

MARCH - APRIL 2012



NineStar_{CONNECTION}

VOLUME 1
ISSUE 2

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Don Burnham retires from
NineStar Connect Board,
colleagues say his impact will be
felt long after he retires.

INSIDE, PAGE 8

REFLECTING ON MV'S JOURNEY TO STATE

NineStar sends
congrats to
ladies after
season to
remember.

PAGE 11



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COMING UP APRIL 13, 2012

MEET & GREET

NINESTAR HOSTS ANNUAL MEETING **PAGE 4**



OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE, KATHY

I WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT AND THANK YOU FOR THE EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE YOU PROVIDED ME LAST WEEK WHEN I WAS UNABLE TO GET INTO MY HOME DUE TO THE TRANSITION PERIOD AT CLOSING. YOU WERE GREAT! THANKS FROM A NEW LOYAL CUSTOMER. MATT R.

HAVE A STORY IDEA?

Contact **David Spencer** at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com or **Rachel Anderson** at randerson@ninestarconnect.com

GET TO KNOW YOUR BOARD PAGE 2-3
NineStar President Tim Hills explains why this year is special for your cooperative, and you can get familiar with your board members.

MEET AND GREET PAGE 4-5
Find out about NineStar's April 13 annual meeting, including parking, special speakers and director candidates.

NEW SERVICES PAGE 6-7
NineStar is offering two new services, Power Guard / Spike Stop and a worry-free hot water option.

SPECIAL FEATURES PAGE 8-9
Read Don Burnham's reflection on his career at NineStar, and then check out a great recipe to add to everyone's Easter celebrations.

SPOTLIGHT
NineStar is proud of its contributions to the community beyond its core business. Check out some of the great things the cooperative with the **George and Icy Vaughn Performing Arts Scholarship Competition** helping make happen in the arts and at schools.
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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.

Volume 1 ■ Edition 2

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2012 — A GOOD YEAR FOR NINESTAR, CO-OPS

It is hard to believe that March is almost behind us and, as a result, a quarter of the year is almost history. April is just around the corner and many will be busy as winter yields to warmer weather and we can venture outside. Before 2012 gets too far away from us, I wanted to take a moment and talk about why 2012 is special for all cooperatives. In July 2011, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a resolution designating 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives. This resolution followed similar action sponsored by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Both organizations recognize the vital role cooperatives play in the economic fabric of the United States. This entire year celebrates a unique business model that puts our member/owners first while providing local services that are part of a worldwide economy. It is staggering to think that more than 800 million people around the world belong to a cooperative, and at least 100 million of them are employed by co-ops. Closer to home, NineStar Connect is proud of our employees and the service they provide to all of our member/owners. I hope that you are equally proud our efforts in providing you advanced telecommunications, broadband, digital TV and power. In closing, I look forward to seeing everyone at our annual meeting and celebration on April 13. Please join us to learn more about NineStar Connect and help us celebrate your cooperative in this special year of all cooperatives.

PRESIDENT & CEO

TIM HILLS

MEET YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 1

DARRELL H. THOMAS (A)

THOMAS KIRBY (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 2

DOYLE S. BAKER (A)

DAVID G. HELLER (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 3

STEPHEN VAIL (A)

JOSEPH PAXTON (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 5

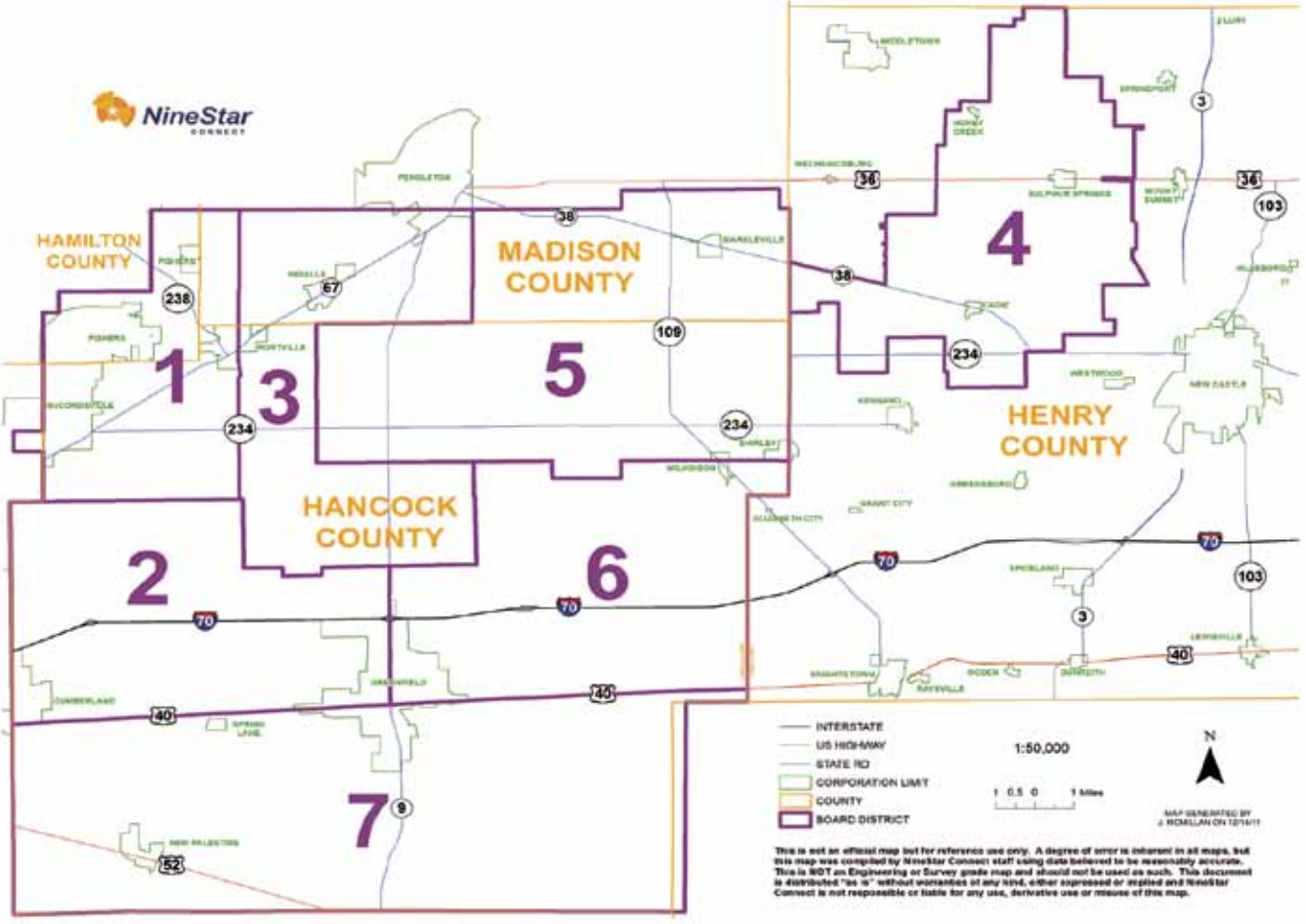
RICHARD C. PARKER (A)

