieces of paper (oh, and your application) stand between you and \$1,500. Have more questions? Call Darrin Couch, our energy adviser at NineStar Connect and he will be happy to help you get the most from your purchase and claim your rebate. You can also visit [ninestarconnect.com](http://ninestarconnect.com) and look for the PowerMoves tab for more information on saving energy and money in your home or business.

# NEW MCCORDSVILLE OFFICE NOW OPEN

This past month, our McCordsville office moved into its new location at 6045 W. Broadway (the old McCordsville Post Office). Construction on the site has been ongoing for several months with us being able to open the doors Sept. 9. The new office is larger and allows for a small conference room for sit-down conversations with our customers. An open house is scheduled for the week of Oct. 7-11 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day. The names of those who extend their contract and/or sign up for new services will be placed in a drawing for prizes. We will be giving away \$500, \$100, a NEST Thermostat and a Microsoft Surface. The drawing will take place Nov. 27. The names of Fortville/McCordsville electric customers who have signed up already for communication services this year will be entered automatically. Additionally, for just stopping in to visit the new office the week of Oct. 7-11, each family will receive a free Silipint cup and can enter their last name in a special drawing. Details of the prize will be illustrated at the open house. We will also have refreshments throughout the day. So, please join us as we begin our tenure at our new location. We couldn't be happier with the outcome and appearance of the remodeled building and are thrilled to be able to open our doors to you and your family.



## EASTERN HANCOCK'S PTO TOUCH-A-TRUCK EVENT



On Aug. 17, Eastern Hancock Elementary School hosted a Touch-A-Truck Event to help raise funds for the Parent-Teacher Organization. During the Touch-A-Truck Event, specialized vehicles we may see on the streets every day in our community were on display. Children and adults were able to get up close and see them from the inside and out. Vehicles such as firetrucks, ambulances, waste removal trucks, Lifeline helicopter and our NineStar Connect bucket truck were there for people to sit in, grab the steering wheel and honk the horn a few times! NineStar's own Matt Spurling was also there to help answer questions and assist young children with climbing in and out of the truck to get a better view. Additionally, bounce houses and food were on hand to add fun to all the excitement. Thank you Eastern Hancock PTO for bringing together this great event!



REPRESENTING

STEVE VAIL ELECTED TO NATIONAL BOARD

Steve Vail, NineStar Connect’s Chairman of the Board, was recently elected to the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC is a member-owned, nonprofit cooperative. The CFC was established in 1969 to raise funds from the capital markets to supplement the loan programs for electric cooperatives offered by the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), previously Rural Electrification Administration (REA). Today CFC is the premier market lender for the nation’s electric cooperatives. They provide financing and related services to RUS borrowers and non-borrowers alike. These loans help



STEVE VAIL

members acquire, construct and operate the utility infrastructure needed to deliver services that improve the quality of life in rural areas. CFC also provides credit enhancements, including letters of credit and guarantees of debt obligations, for their members. CFC is guided by a geographically diverse, democratically elected 23-member Board of Directors, which includes directors and managers of CFC’s member systems. The board sets overall policy, establishes programs and develops strategies for CFC. The Chief Executive Officer and CFC senior leadership team of senior vice presidents manage CFC’s operations and carry out the board’s directives with the support of a staff of 219 employees, including 18 regional representatives located throughout the United States. CFC’s staff has extensive experience in rural utility finance, operations and management. In all, the CFC serves more than 1,000 owners of electric cooperatives, which in turn serve more than 42 million end-users of electricity across the United States. Vail defeated Richard Deneweth from Cherryland Electric Cooperative near Traverse City, Mich., to win the seat. He will replace CFC board member Jim Doerstleron, who decided not to run for re-election. Vail will serve District 4 for a three-year term. The district geographically includes the Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia.

QUARTERLY MEETING

HOLIDAY COOKING SEMINAR

Scott Reifenberger, originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida International University, Miami. Upon graduation he worked at Café Maxx, Pompano Beach, Fla., for noted chef Oliver Saucy as Sous Chef.

