

JANUARY - MARCH 2024



NineStar[®] CONNECTION

VOLUME 13
ISSUE 1

OPERATION ROUND UP[®]

Each quarter a group of Trustees meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received.

Read more on page 6

OUT & ABOUT!

A showcase of places we've been in the community.

Read more on page 9.

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SEE PAGE 4



NineStar's

ANNUAL MEETING

TO BE
HELD ON
MARCH 22ND



NINESTAR
LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY
PAGE 7

MEET THE
CANDIDATES
PAGE 10-11





Ninestar President addresses how upgrades in their utility systems provide for their members and customers. See more on page 8.



OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR ANDREW COX.

"ANDREW... THANKS FOR YOUR HELP. WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW OUT OF ALL OF THE UTILITY COMPANIES I AM DEALING WITH IN THIS SITUATION, YOUR SERVICE IS A+ AND THEIRS IS IN THE C RANGE. GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP AND THE DETAILS YOU PROVIDED."

CUSTOMER DOUG TRUE



Customer service is at the tips of your fingers. NineStar Connect's tech support call center is open around the clock. 317-326-help
ninestarconnect.com

STORY IDEA?

Contact David Spencer at dspencer@ninestarconnect.com

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Ninestar's Annual Meeting to be held on March 22nd, 2024.

OPERATION ROUND UP PAGE 6

Each quarter a group of Trustees meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received.

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Congratulations to the NineStar board of directors & employees who earned certifications through Indiana Electric Cooperatives (IEC).

OUT & ABOUT! PAGE 9

A showcase of places we've been in the community.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

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The *NineStar Connection* is a publication of NineStar Connect servicing retail and residential customers. Nearly 16,000 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 12 No. 4

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 Connection

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Director District 2
Mark Evans

Director District 3
Robin Ritchie

Director District 4
Scott Pittman

Director District 5
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Director District 6
Joseph Paxton

