

THE LINK DAKOTA CENTRAL

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A Letter From The General Manager

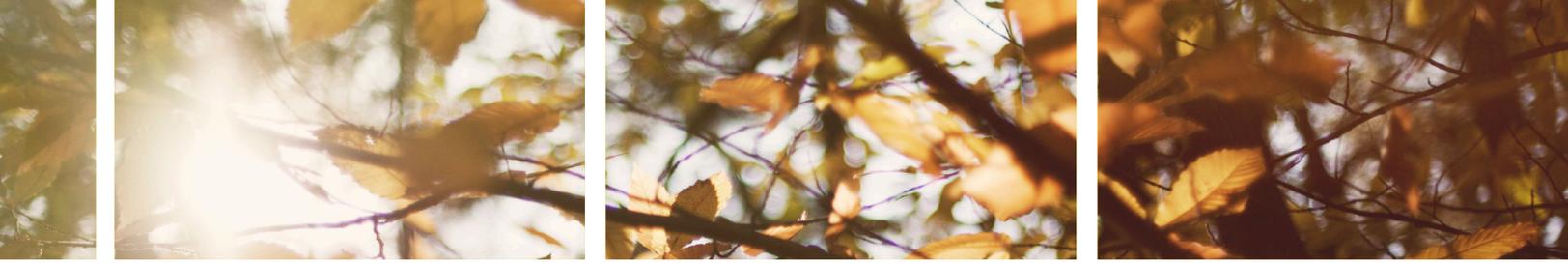
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Business Spotlight

North Dakota Farmers Union Camp offers a fun experience for young members while teaching valuable life lessons.





A letter from our General Manager

As you all know, it's been an unusually hot and dry summer compounded by smoke from the western mountain fires. I think we are all looking forward to some cooler weather and hopefully some good fall rains.

With our fiber construction projects completed last year, a good deal of our focus has been on upgrading equipment and electronics. As we have explained in the past, the transport network that carries our traffic internally and out to the world requires regular maintenance, like everything else. As usage and demands on our network continue to increase, it is important that the equipment in place can support that growth, and then some! This year we are spending more than \$2 million to replace equipment in our network. The new network will provide for two 100-Gigabit transport routes, with the ability to easily double the capacity to 200-Gigabit routes. The ECI transport system has been completed and we are now installing the routers located in our central offices. We

expect all the equipment to be installed and tested soon. Thereafter, the circuits on the old network will be transitioned to the new network.

With the increased capacity on the backbone, we will be offering 10-Gig service this fall. Our 100% fiber optic network allows us to continue to offer the most advanced technology and highest speeds available anywhere by simply swapping out electronics at the customer premise and our central office locations. We are excited to bring this premium high bandwidth offering to all of our customers!

With the Universal Service Fund (USF) Contribution Factor proposed at 31.8% for third quarter 2021, it finally appears it is getting attention from the FCC and Congress. The fee is levied on monthly bills for traditional landline and wireless telephone service while USF funds the Internet infrastructure for broadband services. The current funding of the USF is unsustainable and levies fees on services not receiving most of the benefit. One article I read compared the collection of the fee to "taxing horseshoes to pay for highways."

FCC Commissioner Carr applauded the introduction of the Funding Affordable

Internet with Reliable (FAIR) Contributions Act. This act directs the FCC to conduct a study researching the feasibility of collecting USF contributions from internet edge providers such as YouTube, Netflix, and Google and issue a final report within 180 days. Commissioner Carr stated, "for far too long, Big Tech has been enjoying a free ride on our internet infrastructure." Our network statistics show that these Big Tech Internet providers gobble up a majority of our network capacity. It will remain to be seen whether progress can be made on contribution reform as these players are very powerful and have big pockets. One thing for sure, any progress will be slow and met with much resistance from the big players.

I wish you all a safe fall, and as always, we appreciate your continued support!

- Keith Larson
CEO/GM



Business Spotlight: ND Farmers Union Camp

Nestled in the trees overlooking the Jamestown Reservoir sits the perfect location for a summer getaway. That's exactly what North Dakota Farmers Union Camp is - a summer getaway for youth; a place to learn and make memories. NDFU Camp offers an unforgettable experience, while learning real life lessons.