Scott relocated to the West Coast and took the position of Executive Sous Chef at Blackhawk Grille in Danville, Calif. In 2002, he started working for Club Corp at the Shoreby Club in Bratenahl, Ohio. Six months later, he was promoted to Executive Chef of the Skyline Club, Indianapolis. While at the Skyline Club, Scott has earned four first place awards for heart healthy cuisine from Dining a la Heart, received four trips to the C.I.A. in Napa Valley for Club Corps’ top chefs, taped many cooking segments for local television, hosted bimonthly cooking classes and participated in many community events.



Please join us at our south campus (2243 E. Main St.) on Saturday, Nov. 9, for our Fourth Quarter Member Service Meeting. Chef Scott Reifenberger, Skyline Club Executive Chef, will be present to entice you with some yummy, delicious ideas for the upcoming holiday season. Chef Reifenberger is originally from Cincinnati, Ohio. He graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and earned a Bachelor of Science from Florida International University, Miami. Since 2002, Scott has held the position as Executive Chef of the Skyline Club in Indianapolis. While in Indy, he has earned four first-place awards for heart healthy cuisine from Dining a la Heart, received four trips to the C.I.A. in Napa Valley for Club Corps’ top chefs, taped many cooking segments for local television, hosted bimonthly cooking classes and participated in many community events. Don’t miss your chance at this great opportunity. But you must act fast; seating is limited to the first 100 people! Call to reserve your seat today at 317-323-FOOD (3663). Registration begins at 8-8:30 a.m. the day of the event. There will be refreshments and, of course, a special give-away!

MEMBER BENEFITS

CONNECTIONS CARD CONTINUES PROGRESS

We are pleased to see that the Co-op Connections Card is being used more and more and we couldn’t be happier! Usage of the Healthy Savings portion of the card has quadrupled in some months. When we see statistics such as this, we know that you, our members, are not paying full price for prescriptions or services that you would have to otherwise. We are so glad that we are able to give our members an alternative solution when it comes to these things as we all know that medication and visits to the doctor can get costly.



Additionally, we are excited to announce that we have added four more offers to our Co-op Deals since the last newsletter. Sprinkle CPA, Progressive Hair, Sign-A-Rama and Chicago’s Pizza have signed on to be a part of the Co-op Card program. Please log on to ninestarconnect.com or directly to connections.coop to view the discounts from

these great local businesses. Remember, if you or your business is interested in promoting an offer on connections.coop for NineStar members, please contact Christa Riggs at criggs@ninstarconnect.com or 317-323-2132. It is 100 percent free advertising, and, as a member, you receive the discounts you deserve.

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
  - 1/4 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
  - 1/2 medium-sized onion, white or yellow, chopped
  - 1/2 cup vegetable or chicken stock/water
  - 1 clove garlic, minced
  - 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
  - Sage, dried 1/8 teaspoon or fresh chopped 1/4 teaspoon
  - 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
  - 1/4 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 1/4 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

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, 1/4 cup parmesan, 1 cup of the mozzarella, 1/4 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
  - 1/2 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
  - 1/4 teaspoon cloves
  - 1/4 teaspoon allspice
  - 1/4 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 3/4 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 hollowed-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.