Director District 7
Jack Negley

Director District 8
Raymond Kerkhof

Director District 9
Phil Hayes

Director District 10
Thomas Ording

AT LARGE

Richard Griffin
Susan Bodkin
Timothy Bryant

NINESTAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1



CHARLES KENNEDY

DISTRICT 2



MARK EVANS

DISTRICT 3



ROBIN RITCHIE

DISTRICT 4



SCOTT PITTMAN

DISTRICT 5



STEPHEN VAIL

DISTRICT 6



JOSEPH PAXTON

DISTRICT 7



JACK NEGLEY

DISTRICT 8



RAYMOND KERKHOF

DISTRICT 9



PHILIP M. HAYES

DISTRICT 10



THOMAS ORDING

AT LARGE



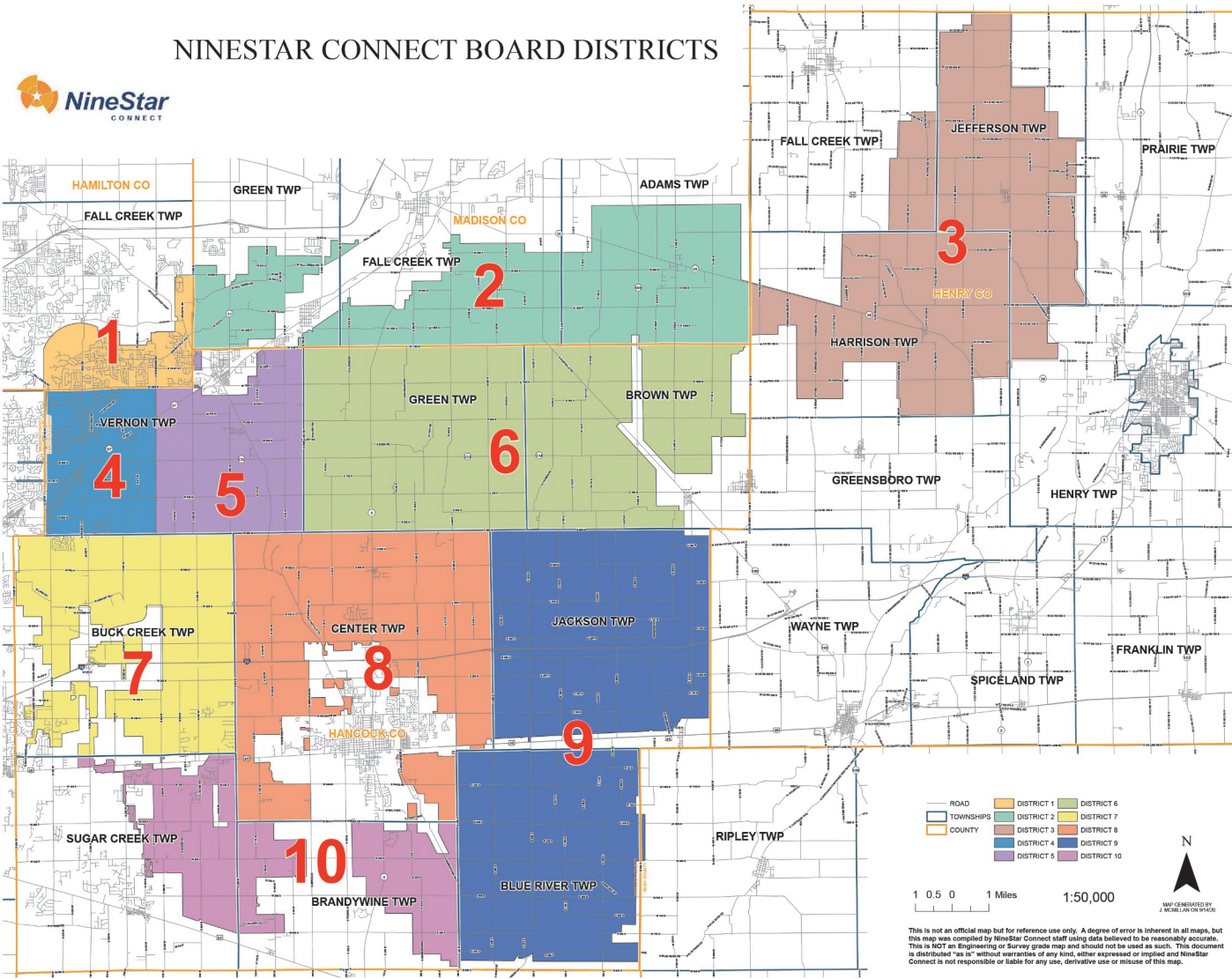
RICHARD GRIFFIN



SUSAN BODKIN



TIMOTHY BRYANT





NineStar Connect has been working to engage its members in new and exciting ways. From virtual town halls to membership appreciation events, the cooperative knows it has a diverse and evolving membership and NineStar is meeting their needs head on. This year's annual meeting is no exception. Once again NineStar Connect will hold its annual meeting in person and online so that members can catch up with the cooperative in a way that is convenient for them.

“We know our members have busy lives, so we want to give them the opportunity to be involved on their own terms,” said David Spencer, director of marketing and community engagement for NineStar Connect. “More importantly, they have demonstrated that they want to be involved and engaged.”

The NineStar Annual Meeting will be held on March 22 at Greenfield-Central High School beginning with check-in and dinner at 5 p.m. The business meeting will follow at 6 p.m. Prior to the meeting, voting for board of directors will take place online via SmartHub from March 1st through 20th. Those wishing to attend the meeting in person can RSVP when voting. There will be no in person voting at the meeting. Members who prefer to view the meeting online, can do so starting on Sunday, March 24th at NineStarNow.com.

Those who choose to attend virtually and turn in their ballot will be eligible for a one-time, \$10 credit on their bill. Those who choose to attend in person can request meal tickets for dinner at the meeting or a \$10 bill credit. All members who vote online will be entered into a drawing for \$5,000 in cash prizes and \$2,500 in giveaways.

(you do not need to be present at the meeting to win). Winners will be contacted following the meeting.

Members can also submit questions they may have for NineStar leadership by emailing annualmeeting@ninestarconnect.com before March 15th. Your question may be answered during the Annual Meeting.

“Our members remain committed and connected to the Cooperative and while the annual meeting is a great time to celebrate all that is going on at NineStar, this kind of hybrid version not only looks out for the entire membership, but also enables us to connect with everyone throughout the year,” Spencer said. “NineStar believes in changing with the times and based on the response we have gotten from members, they appreciate that. We are meeting the new year head on, and we can’t wait for our members to be part of it.”

NINESTAR CONNECT'S ANNUAL MEETING VOTE FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARCH 1ST – 20TH

RECEIVE A \$10 BILL CREDIT OR DINNER AT THE ANNUAL MEETING AND
BE ENTERED FOR \$5,000 IN CASH PRIZES AND \$2,500 IN GIVEAWAYS.