MARK EVANS (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 7

JAMES E. CHERRY (A)

JAMES GILLETT (B)



DIRECTOR DISTRICT 4

DON SHAW (A)

KIM CRONK (B)

DIRECTOR DISTRICT 6

RONNIE MOHR (A)

PHILIP M. HAYES (B)

DISTRICT AT-LARGE

ROBERT GLAZIER

DONALD BURNHAM

RETIRING APRIL 2012

CONNECTION
NINESTAR HOSTS ANNUAL MEETING

Join us at the 2012 Annual Meeting of NineStar Connect April 13, 2012, at Greenfield-Central High School located at 801 N. Broadway in Greenfield. Both dinner and registration begin at 5 p.m. for NineStar Connect and NineStar Communications customers.

- Join us for a free dinner, music and prizes!
- \$17,000 in scholarships will be drawn
- \$5,000 in cash prizes will be drawn
- (Must be present to win)
- Child care available

Call 317-326 MEET (6338) or e-mail: annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com to RSVP by 4 p.m. April 6.





NINESTAR HOSTS ANNUAL MEETING

On April 13, 2012, at Greenfield-Central High School, NineStar Connect will be celebrating its 59th annual meeting and celebration. We hope you can join us that night and partake in the festivities. Once again, a delicious meal will be served and entertainment will be provided by the Greenfield-Central High School Jazz Band & Choir. Doors will open at 5 p.m. with the official meeting starting at 7 p.m.

New this year, NineStar Connect has added two educational workshops on smart meters and electric rates. These workshops will run several times congruently before the official meeting starts. More information on these workshops, times and speakers can be found in this newsletter.

In addition, NineStar Connect will be unveiling two new products at the annual meeting. The Power Guard/Spike Stop surge protection package and the Water Heating Leasing Program will offer members money and time savings while also providing peace of mind.

Finally, the meeting will include the business meeting along with director elections. Profiles and candidate statements are included in this newsletter. If you haven't already done so, please RSVP today at 326-MEET (6338) or via e-mail at annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com today.

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

District: 7
James E. Cherry
Background: Jim Cherry has been a cooperative member since 1963. Cherry attended Hancock Central High School and is a self-employed farmer. He has served on various coop boards since 1974, from county boards to national boards, such as Hancock County Co-op Board, Country-Mark Co-Op Board and Hancock County redevelopment board. Cherry has also been involved with Greenfield Optimist, Kiwanis and Charlottesville Lions Club. Cherry is married to Susan Collins, and they have two married sons and five grand-



JAMES E. CHERRY

District: 7
Dennis M. DeCapua
Background: Dennis DeCapua has been a cooperative member since 1994. DeCapua attended Purdue University and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering; he went on to receive his Master's of Science from Washington University. DeCapua has held the positions of Engineering Director at Stant Manufacturing, Inc., and Senior Engineer at McDonnell Douglas. DeCapua currently holds the position as Technical Project Leader at Cummins Inc., for Heavy Duty Natural Gas Engines; High Horsepower Aftertreatment Systems. He is council chairman at St. Michael's Parish and serves as CYO track coach and CRHP Formation Team for St. Michael's.