NEWS

RIGHT-OF-WAY CARE IS THE RIGHT WAY

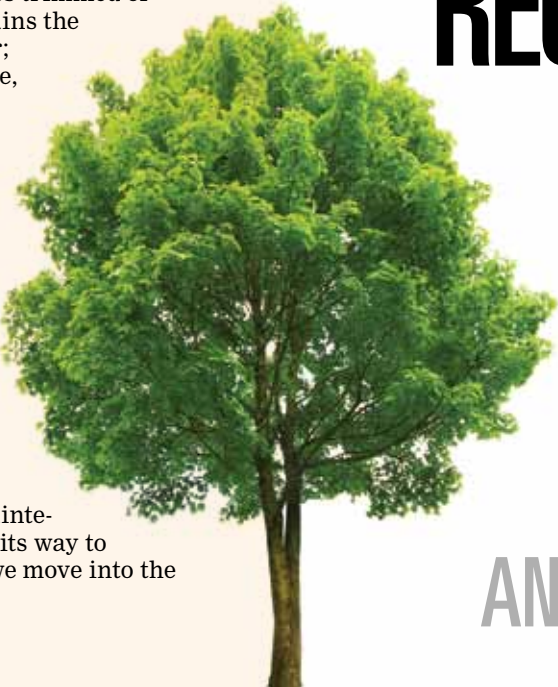
Although NineStar Connect has no control over severe weather that can cause power outages, the cooperative can reduce the frequency and duration of outages through a vigilant right-of-way maintenance program.

Tree trimming and other parts of right-of-way maintenance are essential to ensuring reliable electric service. A major portion of all electric blinks occur when a limb comes into contact with power lines or equipment, causing a momentary short circuit. Besides trees naturally growing into the electric lines, wind, ice and tree decline can also cause a limb to come into contact with the lines. If the limb is not cleared from the line properly, a complete loss of power can result.

NineStar Connect has an extensive right-of-way maintenance program that utilizes several methods of tree and brush control; two of these methods include trimming trees to arborist standards (ANSI A300) and mechanically clearing brush with an industrial mowing machine. NineStar Connect is committed to a right-of-way maintenance program that looks to the future by employing contractors and practices that offer long-term clearance solutions. For example, by trimming all trees to current arborist standards, NineStar Connect can ensure these trees are left in a healthier condition. Trees trimmed to arborist standards do not grow back into the power lines as fast or as extensively; limb failure from decay is also reduced dramatically.

Wood resulting from trees trimmed or completely cut down remains the property of the landowner; however, from time to time, some landowners request the wood to be taken. If you would like your name added to a referral list please contact NineStar Connect.

NineStar Connect has set forth several goals within the right-of-way maintenance program: providing safe, reliable electric service and reducing current and future maintenance costs. NineStar Connect's right-of-way maintenance program is well on its way to achieving these goals as we move into the 2013-14 maintenance year.



RECYCLE THAT APPLIANCE

DITCH  
THAT  
OLD  
FRIDGE  
AND SAVE!

Chicken was on sale at the grocery. So you stocked up. The grandkids come over a lot and you know how much they love mint chocolate chip ice cream. So you stocked up. Your husband and son both hunt and fish so you filled the freezer with meat. Very quickly you realized how full your freezer was.

Then, your neighbor had a garage sale and was selling an old refrigerator/freezer that still ran well. So you bought it, stuck it in the garage and that freed up some space in the refrigerator/freezer in the house. Then the

craziest thing happened – your electric bill went up. Was it that last hot month? Did we run the air conditioner more? No, probably not. Chances are that refrigerator/freezer you got for such a good deal is the likely energy culprit.

Many electric co-op members, just like you, have an additional refrigerator or freezer in the basement, garage or porch. You might be just fine paying the energy costs to run it, but did you know that old model may be costing you FIVE times more electricity than a newer model?