ANNUAL MEETING

IN-PERSON

- ★ FRIDAY, MARCH 22ND
★ GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S FIELDHOUSE
★ DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM, BUSINESS MEETING BEGINS AT 6 PM
★ VOTING/RVSVPs ACCEPTED MARCH 1-20. (VOTING CLOSSES AT 5 PM)
★ PRIZES AVAILABLE TO BOTH IN PERSON AND ONLINE PARTICIPANTS (DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN)

ONLINE

- ★ STARTING ON SUNDAY, MARCH 24TH AT 6PM
★ NINESTARNOW.COM

MARCH WEATHER MADNESS:

PREP YOUR HOME FOR THE SEASON'S VOLATILE WEATHER

This time of year, it's not just basketball madness that people feel. The volatile Indiana weather that can feel like the year's four seasons in a day!

This spring, your home's temperature may feel like it's soaring and sinking with the weather. To avoid scary energy bills caused by your heating and cooling system working harder than needed, three words – seal, insulate, and equip – can ensure that you're prepared for weather volatility.

Seal air leaks to prevent drafts. If your home feels chilly, then creepy crawlies may not be the only things hiding in your attic or crawlspace! Air leaks may be causing conditioned air to escape. You should search for and seal any air leaks. The most important leaks to seal are in your attic and down low in your basement or crawlspace. Framing and places where plumbing or electrical wiring or ducts poke through the ceiling also need to be checked. Sealing air leaks keeps your warm air inside during the winter, and cool air indoors in the summer.

Properly insulate your house to maximize comfort. This step should be taken after sealing air leaks. Air leaking through the insulation decreases its benefits. If part of your HVAC's ductwork is located in the attic, it is especially important to seal that ductwork and bury it in insulation. By adding insulation properly, your HVAC system will have to work less to maintain the temperature in your house, saving you electricity and money.

Make sure you have the proper systems to heat and cool your home. After you have sealed air leaks and properly insulated your home, you can check into new equipment. Now that some of your home's issues are resolved, you may need smaller equipment to properly heat and cool your home. A smaller, right-sized and more energy-efficient system will increase electricity savings, helping your wallet well into the future.

The best way to diagnose issues in your home is to schedule an energy audit. You can contact NineStar energy advisor, Matt Strahl for details. Matt can provide the audit, which includes recommendations on steps you can take to improve your home's energy efficiency. You can get an idea of what options – and Power Moves® rebates – are available to keep you comfortable all year long!

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION



IN APPRECIATION OF OUR LOYAL CUSTOMERS, NINESTAR WILL HOLD A RANDOM DRAWING OF 25 CUSTOMERS EACH MONTH TO WIN A \$150 BILL CREDIT!*

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL \$150 WINNERS!

*Offer valid for internet customers only. Must be current on your bill. One winner per household per year. Credit will be applied to your communications bill. Winners will be notified via email.

NOVEMBER WINNERS

Beau T Hart	Janet York	David Marus	Larry R Fowler
Kristin Allen	Frederick J Hutton	Jeffrey Webster	Marvin Kuhn
Lindsey Bennett	Kristi M Bruch	William Yozipovich III	Robert Rayne
Sierra Roberts	Nicole E Courtney	Ashlea Nelson	Patricia S Cooper
Robert Hamilton	Grant Tennant	Kevin Broddeus	Daniel Harlow
D L Jones	Thomas Roney	Richard E Lamb	Jennifer Williams

DECEMBER WINNERS

Brian C Woods	Christoper Wilkinson	Sara J Oldham	Brian Mays	Shawn C Hawley	Faizan Shaikh	Zachary Beasley
Marvin W Arthur	Amy M Majors	Holli Lentz-Boyer	Jason D Melton	Katherine Alexander	Corey Myers	Franci Smock
Ronald Henry	Pat M Murray	Charles Millis	Jeffrey Owen	Randy G Vondersaar	Teresa Gunst	
	Erica L Neubauer	Richard Mcdonald	Scott M Thomas	Devlin Atchison	Perry Bennett	

JANUARY WINNERS

Zachary R Garner	Suzi Ruggles	Rusty D Fields	Joseph Schauff	Connie S Peacock	Dan Keeler
Bruce Sutton	Derek Sessoms	Dennis R Wallsmith	Michele L Mohr	Michael T Van Koevering	Sherry Southerland
Kimberly Quispe	Herlen Lowe Jr	Jose A Vazquez Jr	Douglas Davenport	John J McCallister	Joseph D Gallagher
Matthew Lewis	J Neil Lowder	Lloyd Lynch	John Lomas	Shawn M Hyde	
		Tanya Craig	Thomas R Kemerly		

FEBRUARY WINNERS

Bonner Wilkinson	Ayman Omar	Kevin Mccarty	Thomas Mcclelland	Cristina Kreigh	Cody Hann	Nicole Greer
Jacob J Chapman	James Seaton	Dianna Sparks	Tonia Lotz	Brenda L Fernandes	Tamara Sturgill	Raymond A Strickland
Rick J Hart	Stephen D Howard	Benjamin Quenichet	Janice K Phillips	Melinda K Wolfe	Kevin Wagner	
	David Baker	Randall Sorrell	David J Dunn	Joy S Sterrett	Eric Stovall	

PAPERLESS BILLING WINNERS

Each month we pick a new winner for just choosing to get your billing statement electronically. If you are drawn as a lucky winner, you will receive a \$50 Amazon Gift Card.