DENNIS M. DECAPUA

Candidate Statement: I would like to join the board to help ensure that NineStar remains a profitable business while continuing to deliver high quality and low cost supply of services to its members. I would also like to help NineStar to expand its services to other nearby areas in an effort to grow its member base (for example, voice and broadband are not offered in my neighborhood). Additionally, I am interested in utilizing my skills to help NineStar achieve its business goals and at the same time have the opportunity to develop additional/new skills of my own. Finally, now that my kids are getting older and more self-sufficient, I have some free time that I would like to use in the local community. I have lived in Greenfield for 18 years, but have always worked far away, and hence have not had much opportunity to get involved locally.

District: 1A
Darrell H. Thomas
Background: Darrell Thomas has been a cooperative member since 1963. Thomas attended McCordsville High School (1959) and received a bachelor's degree in 1963 from Ball State. Thomas went on to receive his master's degree in 1966 from Ball State. Thomas has worked for 36 years with the Mt. Vernon Schools as teacher,



DARRELL H. THOMAS

coach, vice-principal and principal. Thomas has also spent four years as the executive director of Hancock County Economic Development. Thomas recently completed a nine-year term as a member of the Hancock Community Foundation; he is a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and a member of the Indiana Retired Teachers/Principals Association. Thomas has served as chairman of the board of Hancock Telecom for 10 years; vice-chairman of TECO (a national PAC for the telecom industry); a committee member on various committees for the National Telecommunication Association; a member of standing committees for our local cooperative; and a member of the Central Indiana Power membership committee for a number of years. Thomas is married to Nancy and they have three children together, Darren, Shannon and Erin.

Candidate Statement: In 1865, my ancestors settled on a 120-acre farm southeast of McCordsville.

Presently, we live on that land where a portion of the original farmhouse (a log cabin) has been restored. Sometime after the turn of the century, the cabin portion housed the McCordsville Telephone Company Exchange. Yes, that was the same exchange which eventually became part of our present day telecom/power cooperative, NineStar Connect. As you can see because of this historical/family connection, I am very passionate about the future of NineStar Connect and the area it serves. I would like to continue nurturing this passion as a board member by using my expertise from the past coupled with my knowledge of the industry to see this new cooperative is recognized by its peers and members as one of "best in business." The future of this company is bright, however, it will depend on the leadership of those selected to govern. I would welcome the opportunity to continue representing the members of NineStar Connect.

District: 3
Stephen C. Vail
Background: Stephen Vail has been a cooperative member since 1983. Vail has a Bachelor of Science from Purdue University with a focus in Financial and Operations Management, as well as a Master's of Arts from Ball State in Organizational Development. Vail has been a Team Leader of Process Improvement with Hancock Regional



STEPHEN C. VAIL

Hospital for 19 years. Vail has been chairman of the Character Council of Hancock County, an active member of the Rotary Club of Greenfield, an active member of Mohawk United Methodist Church and presently serves as a committee member of the Hancock County Redevelopment Commission. Vail is a Credentialed Cooperative Director through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Vail is married to Shelley and has a son, Kyle, daughter, Alyse, and son, Keegan.

Candidate Statement: Through the recent merger of Hancock Telecom and Central Indiana Power, our cooperative has positioned itself to capitalize on the future intersections of both the telecommunications and electric industries. We have the capabilities in the near future to greatly enhance the

services and ultimately the quality of life that our member owners experience through being a part of this great new company. In delivering on this future, it is incumbent upon us as an organization to do this with great attention to the quality, timeliness and cost of the services provided. I am confident that my background and experience in business management and process improvement can help to strategically serve our cooperative in achieving those objectives.

District 4
Donald L. Shaw
Background: Donald Shaw has been a cooperative member since 1965. Shaw attended Sulphur Springs School and has lived and worked in Jefferson Township all of his life. Don and his wife, Judy, have been married for 51 years. They have three children, two grandchildren and one great grandchild. Don has been self-employed as an electrician and heating and cooling contractor for 45 years. Shaw has been on the Jefferson Township Volunteer Fire Department for 45 years as chief. Shaw has extensive Homeland Security training at the National Fire Academy in Emmittsburg, Md. He is a member of the Sulphur Springs No. 348 Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, and the Murat Shrine. Don is



DONALD L. SHAW

Central Indiana Communications Chairman of the Board. He is on the National Marketing Committee, and the Marketing Committee at NineStar Connect. Shaw was a Henry County commissioner for eight years. He takes pride in serving the public, and is involved in many community projects.

Candidate Statement: My tenure on the Board of Directors has been a very positive and enjoyable experience. I have been involved in and witnessed all of the changes and challenges that have taken place with the company. The merger this last year has been an exciting and knowledgeable adventure. NineStar has an outstanding company image on the national scene. I would hope that my experience and dedication to NineStar would continue to be an asset.

District: 5A
Richard C. Parker
Background: Richard Parker has been a cooperative member since 1955. Parker graduated from the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin. Parker has been the senior vice-president of National City Bank. Parker is a member of the Eden United Methodist Church; Greenfield Chamber board for seven years; Downtown (Greenfield) Merchants Board for nine years; and a 4-H Leader for 13 years. Parker has a grain and livestock farm where he has raised registered Hampshire Sheep. He is presently vice-chairman of Telecom Insurance Group. He served in the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1955 and was the treasurer of the Boys & Girls Club for 12 years, treasurer of the County 4-H Fair board for 12 years. Parker is married to Ann and has three sons and four grandchildren.