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

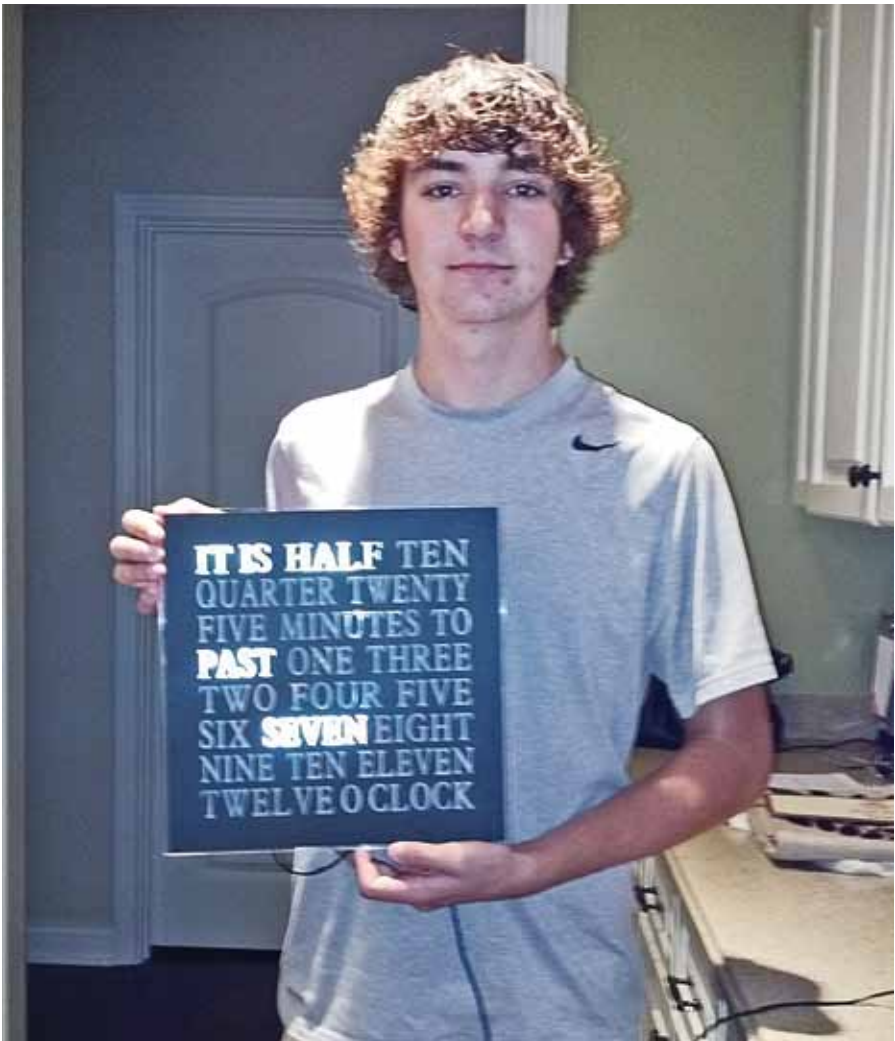
Thankfully, NineStar Connect has a way to help! Call 1-877-395-5535 or go to [ninestarconnect.com](http://ninestarconnect.com) and locate the PowerMoves tab to schedule an appointment to have your extra refrigerator or freezer recycled. Once you have made an appointment, a representative from JACO Environmental, or partner in this program, will arrive at your home and haul the unit away to be recycled.

Yes, that's right they will go down into your basement and carry it upstairs and out of the house — for FREE. Actually, we'll pay YOU to do it. Four to six weeks after your appointment, you will receive a check for \$35.

So, where does the refrigerator or freezer go after it leaves your house? Depending on where you live in the state, it will go to a recycling plant in Indianapolis or Chicago. There, workers will deconstruct the unit and safely dispose of any toxins or ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbon gases, called CFC-11, found in the foam insulation.

JACO ensures that more than 95 percent of the components and materials of the refrigerator or freezer is either recycled for beneficial uses or eliminated in an environmentally responsible way. The remaining 5 percent can then be productively used as "fluff" to facilitate the decomposition of biodegradable landfill material.

You may enjoy having an additional refrigerator or freezer space, and you may not mind paying the electric costs associated with having that luxury. But if you're like the 7,800 electric co-op members who have already participated in this program and you're ready to part ways with an old, energy hog refrigerator or freezer, call 1-877-395-5535 or sign up at [ninestarconnect.com](http://ninestarconnect.com).



STATE FAIR PROJECT WINNER

NineStar Connect would like to congratulate Adam Shanahan for earning top honors for his electric project at this year's Indiana State Fair. Adam's project was judged among 423 entrants in the Electric Project divisions. Not only did Adam receive Grand Champion Electric Project but he also received the prestigious Executive Director's Award for his "Word Clock" project.