Congratulations to our latest monthly winners:

NOVEMBER WINNERS	DECEMBER WINNER	JANUARY WINNER
DONALD & BARBARA	MARILYN	JOSHUA ALLANSON
COLE	JOHNSON	FISHERS, IN

Paperless Billing is the easiest, cheapest way of paying your bill each month. Please feel free to give one of our Residential Service Consultants a call at 317-326-3131 to help you set up if needed. It will be a call you are glad you made!



Enroll in paperless billing for a chance to win big!





NineStar Connect OPERATION ROUND UP®



Each quarter a group of Trustees (NineStar customers who volunteer their time to serve on the ORU committee) meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received. Here are the organizations that benefited from the Operation Round Up fund the last quarter of 2023:

BLUE ANGEL CONNECT - \$7,000.00

Support of their Holiday Hope Program to help families with a Christmas meal and gifts.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT, JOSEPH HICKS - \$1,000.00

Project to replace/improve concrete at Bethel Baptist Church walkway.

GLEN COVE HERITAGE FOUNDATION - \$2,458.00

Funds for Legacy Mark Software to record burial locations.

GYBA BOOSTER CLUB - \$3,000.00

Funds for a paved walking path for the disabled and a park entry sign.

HANCOCK4KIDS, INC. - \$4,000.00

Funds to purchase clothes for annual "Shop with a Child" event.

HANCOCK COUNTY FRIENDS OF CASA, INC - \$5,195.00

Funds to purchase a 6 month billboard rental to promote more CASA volunteers.

MIDDLETOWN, FALL CREEK PARKS DEPT., HONEY CREEK TRAIL - \$4,000.00

Funds to provide safety rails near bridges and drop off areas.

NEW PALESTINE INTERMEDIATE ROBOTICS TEAM - \$1,500.00

Funds for hardware, registration fees and team T-shirts.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM, INC - \$10,000.00

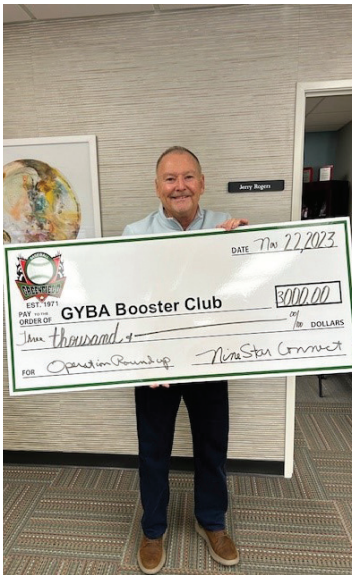
To help provide a safe haven for domestic violence victims via legal assistance, life skills.

The purpose of the Operation Round Up program is to accumulate and distribute funds for charitable purposes to groups/organizations within the NineStar service territory. The source of these funds is the membership of NineStar Connect service customers who voluntarily "round up" their bill to the next highest dollar. The money is accumulated by the co-op and transferred to the NineStar Community Trust.

For ones that want to send in an application for Operation Round-up dollars, the next application deadline is April 5, 2024. Applications can be downloaded from our website at www.ninestarconnect.com under "About" and then "In the Community".

If you have any questions about the ORU program, please email OperationRoundUp@NineStarConnect.com or call 317-323-3087.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE 2023 FOURTH QUARTER ORU RECIPIENTS!



CURIOUS ABOUT HOW A SMALL UTILITY COOPERATES?
INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A NINESTAR DIRECTOR ONE DAY?
ARE YOU A NINESTAR MEMBER WHO JUST WANTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUR COOPERATIVE?

CONSIDER ENROLLING IN THE NINESTAR LEADERSHIP ACADEMY!

NineStar Connect members are eligible to enroll in 5 courses that include:

1 CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT:

Learn about NineStar’s current strategic plans, how it assists other cooperative utilities and how it acts to assist communities in business development and quality of place through investments in utility infrastructure.