Candidate Statement: Past experience as board member of



RICHARD C. PARKER

NineStar Connect and previous board member/officer of Hancock Telecom has given me great insight into both the communications and electric industries. NineStar is very innovative and is a leader nationally. The challenges we face are never-ending in large part due to our proximity to Indianapolis. NineStar continues to make great strides in providing excellent service to our communications and electric subscribers. I want to make sure this practice continues.

SPEAKERS TO SEE AND HEAR

New this year are two pre-meeting seminars featuring NineStar Connect staff and guest speakers who will present information of interest to all NineStar Connect members. The two seminars, "Smart Meters 101" and "Rates: Where We Are Headed & What We Can Do" will provide additional information on two timely and important topics. The Smart Meter seminar will be presented by NineStar Connect staff members Bryan Smith (see profile) and Jamie Bell along with Tantalus Systems' Marketing Programs Manager, Matt Haile and Account Executive, Barb Gautier (see profiles). The Rates Seminar will feature Prime Group Principal, Marty Blake (see profile) who will provide insight on how electric rates are developed and what cooperative members need to know about things like rising fuel costs, environmental regulations and renewables as they relate to the impact on their electric bills. Both 30-minute seminars will run concurrently at 5:15 p.m., 5:45 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. Plan now to attend both of these informative and educational seminars.

MARTY BLAKE, THE PRIME GROUP LLC PRINCIPAL

Marty is a Principal of The Prime Group, LLC that provides marketing, strategic planning, training, cost of service, rate and regulatory support services for investor-owned, cooperative and municipal utilities that provide electric, gas or water service to their customers. The Prime Group has done cost of service, individual customer profitability, financial planning, strategic planning and rate work for G&T and distribution cooperatives throughout the country, and Marty has made presentations to numerous cooperative Boards on these subjects.

MATT HAILE, MARKETING PROGRAMS MANAGER

Matt Haile joined Tantalus in October 2010 as Marketing Programs Manager. In this role, he is charged with working with Sales and Marketing to increase revenues and new customer adoption rate as well as carve out specific areas where Tantalus is differentiated in the marketplace. Matt is a key driver of sales lead generation and qualification for fiber, demand management, irrigation management and other strategic marketing programs. In addition, Matt engages external parties and strategic partners to complement the Tantalus portfolio that will result in solutions that solve our customers' business challenges.

BARBARA GAUTIER, ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Barb joined Tantalus in September 2004 as the Inside Sales Coordinator. The Tantalus Utility Network (TUNet) had just become commercially available, and Barb was the third person hired on the commercial side of the business. She was responsible for supporting the sales team along with the VP of Sales. She worked on generating new leads, event coordination, established internal business processes, developed customer service operations and continuously improved customer satisfaction. After five years as the Inside Sales Coordinator, Barb asked for the opportunity to become the Account Executive for Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia. In this current role, she is responsible for taking care of her existing customers as well as generating new business in her territory.

BRYAN SMITH, NINESTAR OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

Bryan Smith has been with NineStar Connect since 2006 and is currently in operations. He currently oversee the installation of all smart meters that are presently being deployed. This also includes maintaining and programming meters in the network. Last year he oversaw the deployment of 5,400 smart meters and hopes to install another 7,000 over the next two years.

ANNUAL MEETING PARKING

Since last year's annual meeting at Greenfield-Central High School, the school has finished its redesign of the parking lot. To ensure parking for our members goes as smoothly as possible, we would appreciate everyone using any of the following three entrances off of Broadway Street. Cougar West Park, Cougar Main Entrance or Cougar Trail NineStar Connect employees will be stationed at each of these three entrances to help direct traffic flow. As in years past, NineStar will be offering golf carts to shuttle members who need special assistance to the front door of the school. In case the school parking lot becomes full, overflow parking can be found at the First Church of God located at 700 N. Broadway St.

N E W S

NINESTAR INVESTS IN LINCOLN TECH MULTIMEDIA

NineStar Connect is making a large investment in its training and education program for the multimedia/installation and maintenance services department. To better prepare our installation and maintenance technicians, NineStar Connect is teaming up with Lincoln College of Technology to gain further expertise in all residential and commercial services offered. The program provides essential skills and knowledge for the installation, troubleshooting, repair and maintenance of commercial and residential services, including broadband, video, security, telecommunications and business phone systems.

This training and education program is underway and will involve all multimedia technicians. Each technician will complete a minimum of eight



courses of study totaling 720 instructional hours per employee. The investment per technician for these eight courses of study will be about \$15,000 each. The total program investment for the entire multimedia department will be well over \$150,000 upon completion. The commitment made by NineStar Connect to its employees and customers is creating higher standards of service offerings and better quality communications services, which in turn creates the ultimate customer experience for all lines of business offered by NineStar Connect.

Lincoln has been helping adults transform their lives through professional technical training for more than 65 years. Originally inspired by the desire to assist returning World War II veterans quickly qualify for skilled careers in 1946, Lincoln has gone on to expand its mission and now embraces American adults from all walks of life, offering technical training opportunities throughout the United States within a wide variety of professional programs. Its legacy of experience in helping adults succeed through secondary education means that its also familiar with the special challenges and situations affecting our unique student population.