Adam is a sophomore at Mt. Vernon High School and a member of Cool Clovers 4-H Club in his seventh year as a 4-H member. Adam found out about his achievement when he was invited to attend the State Fair opening ceremonies and listen to Gov. Mike Pence speak.

Adam got the idea for his word clock 3-4 years ago when he noticed a similar clock on the Internet. This past November, as he was planning his advanced division electric project for the 2013 Hancock County Fair, he came across a set of plans for a word clock. Adam spent nearly 50 hours creating

his work of electric art. The project required an intricate maze of electric wires and solder connections to create this unique project. Unlike a typical clock with numbers or hands, the word clock illuminates words to tell time. When the time is 1:30, the words will light up to say "It Is Half Past One." Adam said there were many times he found ways to overcome complicated aspects of his project. The word clock typically has laser etched numbers on the face. Adam said since he did not have a laser cutter at his disposal, he cut the letters for his clock face using his mom's scrapbooking tool. "I learned many of the things I expected to work out easily were often some of the most difficult parts of the project, and some of the things I thought would be difficult worked out easily," Adam said.

Adam's project will most certainly become a treasured timepiece for his family to enjoy for many years.



HOSTED PHONE SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESSES

NineStar Connect's Hosted Phone solution has been a popular service for many of our small- to medium-sized businesses. A hosted phone solution is simple: the only pieces of equipment that reside at the customer location are the phone hand-sets and a power source. The phone "system" itself is located, managed and monitored at NineStar. This allows customers to have a sophisticated telephone system without the investment in the telephone equipment! The benefits to businesses include the following:

Cost Savings: no up front investment, reduced monthly telephone line charges, no software upgrades, no IT hours to manage the system, and no expensive hardware upgrades.

Enhanced Features: have all the latest features available without all the added cost.

Scalability: expand and grow your business as you need to, one phone set at a time.

LOCAL Support: with NineStar Connect, you get all the benefits of our 24/7 support center, but if you need any on-site help, we have LOCAL Indiana support!

Disaster Planning: if anything should happen to your physical business location, we can have you back up and running quickly with new phone sets. All the intelligence of your system is safe and secure off-site!

If you would like to learn more about the NineStar Connect Hosted Phone solution for your business, please call the office at 317-326-3131 and ask to speak to a business sales representative.





# OPERATION ROUND-UP TAKES PENNIES, GIVES DOLLARS

The quarterly meeting of NineStar Connect's Operation Round-Up took place Aug. 1, 2013, at the company's headquarters. The committee decided on two applications and awarded \$7,800 to the following organizations.

## Eastern Hancock Youth Football League

The Eastern Hancock Youth Football League was created to teach and familiarize young individuals with the fundamentals of football. It was also created to provide young athletes with the opportunity to play a supervised, organized and safety-oriented sport. The money that was given to the league will be used to

purchase new helmets and equipment for those participating.

## Green Township Volunteer Fire Department

This department consists of volunteers who perform fire suppression and other related emergency services in their area. The money they received will be going to rescue struts and plastic cribbing to assist them in their rescue efforts.

Operation Round-Up Program (ORU) and the Central Indiana Power Community Trust were 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 and communications service area. The funds come from NineStar Connect electric/communication customers who agree to donate the amount needed to round up their bills 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.

If you would like to be considered for an ORU grant, you can download an application from [www.ninestarconnect.com](http://www.ninestarconnect.com). Applications are due Oct. 18, 2013, to be considered at the Nov. 7, 2013, meeting.



# NINESTAR TO HOST UPCOMING BLOOD DRIVE

Once again NineStar Connect is proud to partner with the Indiana Blood Center to host a fall blood drive for its employees and customers. The event will take place on October 23rd at both NineStar's campuses.

For the south campus the event will run from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. The event at the north campus will run from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Anyone interested in donating can preregister at [www.donorpoint.org](http://www.donorpoint.org) or stop by between the listed times.

At the last event over 26 units were donated which will help 73 fellow Hoosiers in need. Please donate and save a life!

# 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](http://ninestarconnect.com) Facebook page for last edition's solution.

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