Tuesday, May 7, 2024, 6:00pm
– Michael Burrow

2 ADMINISTRATION & HUMAN RESOURCES:

Learn about NineStar’s customer service, subscriber billing, and marketing/member relations. As well as internal open positions and what we do related to talent acquisition, employee development, and retention of our great employees.

Thursday, June 13, 2024, 6:00pm
– Regina Bever & Sara Pechin

3 TECHNOLOGY:

Learn about NineStar’s current and future technologies, how it is adapting to change to meet member’s needs along with how it operates its support center.

Thursday, July 18, 2024, 6:00pm
– Ross Ferson

4 OPERATIONS & ENGINEERING:

Learn about NineStar’s electric, telecommunications, water and wastewater distribution systems, how they are built and maintained and major maintenance or expansion over the next 36 months.

Thursday, August 15, 2024, 6:00pm
– Tommy Nance & George Plisinski

5 FINANCE:

Learn about NineStar’s current and upcoming capital budgets, along with the taxes that a non-profit utility pays and how capital credits are allocated and retired.

Thursday, September 19, 2024, 6:00pm
– Scott Hiatt



All Leadership Meetings will be held at
NineStar Connect, 2243 East Main St.,
Greenfield, 46140

(There is NO CHARGE for enrolling and attending the NineStar Leadership Academy. Only members of NineStar Connect in good standing may enroll. Enrollment is limited to the first 25 members. Enrollees attending and completing all five courses will receive a certificate and recognition.)

For more information or to enroll in the
NineStar Leadership Academy, contact
George Plisinski at 317.326.3131 during
regular business hours.

You can also enroll online by visiting
NineStarConnect.com/leadership-academy

CERTIFICATIONS EARNED

Recently, two NineStar board of directors and three employees earned certifications through Indiana Electric Cooperatives (IEC).
Congratulations to Charles Kennedy, Scott Pittman, Angie Freeman, Brian Dowden, and Andrew Eller.



President's Message

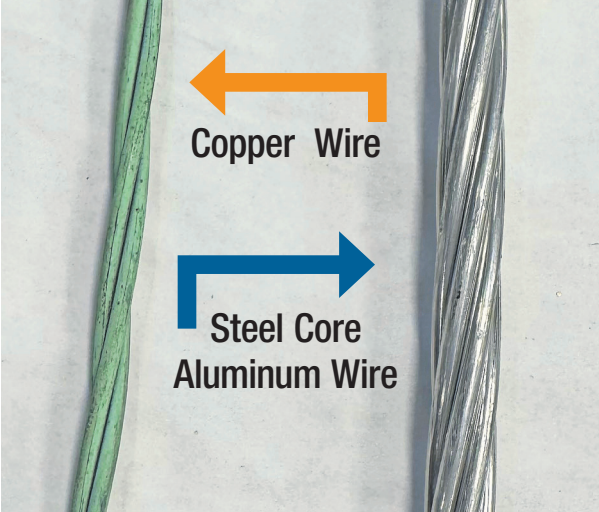
By Michael R. Burrow, President & CEO

I grew up on NineStar's electric lines. Back then, the co-op was known as Hancock County REMC. On the occasions that power was interrupted (seemingly always during a favorite TV program like Gunsmoke or the Carol Burnett Show), my parents would simply shrug, get out an old oil lamp and say it was "just a part of living in the country." Their generation still carried the memory of what it was like to "live in the country" without electricity. An occasional power outage wasn't going to dampen their gratitude for having electricity available in rural Hancock County where we lived.

Fast forward over 50 years from that time and we see that perspectives have indeed changed. To be fair, in what was rural, east central Indiana back then, farms have given way to homes and those homes are much more dependent on electricity. The Greatest Generation who were children during the 1930's rural electrification movement are mostly gone, and subsequent generations (mine included) have come to expect much more from their utility cooperative. It isn't good enough that electricity is simply available, but it must also be highly reliable.

Over the last few years, NineStar Connect has doubled down on its efforts to upgrade and modernize its local electrical distribution system. One of our key efforts is to phase out old 6A copper wire that once was ubiquitous on most rural electrical systems. As demand for energy increases, these old copper lines are not capable of delivering sufficient power to meet the electrical needs of modern homes, businesses, and farms. That's why we are replacing the copper lines with steel core aluminum wire that can carry much greater electrical loads and is much stronger and resilient to impacts from storms like down limbs. Today, NineStar has around 200 miles of copper line remaining on our system with plans to eliminate it altogether on our system over the next few years.

Of course, most interruptions in power that occur on NineStar's distribution system are not caused by the size of the distribution wire but by storms, animals and motor vehicles hitting poles. While NineStar can't eliminate these causes of outages, we have been making significant progress to reduce the impact on our members when they do occur.