POWER GUARDIAN

PROTECTION FOR YOUR HOME ELECTRONICS

Electricity is an invaluable tool in today’s society, with the size and scope of electrical services installed in new homes continuing to grow with the growing number of appliances and plug-in electronic devices being used. Each one of these appliances and electronic devices represents a valuable investment and, in most instances, an integral part of the home’s operation, controlling and operating important security and information systems inside and outside the residence.



Why then do most homeowners resist installing effective power protection equipment? There are two primary reasons: cost and misunderstanding. The retail cost of top quality, effective power protection devices is relatively high and, as a result, most people end up purchasing devices that claim to provide protection, but don’t. NineStar Connect does all that it can to deliver quality electric service, but many common things that happen every day can cause a momentary spike in voltage. These voltage spikes can originate from outside your home as well as inside. Some causes include bad weather, vehicle accidents, tree limbs, animals on power lines, the operation of large motors, loose connections and poor grounding in the home. These as well as other issues can result in power surges and spikes that have the potential to damage electrical and electronic equipment in homes and businesses. These transient power surges can occur at any time, and when they do, they can damage any appliance or electronic device connected to the electrical system in your residence. Any system, not just the electrical system, capable of conducting electricity can provide a point of



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

entry for voltage spikes into your home. This includes the electrical system as well as satellite or cable television and landline telephone systems (excluding fiber optics). To provide complete protection for home appliances and electronics, you must lock down each point of entry. Point-of-use surge protection devices that are plugged into the wall will help protect appliances and electronics that are plugged into them, but these devices alone do not provide the level of protection that is needed.

That’s why the NineStar Power Guard program is a two-level protection system featuring a “whole-house” device installed at the meter base plus multiple point-of-use devices installed in the home. Many of the point-of-use devices feature electrical connections as well as connections for coaxial cable, Ethernet and telephone conductors. The Power Guard / Spike Stop protection package is available from NineStar Connect for only \$6.75/month plus sales tax. This package includes a whole-house device and four (4) plug-in devices, some of which provide protection for video and communications system as well as electric. In addition to the Spike Stop package, NineStar Connect also offers a package designed to protect against power spikes plus eliminate those annoying momentary power interruptions that shut down computers and video systems. The Power Guard / Power Up package includes the same protection that is available in the Spike Stop package plus an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) device. The Power Up package is available for only \$7.75/month plus sales tax. Additional plug-in devices may be purchased when you lease either package. Contact NineStar Connect for more information.



NINESTAR CONNECT PROVIDES WORRY-FREE HOT WATER

It always happens at the worst possible time. In the middle of your morning shower or bathing the kids before bedtime, the HOT water suddenly is NOT! It happens without warning! The soothing flow of hot water that we take for granted when we turn on the faucet is replaced by an icy surprise. It’s an unwelcome interruption that also ends up being an expensive hassle by the time all is said and done. Now NineStar Connect has the answer for anyone who wants to have peace of mind when it comes to the hot water in their homes. The Marathon Electric Water Heater, manufactured by Rheem is the best water heater on the market. In fact, it’s so good that it comes with a lifetime tank warranty from Rheem. The Marathon Water Heater is also the most efficient and durable electric water heater on the market. No rust, no corrosion – EVER! The Marathon Water Heater features a seamless, blow-molded polybutene inner tank wrapped in filament-wound fiberglass. These water heaters are the perfect solution for extremely hard well-water conditions (Like we have here!). The inner tank is surrounded by 2.5 inches of Envirofoam® insulation, minimizing stand-by heat loss. This environmentally friendly high-density foam insulation is made without CFC’s and HCFC’s. And since

the tank can’t rust, there’s no need for the “rotten-egg” smell producing anode rods that are standard in steel tank water heaters. Typically, the Marathon Water Heater retails for more than \$1,000 installed, but beginning in April, NineStar Connect will offer the Marathon Water Heater for a low monthly lease. This is an opportunity for everyone to have worry-free hot water for less than \$20 per month. The NineStar Connect Marathon lease program is available to all NineStar Connect members, regardless of who they have for their electric power supplier. The Marathon lease program includes this premium quality electric water heater, installation and all maintenance including, but not limited to, electric heating elements and thermostats. This means that if you have a problem with your supply of hot water caused by a malfunctioning element or thermostat, and you have a Marathon Water Heater leased from NineStar Connect, you need to only make one phone call to NineStar Connect. NineStar will then see to it that your Marathon Water Heater is repaired or replaced within 24 hours. The standard tank size being offered is 50 gallons, but for larger families, 75-gallon tanks are also available. If you’re interested in “Worry-free Hot Water,” contact NineStar Connect today.

