

Summer 2019



THE LINK

68th Annual Meeting
 Wednesday, June 12, 2019
 Foster County Fairgrounds

Registration 3:30pm

Business Meeting 4:30pm

Dinner following the meeting,
serving until 6:30pm



OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF DAKOTA CENTRAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE



Notice is hereby given, that the 2019 annual meeting of the members of Dakota Central Telecommunications Cooperative, Carrington, North Dakota, will be held at the Foster County Fairgrounds on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 4:30 pm, to take action on the following matters:

1. To elect board members in the districts of Edmunds and Ypsilanti.
2. To present reports for the 2018 fiscal year.
3. Transacting such other business as may come before the meeting.

Individuals were nominated by petition to represent the members in their respective districts.

Following are the candidates nominated:

Doug Wede, Edmunds Exchange
Craig Headland, Ypsilanti Exchange

Each member of the cooperative present at the meeting shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from each district. The candidate from each district receiving the highest number of votes at the meeting shall be considered elected as a board member.



SPOTLIGHT BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: *Zen Sleep Consulting*

This issue's Business Spotlight is unique, as it is a 100% online-based business with no storefront. Zen Sleep Consulting is based out of Annie Schlecht's home in Wimbledon, ND. One would think that the business of sleep consulting would require in-person meetings, and while Annie does consult with each client face-to-face, it is all done over video conference.

Zen Sleep Consulting's mission is to "help parents feel calm and confident in their ability to get their child to sleep peacefully throughout the night (zensleepconsulting.com)."

Annie is a mom of two young girls and a wife to Tyler, who works in the agriculture industry. As a busy mom and wife, it is important to Annie to do work that she loves, but also have the flexibility for her children, especially during her husband's busy seasons. With her background in Occupational Therapy and past work experiences, Annie took a leap and started a sleep consulting business right from her home. Virtually all of the work she does is over the Internet. Annie says, "Having a reliable connection at our home has given me the freedom and flexibility to have the career I want without geographical limits."

A typical client interaction begins by the client initiation via website or

With a reliable broadband connection from Dakota Central, she is able to connect with families all over the globe.

social media. Then, via email, they will schedule a free 15-minute sleep assessment which happens over the phone. Here she will explain her services in more detail and learn more about the client's needs. After the sleep assessment they will communicate more via email, and set-up a video consultation. This is where a consistent connection is vital. Annie explained, "If I don't have a strong connection and the video buffers or disconnects, that reflects on my business and the perceived quality of service I provide. I want my clients to have a great experience every time, which means I need a dependable internet connection."

So far, Zen Sleep Consulting is the first and only business of its kind in the state of North Dakota. "Dakota Central has helped me pioneer this line of work; I'm grateful to be able to provide this service right from home," Annie said. With a dream and Fiber-to-the-Home, Annie is able to run a professional business while raising a family in rural, small-town North Dakota.

To learn more about services provided by Zen Sleep Consulting, visit www.zensleepconsulting.com.

A LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

Over the past few years, we have been expanding our service to the area North of Jamestown where there is little to no broadband service. We have been building facilities to the most densely populated areas as construction costs per location are extremely high in the less densely populated areas. We have continued to do this in stages as we have been internally funding construction. In 2018, we completed the projects to complete fiber construction on the west side of the Jamestown Reservoir and the Spiritwood Lake area.

In addition to the usual fiber construction to new homes and businesses during the summer, we will be concentrating on replacing approximately 1,400 Optical Network Terminals (ONT) located on customers' premises. We have been experiencing the failure of a series of ONT units that will cause other ONTs on the network to fail. We utilize a Passive Optical Network (PON) which has up to 32 ONTs connected off one fiber splitter. It is problem enough that the one bad ONT fails, but it also can cause the other 31 ONT's on the fiber splitter to fail. It's a time-consuming process for our technicians to locate which ONT is causing the failure as the problem may be temporary and intermittent. The manufacturer has recognized the problem in the series and offered discounted replacement units, but we still have the burden of the time to replace the units. Arranging appointments to schedule the replacement ONT is not always easy, so we appreciate our customers' patience as we work through the replacement process.