By utilizing the same NineStar fiber optic network that enables all our cooperative members to have access to up to 10 gig of synchronous broadband internet service at their homes, NineStar has installed various interconnected smart grid devices that in microseconds isolate the location of an outage thereby minimizing the number of members who experience a power outage.

Prior to investing in this smart grid technology, a downed tree limb or wayward squirrel could trip fuses that could interrupt power on miles of line, causing hundreds to be without power. The length of that outage was largely dependent on how quickly one of our linemen could patrol the line, isolate the cause of the outage, and fix the issue. With smart grid technology, some might experience a momentary blink for two or three seconds while the switches 'talk' with one another to isolate the location of the fault on the system. These devices, which can cost upwards to \$30 thousand



dollars each, greatly reduce the number of homes and businesses that experience an outage and enhance the overall reliability of the distribution system to the benefit of everyone.

With this new technology that is being developed and deployed, linemen are also tasked with learning additional skills to both service and operate a smart distribution system. I'm proud to say that NineStar's linemen are some of the best-trained and highly skilled linemen you can find anywhere in the United States. And our next generation linemen that today are serving you as groundmen and apprentices are equally committed to learn and stay abreast of this rapidly evolving technology.

As people's needs evolve and change, so do their service expectations from their utility cooperative. NineStar is committed to continually reinvesting in all its utility systems to provide its members and customers with the best-in-class services you should expect from your cooperative.

We love to hear from our members and customers. Please feel free to reach out to us with any comments or questions. We may want to use them for future newsletter articles.

OUT & ABOUT

HR AND ACCOUNTING SPONSOR FAMILY

NineStar's Accounting and Human Resources departments joined together to sponsor a family for Christmas by purchasing them gifts.



GRADUATION

Andrew Eller graduated the REAP (Rural Electric Apprenticeship Program). He is currently NineStar's newest journeyman lineman. Pictured from L to R - VP of Operations Tommy Nance, Andrew Eller, Line Superintendent Eric Truitt, and President & CEO Mike Burrow.



SENIOR SAFETY

NineStar employees Matt Strahl and Gary Ouellette presented at Morristown Senior Center. Matt spoke about electric safety and energy savings and Gary talked about the importance of being cyber smart.



HOLIDAY HELPERS

Employees Jennifer McMillan and Lisa Lemons volunteered to ring the bells for the Salvation Army in December.



NineStar employees and Eastern Hancock graduates Nick Potts, Chase Riggs, Brayden Tincher and current senior Dylan Bowman all helping out during the employee holiday party!



FIBER SPLICING

NineStar employee Jordan Brown demonstrates fiber splicing to members of the Indiana Broadband Office on January 12th.

GRADE SCHOOL SAFETY

Energy Advisor, Matt Strahl visited Brandywine Elementary as he performed an Electric Safety Demonstration. He presented to the entire 4th grade class that included 4 classes, 75 students.



MEET THE CANDIDATES

VOTE MARCH 1ST - 20TH

NINESTAR CONNECT’S ANNUAL MEETING

ANNUAL MEETING

IN-PERSON

- ★ FRIDAY, MARCH 22ND
- ★ GREENFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL’S FIELDHOUSE
- ★ DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM, BUSINESS MEETING BEGINS AT 6 PM
- ★ VOTING/RSVPS ACCEPTED MARCH 1-20. (VOTING CLOSSES AT 5 PM)
- ★ PRIZES AVAILABLE TO BOTH IN PERSON AND ONLINE PARTICIPANTS (DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN)

ONLINE

- ★ VIEW THE MEETING ONLINE BEGINNING ON SUNDAY, MARCH 24TH
- ★ NINESTARNOW.COM

VOTE FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARCH 1ST – 20TH

RECEIVE A \$10 BILL CREDIT OR DINNER AT THE ANNUAL MEETING AND BE ENTERED FOR \$5,000 IN CASH PRIZES AND \$2,500 IN GIVEAWAYS.

Vote online at ninestarconnect.smarthub.coop/


ONLINE ONLY,

YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO VOTE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

To learn more visit ninestarconnect.com/annualmeeting.