NINESTAR MARKETING WINS NATIONAL AWARD

David Spencer and Rachel Anderson recently received a national award for marketing achievement from the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA). The award was presented during NTCA’s Annual Meeting & Expo in San Diego, California in February. The award is the highest honor presented to marketing officials in the rural telecommunications industry. NineStar Connect received the award through the efforts of Spencer and Anderson who worked vigorously during the total rebrand of Hancock Telecom and Central Indiana Power into what is now known as NineStar Connect. The management and board of NineStar gave the two marketing officials a deadline of April 15 for the rebrand to be completed. This date was selected because it was the date of the 2011 Annual Meeting. The task seemed overwhelming at first. Rebranding everything from not just one but two companies into a new single company would take time and tremendous effort. Everything from business cards, forms, billboards, four business offices, company wear, 10 central offices, substations, TV commercials and a website all had to be changed. During the darkest winter days of 2011, both Spencer and Anderson spent 12- to 16-hour days working tirelessly to meet the deadline. The rebrand was completed two weeks ahead of schedule on April 1. Everything was orchestrated and completed in only 47 working days. Because of this feat, NineStar Connect was selected for the National Marketing Achievement award. The NineStar Connect marketing department is no stranger to being honored by NTCA. This marketing achievement award actually joins two others in the corporate trophy case. In 2005, NineStar Connect won for its unique marketing use of Garfield the cat and, in 2006, the award was presented for the company’s groundbreaking 911 for Kids public relations program. In its history, NTCA has never awarded a marketing department of a member phone company with three national awards. These awards for marketing achievement coupled with great customer service and state-of-the-art products and services, are what makes NineStar Connect raise the bar year after year.

RURAL CUSTOMERS

RULE CHANGES THREATEN SERVICE

The “Universal Service Fund,” a program overseen by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and funded through contributions paid by telecom providers across the country, has been essential in making sure rural consumers like you have access to high-quality networks and affordable telecom services. But rule changes just made by the FCC and others still being considered put rural networks and services at risk.

Don’t let the FCC keep our rural community on the slow side of a broadband digital divide. Don’t let the FCC adopt policies that will require rural consumers to pay higher rates for telephone service and slower broadband. Contact your congressional representatives and urge them to support regulatory action that ensures equal and affordable access to broadband for all Americans. Ask your representatives to help make sure that the new rules are implemented in a manner that is fair for all rural consumers and consistent with true universal service. Ask your representatives to tell the FCC to stop pressing for new rules that will only make matters worse. Contact our office to learn more about this issue and how you can help, or visit saverural-broadband.org.

MEETING



INDIANA CHAPTER OF WINUP VISITS NINESTAR CONNECT

The Indiana Chapter of the Women’s International Network of Utility Professionals (WinUP) recently conducted its quarterly meeting at NineStar Connect. After the meeting and lunch, the group toured the south and north campuses of NineStar Connect. WinUP is an organization providing a link for developing and recognizing professionals involved with utility business trends, issues, products and services. Objectives of the group include; opportunities for professional development of members, network and mentoring among members, and recognition and visibility for members and business partners.

RETIREMENT



Don Burnham said there isn’t much to tell about his role as a member of the NineStar Connect board, but his colleagues say his impact will be felt long after he retires from his position. “He will be sorely missed,” Board Executive Committee Member Steve Vail said. “Don has been a tremendous asset to the board for a number of years, and when he speaks the board listens, knowing that his comments will be wise, thoughtful and reflective of the issue at hand.” After retiring from Eli Lily in 1993, Burnham was a board member for Central Indiana Power for 15 years serving as a board chairman for four of those years. During his time with the co-op, Burnham used his computer science background to write a few programs for the company and helped the organization stay on the cutting edge of emerging technologies, such as fiber optics and radio. He said he wanted to see the entity improve and knew that could only happen by staying engaged in the latest and greatest technology. “You learn quickly, especially in the computer science field, that everything that seems new and fresh today, one-half of it will be obsolete in two years, especially if you want to stay active in the field,” he said. He noted that it is always important to go back and re-educate yourself on the current best practices and technological advancements. His own education led him to a

WRITTEN BY
JULIE
YOUNG

number of classes and conventions through the years where he humbly admitted to crossing paths with late Apple founder Steve Jobs and Microsoft’s founder and noted philanthropist Bill Gates. He said they were two incredibly intelligent men who epitomized the kind of focus and dedication one must have in an ever-evolving world. While on the board with Central Indiana Power, Burnham also served as a member of the executive board of the Indiana Statewide Co-op Representatives, a group that was able to help individual power co-ops do things that they couldn’t do for themselves including congressional lobbying, the implementation of best practice training, safety training, director and employee training, organizing and dispatching line crews to assist other co-ops after disasters, and general support of one another. “It was really great to meet all of the other co-op directors and CEOs,” he said. “It was a privilege to be among them.” “His experience at Statewide really has brought a unique perspective that other board members do not have,” Vail said. Jim Cherry, board vice-chairman of NineStar Connect, agrees. “He’s had a different experience with the electric side of the co-op that we really appreciate, not to mention his passion and interest in legislation. His leadership will be missed a lot.” As Central Indiana Power advanced