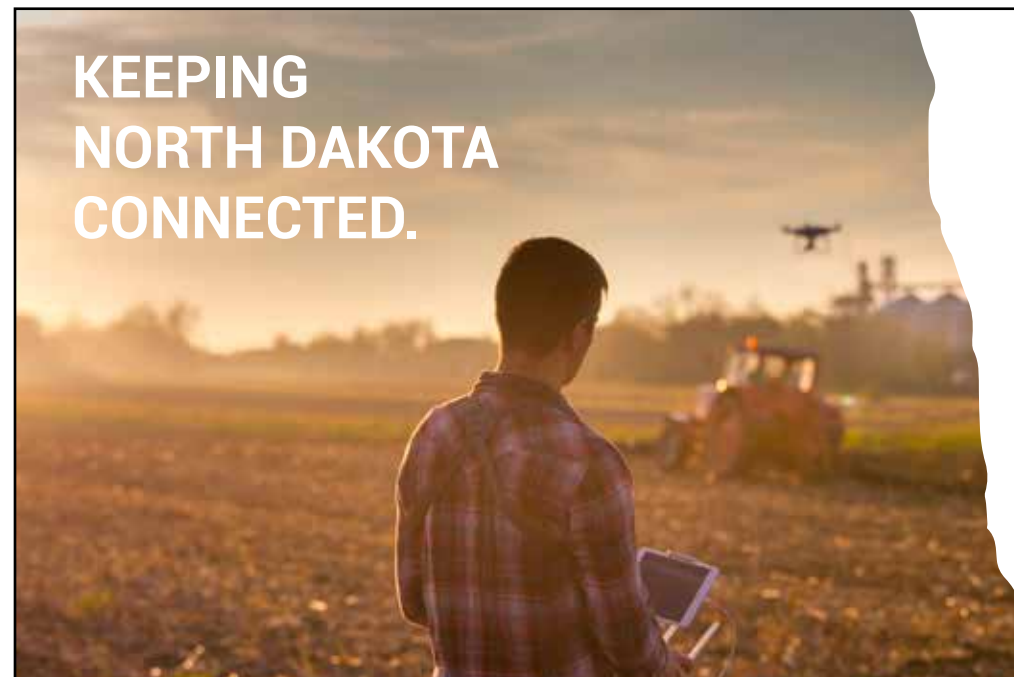
Keith Larson, CEO/GM

You may recall in 2018, our state association went through the process of rebranding from the North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives to the Broadband Association of North Dakota (BAND). The new name and its mission better reflect the changing times. The availability of high-speed broadband service has become a necessary component of the required infrastructure to operate a business, educate our children and keep in touch with our friends and family members.

BAND's focus is to educate our policymakers and the public regarding issues that affect broadband deployment in North Dakota. The small, rural commercial and cooperative companies in the state cover the vast majority of the land mass and have been extremely aggressive in providing broadband service to their service areas. Recent statistics indicate North Dakota is ranked number two in the nation as most connected. However, the job is not done as there are still many areas outside our designated service territories where broadband is minimal.

We are excited that we have been able to continue to expand our high-speed fiber-optic network to businesses and residents that are desperately in need of broadband service. We are hopeful to continue doing so to meet the needs of central North Dakota. Thank you for your past support and we wish you all a great year!

KEEPING NORTH DAKOTA CONNECTED.



Learn more at
BroadbandND.com

BAND

broadband association of north dakota

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MEMBER ORGANIZATION



GRANTS

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



FRS GRANT PROGRAM

As part of its ongoing commitment to rural communities across the country, the Foundation for Rural Service provides annual grants for rural communities served by NTCA members. The goal of this program is to support local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural America.

Applicants may request grants in the range on \$250 to \$5,000. Each grant is a one-time award. Projects may be funded at a lesser amount than requested. Application deadline is September 13, 2019.

The foundation supports organizations and projects that fit into the following grant categories:

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurship and job creation programs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Outreach programs that promote technology learning and innovation. Programs that encourage rural development through arts and tourism.

EDUCATION

Technology in the classroom (computers, smart boards), curriculum development, extracurricular activities and distance-learning programs.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Broadband adoption projects; applications of broadband, including in healthcare, agriculture, and education; and technology infrastructure, such as community hot spots.

For more information on the FRS Grant Program or to obtain an application, visit: www.frs.org/programs/grant-program/community-grant

RDFC AWARDS GRANTS IN DAKOTA CENTRAL'S SERVICE AREA

Dakota Central Telecommunications is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area are eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$2,000 for community-based projects. RDFC is making these funds available in order that more people become aware of their larger loan program that funds community-based projects and non-profit entities with low-interest loans.

RDFC has recently awarded a \$2,000 grant to the Carrington Park District. The grant will be used to assist the Carrington Park District with the funding of painting the community pool. The Carrington Park District features various playground equipment, as well as volleyball, tennis, basketball, horseshoes, swimming, picnic facilities, softball diamonds and disc golf. Carrington Park District also offers camping on a first come, first served basis.