DIRECTOR, AT-LARGE B

TIMOTHY BRYANT




BACKGROUND: Tim has dedicated a significant portion of his life to the community, having resided in Hancock County and been a member of NineStar for over 30 years. His commitment to both education and business has been a driving force in shaping his career. He has a strong educational background, holding a Bachelor of Engineering degree from Purdue University and an MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University. Currently serving as the President and CEO of IT Synergistics, he has demonstrated leadership and vision in the technology sector. Prior to his role at IT Synergistics, Tim held the position of Vice President of Administration at Indiana Blood Center. Tim and his wife Susan have raised three children – Erin, Matt, and Lauren, and enjoy spending time with their six grandchildren.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: My three-decade-long association with NineStar has provided me with an understanding of the company’s management and offerings. I have been honored to serve the past three years as a Board Member, and I thank those members that voted for me, and all the candidates. NineStar continues to be a leader in the industry, but there remain challenges in the near future relating to security, clean energies, new technologies and more. I would like to continue this journey providing my talents and skills to ensure NineStar remains a pillar in the community.

DIRECTOR, DISTRICT #3

ROBIN RITCHIE



BACKGROUND: Robin Ritchie has been a cooperative member since 2015. She has a Bachelor Degree in Business from Indiana University and a Master of Library Science (MLS) also from Indiana University. She currently is employed with the New Castle – Henry County Public Library as a children’s assistant. She was previously employed at AT&T/Lucent Technologies as a software associate/systems consultant. Robin is a 2001 graduate of Leadership Hancock County, Dale Carnegie Training of Central Indiana. For the past three years, Robin has served on the NineStar Connect Board of Directors. Robin and her husband David live in Middletown.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: While employed at AT&T/Lucent and the Courier Journal my main focus was customer service. Working together with my team and the client’s team to implement the installation of telecommunications equipment and software upgrades. This involved an understanding of the client’s business needs, the needs of team members and working together to complete the project. Working at the library I have learned a lot about the needs of our patrons and conditions present in the community. I am a team player and the knowledge and experience I gained in my career journey as well as being on the NineStar board for the past three years, has helped me develop an understanding of the needs and expectations of our community and has helped me make informed decisions for the direction of NineStar Connect. I am eager to continue to serve the people in our community.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

DIRECTOR, DISTRICT #4 LARRY LONGMAN



BACKGROUND: Larry Longman has been a cooperative member since 2003. Larry is a graduate of Lawrence Central High School, Purdue University (Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering), and Dale Carnegie Leadership Series. Larry is currently the Director of Preconstruction at Victory Unlimited Construction. Since 2012, he has served on the McCordsville Town Council and served as president in 2017 and 2018. During his service, he oversaw growth in residential, commercial, and industrial sectors, not to mention the Town staff. Larry has mentored and managed construction personnel while overseeing Lauth Preconstruction Department that peaked at 32 associates. He is a licensed General Contractor in the states of Virginia, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Kansas, and within many municipalities within Indiana. Larry is well versed in data analysis and creating solutions maximizing profit and loss. In 2013, Larry was a Panel Moderator regarding "Municipalities Use of TIF" for the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns Conference. In the following years, he has spoken at various conferences such as Fresh Thyme Farmer's Market Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, was a panelist at the ICR Fall Conference, testified at the Indiana Statehouse in Support of SEA 308's "Rapid Growth" taxing provision and was a steering committee member for the Urban Land Institute's Study for Mt. Comfort Corridor. Larry has volunteered in positions for the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation, the Town of McCordsville BZA, RDC, Plan Commission, Municipal Police Commission, and the Oaklandon Youth Organization. While attending Harvest Church, he served on the welcome team and was a small group leader. Larry is a 2008 Indiana University Hoosier Fellow and was twice recognized by Junior Achievement as a Best & Brightest Finalist in the Real Estate and Construction sector. Larry and his wife Jennifer reside in McCordsville and have two daughters: Emme and Avery.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: NineStar Connect's service platform not only provides utility services, but also enhances economic development throughout a large portion of Hancock County, as well as Henry, Hamilton, and Madison counties. As a Director, I will continue to grow our customer base, prioritize utility reliability, and maintain inputs that yield competitive rates within our service territories. Utility reliability is a major component of complete customer satisfaction. There are challenges ahead in maintaining the integrity of our utility infrastructure, simultaneous with new opportunities through the water & sewer service territories. I recognize the importance of planning, financing, and undertaking the capital improvements necessary to enhance our service to our members and customers. I have utility installation and maintenance experience as both a developer/contractor and a Municipal Utility Board Member in the Town of McCordsville. With this experience, I feel that I am well suited to serve our utility cooperative's members and customers

DIRECTOR, DISTRICT #4 MARK ROBERSON



BACKGROUND: Mark Roberson has been a cooperative member since 2021. Mark has a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Ball State University. He is currently Vice President, Reit Tax Compliance for Simon Property Group. He is a licensed and certified Public Accountant (CPA) in Indiana. He has held several senior level positions in accounting, finance, and tax during his 31 years at Simon Property Group. He was a director for the Castleton Estates Homeowners Association and a treasurer for the Hamilton Southeastern Boys Track & Field. He is also an IHSAA Official for Basketball and Track & Field. A lifelong resident of Indiana, Mark and his wife Ellen currently reside in McCordsville and have two sons; Ryan and Ross.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: My interest in a NineStar Director position stems from my current position at Simon Property Group in which I am responsible for analyzing business initiatives. I enjoy analyzing how a business functions and assisting in cultivating a strategy for that business to succeed.