into fiber and newer technology, which allowed the company to read meters remotely, he knew that consolidating with Hancock Telecom would be a boost for everyone, considering the amount of fiber already in the ground and the emerging capabilities. “There is still a long way to go, but we are now in a position not only to begin reading our customers’ meters remotely, but to provide feedback on their daily usage and give them methods and tips as to how they can save on power and the associated costs,” Burnham said. He said ultimately this gives NineStar’s customer-owners the chance to be the master of their own power. The alliance with the telecom side of the business has played a large part in making this happen. As it all comes together, Burnham said it is a great advance as far as the customers are concerned, and since he is first and foremost a customer, he has always tried to represent them in the way he would want to be represented. “Our customer-owners want to keep costs as economical as possible, and we are a co-op whose main drive is to give customers the best value for the least amount of money,” he said. “We want to give them value for their dollar and that’s the way it should be.” As he looks ahead to life beyond NineStar, Burnham said he expects to spend a lot of time shuffling his four grandchildren to a variety of extracurricular activities. When he is not playing taxi driver (a term he used with great pride and affection), he likes to hunt, fish, play a little golf and enjoy traveling with his wife, Barbara. “We just got back from Australia and New Zealand,” he said. “We had always wanted to visit those countries, so we finally saved up enough to make it happen. We have been to a lot of places including Alaska and other places in the U.S. I loved Alaska as well as Australia, New Zealand and a number of the big parks out west.” Vail said NineStar has been fortunate to have someone with Burnham’s expertise on the board lending his voice to the conversation and helping the company move ahead. “He is a great individual who has helped us get where we are going,” Vail said. “We are happy that he will be able to spend some time with his family, and we know that he is still a part of our community. If we need him, we know he will be there.” As for Burnham, he said he is confident in the direction NineStar is going and said the co-op is in good hands. He is just happy to have had a role in making it happen. “I would like to think I made a difference,” he said.

BRAIDED
EASTER BREAD

INGREDIENTS
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, divided
1/4 cup white sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
2/3 cup milk
2 tablespoons butter
2 eggs
5 whole eggs, dyed if desired
2 tablespoons butter, melted

DIRECTIONS
In a large bowl, combine 1 cup flour, sugar, salt and yeast; stir well. Combine milk and butter in a small saucepan; heat until milk is warm and butter is softened but not melted. Gradually add the milk and butter to the flour mixture; stirring constantly. Add two eggs and 1/2 cup flour; beat well. Add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring well after each addition. When the dough has pulled together, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 8 minutes. Lightly oil a large bowl, place the dough in the bowl and turn to coat with oil. Cover with a damp cloth and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour. Deflate the dough and turn it out onto a lightly floured surface. Divide the dough into two equal size rounds; cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll each round into a long roll about 36 inches long and 1 1/2 inches thick. Using the two long pieces of dough, form a loosely braided ring, leaving spaces for the five colored eggs. Seal the ends of the ring together and use your fingers to slide the eggs between the braids of dough. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Place loaf on a buttered baking sheet and cover loosely with a damp towel. Place loaf in a warm place and let rise until doubled in bulk, about 45 minutes. Brush risen loaf with melted butter. Bake in preheated oven for 50 to 55 minutes, or until golden.

DELUXE
DEVILED EGGS

INGREDIENTS
6 eggs
1/2 stalk celery, finely chopped
1/4 onion, finely chopped
1/4 cup mayonnaise
salt to taste
1 dash hot pepper sauce
paprika, for garnish

DIRECTIONS
Place eggs in a medium saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring water to a boil and immediately remove from heat. Cover and let eggs stand in hot water for 10 to



12 minutes. Remove from hot water, cool and peel. Cut eggs in half. Remove yolks and place in a medium bowl. Mash together with celery, onion, mayonnaise, salt and hot pepper sauce. Stuff the egg white halves with the egg yolk mixture. Sprinkle eggs with paprika. Chill covered in the refrigerator until serving.

CARROT
CUPCAKES

INGREDIENTS
2 ounces white chocolate
1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon orange extract
4 cups confectioners’ sugar

2 tablespoons heavy cream
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 1/8 cups white sugar
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups shredded carrots
1/2 cup crushed pineapple
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1 cup chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease 12 muffin cups. In small saucepan, melt white chocolate over low heat. Stir until smooth, and allow to cool to room

temperature. In a bowl, beat together the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Mix in white chocolate, 1 teaspoon vanilla, and orange extract. Gradually beat in the confectioners’ sugar until the mixture is fluffy. Mix in heavy cream. Beat together the eggs, white sugar, and brown sugar in a bowl, and mix in the oil and vanilla. Fold in carrots and pineapple. In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger. Mix flour mixture into the carrot mixture until evenly moist. Fold in 1/2 cup walnuts. Transfer to the prepared muffin cups. Bake 25 minutes in the preheated oven, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean. Cool completely on wire racks before topping with the icing and sprinkling with remaining walnuts.

DECORATING

NEW TWIST ON
SPRING, EASTER

Eggs are symbolic of Easter. They’re colored, decorated, hidden, and used in decorative items for the home. The one caveat to eggs is that they are quite fragile, and even hard-boiled eggs can be rendered useless with one accidental drop or blow. Instead of relying on breakable eggs for Easter fun, consider making stronger ones instead. Symbolic of rebirth and renewal, eggs are an integral part of setting the scene come early spring. Selecting a less fragile material to create the looks of real eggs can increase the potential for using them in many different applications. One of the easiest ways to create harder-to-break eggs is to make them out of clay. Modeling clay is a versatile medium that can be used to make everything from clay eggs to bunny figurines to religious items synonymous with Easter. A visit to the local craft store or even a chain retailer will likely turn up different clay products, which come in a variety of colors. You can create pastel-colored clay by mixing primary colors with white clay if you cannot find pastel colors in the store. There are two main ways to create egg shapes out of a ball of clay. One way is to roll a ball out of the clay and then roll it vertically between your hands to make the smaller end of the egg. Another is to use a plastic egg as a mold and stuff the clay inside. Pop open the top of the plastic egg and then gently tap the clay out. You don’t even have to color your clay if you don’t feel up to it. You may also use white clay, allow to dry, and then paint them using acrylic paints. Mix two clay colors together before forming into an egg to achieve a marbled effect. Also think about adding embellishments like stickers, ribbon, bows, and flowers to the eggs, much in the same way you would decorate real eggs. To display clay eggs in a vase or to attach to a spring wreath, thread a dowel or piece of florist’s wire into the egg before allowing to harden completely. Then attach them as needed.