2019 RDFC GRANT PROGRAM

The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) is pleased to announce it has approved a 2019 grant allotment of \$2,000 per member-cooperative to be used to support community-owned entities, non-profits and community-based projects.



Eligible projects include community-owned businesses (café, grocery store, motel, other); community facilities (such as ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center, etc.); or community-based projects (such as school/youth projects, other) that benefit rural areas.

The grant application deadline is December 31, 2019. For grant guidelines and the application form, contact Brienne at 701-652-3184.

VOLUNTEER

HELPING HANDS



Because we live in the communities we serve, Dakota Central employees are committed to volunteering for various organizations. We want to continue to have great communities to live and work, so we're willing to lend a helping hand where needed! Here are some of the organizations our employees are currently involved in:

School Board
City Council
Job Development Authority
Community Development Board
Park Board
Rotary Club
Lions Club
Eagles Club

Kiwanis Club
Knights of Columbus
Rural/City Fire Department
McHenry Ambulance
Church Committees
4H Leaders
Make-A-Wish

COMPANY NEWS

DAKOTA CENTRAL NEWS

CERTIFICATION COMPLETIONS

Congratulations to the following Field Technicians for completing the necessary training requirements to earn Field Technician II certification. These technicians completed 40 hours of A+ Certification, 32 hours of NetSci Level 1 Certification, 40 hours of Fiber Optic Splicing and Termination, 20 hours of Managing Subscriber Experience training, and 40 hours of Certified Wireless Technology Specialist training.



Matt Anderson



Jordan Berg



Ryan Fisher



Larry Gilge



Doug Greb



Bryant Stangeland

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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dakotacentral.com
652.3184 or 952.1000



MEET THE NOMINEES

Nominations for the Dakota Central Board of Directors were recently made to elect board members for the **Edmunds and Ypsilanti Exchanges**. In accordance with the cooperative's bylaws, nominations for board members were made via petition to represent the members of their respective districts. Following are the members who were nominated and whose names will appear on the ballot at the annual meeting on June 12th.

EDMUNDS EXCHANGE, DOUG WEDE



EDMUNDS EXCHANGE
Doug Wede has served as director for the Edmunds Exchange for 36 years, and is seeking re-election.

Doug is a board member on NDTA in Devils Lake. Doug also serves as a Walters Township officer and is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Carrington.

Doug currently farms south of Carrington. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two children, Samantha and Mason.



YPSILANTI EXCHANGE
Craig Headland is seeking re-election for a tenth term as director for Dakota Central representing the Ypsilanti Exchange. Craig is a legislator serving in the North Dakota House of Representatives. He also serves on the NDATC board, a state association established

to manage the political and regulatory interests of rural telecommunications companies. Craig and his wife, Dawn, have one daughter, Sydney, and they farm near Ypsilanti.

CONGRATS! DAKOTA CENTRAL AWARDS \$5,500 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

Dakota Central is proud to announce the **2019 Dakota Central Scholarship winners!** Five \$1,000 scholarships have been awarded to outstanding graduating seniors whose parents or guardians are customers of Dakota Central. The Jerry Eissinger Memorial Scholarship of \$500 has been awarded to the top scoring applicant, in addition to the \$1,000 Dakota Central Scholarship.

Applicants were judged on community activities, school activities, financial need, grades and achievement. Consideration was also given to those looking to pursue a career in the telecommunications or technology industry, as well as those looking to return to a rural area after college. This marks the 19th year of the scholarship program, having awarded over \$95,000 to date. Dakota Central is proud to offer the scholarship program to show its commitment to area youth.

HATS OFF TO THIS YEAR'S DAKOTA CENTRAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS AND TO THE ENTIRE CLASS OF 2019!



AMANDA JARRETT
JERRY EISSINGER SCHOLARSHIP WINNER
Daughter of Jason & Bobbi Jarrett
Carrington



KAYLEE WENINGER
Daughter of Brad & Lisa Weninger
Carrington



CONNER FIKE
Son of David & Roxanne Fike
Bowdon



CARLEE MOSER
Daughter of David & Jacki Moser
Medina



MILLISA KUKOWSKI
Daughter of John & Tonya Kukowski
Jamestown



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Win credit on your Dakota Central bill!

Win a **\$25** credit on your Dakota Central bill.
Just return this coupon by July 31, 2019, to be
eligible for the drawing.

Congratulations to last issue's winner:
Allen Valenta, Jamestown.

Name

Phone #





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JAMESTOWN OFFICE
604 18th St. SW Jamestown, ND 58401 p: 701.952.1000 f: 701.952.1001

OFFICE HOURS
8am-4:30pm M-F To report trouble call your local office and follow prompts.

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