DIRECTOR, DISTRICT #4 SCOTT PITTMAN



BACKGROUND: Scott Pittman has been a cooperative member since 2016. He holds a Bachelors degree from Olivet Nazarene University, a Masters in Ministry/Non-Profit Leadership from Indiana Wesleyan University and an MBA from Indiana Wesleyan University. He currently serves as Mid-Market Account Executive at Remodel Health, and previously served for almost 10 years at Indiana Wesleyan University, most recently as the Director of Enrollment Staff Development, as well as in pastoral ministry in the Church of the Nazarene. Additionally, Scott and his wife Amanda have started and operated three small businesses together. In his free time, Scott is an active member of the leadership team at Emerge Church in Fortville and coaches youth sports. Scott and Amanda live in McCordsville and have four children; Bella, Bianca, Jacob and Maezie. Since joining the NineStar Connect board in 2021, Scott has earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and the Director Core Curriculum Certificate from the National Telecom Cooperative Association.

For the past two years, Scott has served as the chair of the Business and Economic Development Committee, as an appointed member of the Strategic Planning Committee, and as an elected member of the board's Executive Committee.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: When I joined the board in 2021, my fellow board members told me that it would take the first three years to get up to speed. I have taken that challenge head on by taking full advantage of training and educational opportunities and volunteering for additional ways to serve our board. Three years in I can say that I am a passionate and engaged board member, deeply committed to the work of shaping the future of NineStar Connect. NineStar is an innovative organization built on a legacy of service and a desire to improve the quality of life and place for its members. I believe that my experience developing organizations has brought unique perspective and added value as a board member, including as an active contributor to our board's newly approved strategic plan. As we continue to experience rapid growth in our service territory, it is important to have a fully engaged and well-informed board that will work collaboratively with senior leadership. As a board member, I strive to put members first in every conversation and decision that we make, so that we can continue to provide the best quality and cost-effective services that improve our communities. It is a privilege to serve this growing and thriving cooperative - I believe that our best days are ahead of us.

DIRECTOR, DISTRICT #5 JAN COCHARD



BACKGROUND: Jan Cochard has been a cooperative member since 1992. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and Recreational Therapy from Purdue University. He currently works as a Senior Logistic Courier for Quest Diagnostics. Previous employment included manager at Indy Tractor/Healy Equipment, owner/manager of Cochard Implements, sales district manager for Parts Associates and owner/operator of a dairy farm. Jan also has his real estate license and is a financial advisor and has his stockbroker license, series 7 and 66 and Indiana Life Insurance License. Jan is very involved in the 4-H program. He was a leader for the Hancock County 4-H Dog Obedience for numerous years and Entomology projects. He is an Indiana State Fair 4-H Dog Obedience and Agriculture Crops judge. He has been a presenter at several state 4-H leader training meetings. Jan was president of the Hancock County/Purdue University Cooperative Extension Board and Chairman of the Hancock County Farm Festival Tour. He received the Conservation Pollinator of the Year award from the Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District for his efforts to help reestablish the Monarch butterfly flyway. Jan was also Chairman of the Deacons, Sunday School teacher, and Worship leader at his local church. Board member and past president, Mt. Vernon Community Schools. Past president of the Greater Greenfield Chamber of Commerce, Central Indiana Power Advisory Board, CIP and NineStar Connect Director Nominating Committee. Jan and his wife Gwen currently reside in Greenfield and have three children; Charles, Steven, and Christina.

CANDIDATE STATEMENT: While serving on the Central Indiana Power Advisory Board, I became interested in the functioning of the Co-op utility. The growth and development of NineStar Connect has added to my interest in being involved with the Co-op. I have been a supporter of the District 5 director and now that he is retiring I think it is time for me to step forward and assume the responsibilities. I realize each director not only represents the members of their district but also represents all of the members of NineStar Connect. I look forward to being a part of the team utilizing my leadership and interpersonal skills to help guide our Co-op to the next level maintaining NineStar's leadership among state and national utilities.

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