EGGS IN A NEST

Here’s a creative way to show off clay eggs. **MATERIALS**
2 to 3 eggs depending on size
Moss or raffia
Ribbon
Florist wire
DIRECTIONS
Weave or shape the raffia or moss into a nest shape large enough to fit the clay eggs. Secure as necessary with the wire. Decorate with bows made out of ribbon. Place the eggs into the nest and display where desired.



MOMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Mt. Vernon High School's Adeline Dible performs a classical ballet routine to "Never Let Me Go" during the George and Icy Vaughn Performing Arts Scholarship Competition. She was one of 15 high school seniors from county schools who performed in the competition Sunday March 18.

PHOTOS BY TOM RUSSO/DAILY REPORTER

SHINNING EXAMPLES ANNUAL PERFORMING ARTS COMPETITION TAKE STAGE

On Sunday, March 18, the George and Icy Vaughn Performing Arts Competition took place at the H.J. Ricks Centre for the Arts in Greenfield. The annual event, put on by the Hancock County Community Foundation, saw 15 of Hancock County's most talented high school seniors in the arts take the stage.

"THIS WAS THE FIRST YEAR WE WERE ABLE TO AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS TO EVERY PARTICIPANT AND WE GAVE BIGGER AMOUNTS FOR THE TOP SCHOLARSHIP."

ALYSE VAIL, PROGRAM OFFICER AT THE HANCOCK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



TOP WINNERS: All the performers received scholarship funds from the Hancock County Community Foundation, but the five winners were Allie Watson, New Palestine; Emily Barga, New Palestine; Kathryn Brock, Greenfield-Central; Sydera Theobald, Mt. Vernon; and Marilla Miller, Eastern Hancock.

Students performed in such areas as dance, vocal and instrumental music. New Palestine High School's Allie Watson took home first place for her clogging routine and, as a result, received a \$7,000 scholarship. Second place was awarded to New Palestine's Emily Barga who received a \$4,000 scholarship for her performance on the alto sax. Third place went to Greenfield-Central High School's Kathryn Brock, who received a \$3,000 scholarship for her vocal performance of "Sad Eyes." For the fifth consecutive year, NineStar Connect was proud to sponsor the event and partner with the Hancock County Community Foundation. In addition, NineStar Connect recorded the show and will rebroadcast it at a later date on their local television channel 160. The Vaughn is just one of several community arts events that NineStar Connect is proud to sponsor. In addition the company assists with the Will Vawter Arts show and the Riley Spring Concert Series.

NINESTAR SALUTES MV ON STATE RUN

NineStar Connect salutes the Mt. Vernon Lady Marauders and their run to the IHSAA State Finals. It was a season filled with excitement, drama, and memories that will last a lifetime. MV won county, conference, sectional, regional and semistate titles this year while setting a new program record for most wins in a season, and the black-and-gold advanced to the state finals for the first time since 1977. Included on the coach roster was Tom Kirby, who is also on the Board of Director's at NineStar Connect. Congratulations coach on a terrific season.

(Below) Jessica Brown scored 17 points in the Saturday, March 3, girls basketball state finals game against Fort Wayne Concordia.

PHOTO BY TOM RUSSO/DAILY REPORTER



EYES ON DUPLICATE MAILINGS

NineStar Connect has been working diligently to eliminate duplicated addresses which results 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.

INAUGURAL
2012

The Riley Spring Concert Series

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

JENNIE DEVOE Saturday, April 7, \$25
HOOSIER BEATLES Saturday, April 28, \$25
INDY JAZZ ORCHESTRA Saturday, May 19, \$20

DOORS OPEN AT 7:00 pm. ALL SHOWS START AT 8:00 pm.
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317-477-SONG to order by phone.
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NINESTAR OFFERS 2012 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR 15

The 2012 Scholarship Program provides 15 \$1,000 scholarships for children of NineStar Connect members. As of March 1, 2012, the student's principal residence must be with said student's parent or legal guardian who is a member in good standing of NineStar Connect.

- The student must be a 2012 graduating high school senior.
- The student must have a seven (7) semester minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent at the time of application.
- Application forms must be submitted to NineStar Connect by 3 p.m. April 6, 2012.

Application forms are available at ninstarconnect.com under Our Community and at all local high school guidance offices. They may also be picked up at either of NineStar Connect's business offices.

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

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

For more information call
(317) 326-3131 or (765) 533-4303



S U D O K U

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

See ninstarconnect.com for last edition's puzzle solution.

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

Level: Intermediate