The inaugural summer season is complete for the NDFU Jamestown camp, which was finished and ready just in time for camps to start in July. Education Director Bri Sorensen said they squeezed 8 camps in six weeks for almost 1,200 campers in grades 3-12. According to the camp description, "North Dakota Farmers Union provides trained counselors who encourage campers to develop positive and constructive attitudes about their own capabilities through cooperation, teamwork and leadership. Our program and activities are designed to highlight the individuality in all youth." Campers are educated on real-life issues affecting their generation through hands-on

lessons in Volunteerism, Government, Cultural diversity, Legislative process, Mock trials, and Patriotism. Campers also enjoy a variety of games and activities that round out the camp experience such as swimming, singing, theme nights, sports,

dancing, and campfires. Sounds like a great way to spend a few days of summer vacation!

Prior to the camp season beginning, the NDFU staff and Dakota Central technicians worked hard to get the camp buildings connected and ready in time. Dakota Central provides phone and Internet service to the ironically "tech-free" camp (meaning campers are not allowed to bring their own devices). "The connectivity in our STEM room is huge," Bri explained. "Even though we have a tech-free camp experience, we incorporate curriculum through an online platform that requires Bluetooth and Wi-Fi for robotics and 3D printing." Offering STEM education and resources is a great way for youth to discover the possibilities of future technology careers.

Bri also explained how working with a local company made it a great experience for NDFU staff. "Dakota Central not only provides our services, but they are also a sponsor of ours. We are looking forward to continuing our relationship with the company."

The education and experience that NDFU Camp provides to youth is unique and invaluable, and Dakota Central is pleased to help make that experience possible. To learn more about NDFU Summer Camp, visit www.ndfu.org/youth/youth-camps/.





Company News

New Faces

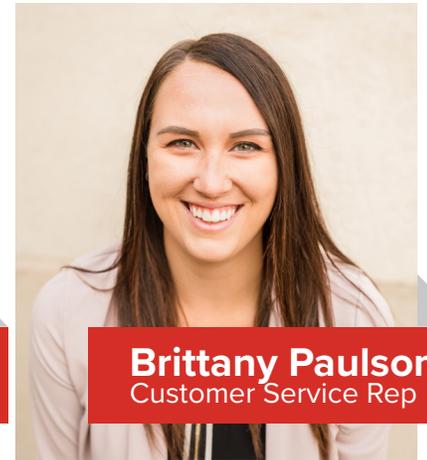
Dakota Central is excited to announce two more additions to the team.

Aaron Backer joined us in Jamestown in May as a Field Technician Apprentice. He has experience in the telecommunications industry, so we are happy to have him on the team!

Most recently, **Brittany Paulson** started in July as a Customer Service Rep in Carrington. Brittany is originally from Bowman, ND, but recently moved to Carrington. She is a welcomed addition to the team and community!



Aaron Backer
Field Technician Apprentice



Brittany Paulson
Customer Service Rep

Summer Happenings

We've been busy! Here's a recap of what we've been up to this summer.

We're so happy to be back in the swing of things with a busy summer of events in our communities! We kicked off the summer with our annual membership cooperative meeting in June, followed by the Foster County Fair and the 4th of July Parade in Carrington, then Kid's Night at the Speedway, Buffalo Days, the Downtown Art Market, and the Community Block Party, all in Jamestown. We love being a part of these community events, especially "post-COVID"!

Also in 2021, we have been a distribution location for the Great Plains Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry in Carrington. The Mobile Food Pantry provides fresh

vegetables, fruits, shelf-stable items, meat, bakery items, boxed goods, and much more to communities in need. Items are distributed right off the truck by volunteers and delivered directly to people in need. Distributions are set up as a drive-through where clients are able to stay in their cars and items are placed directly inside their vehicle. All in need of food assistance are welcome to come and receive food at no cost! A short intake form is filled out onsite; no pre-registration or referrals required. In addition to the Mobile Food Pantry distribution, we have been added as a pick-up site for the Senior Commodity Food Program. With this program, seniors need to apply and qualify in order to receive the distribution. Contact us if you would like to apply for the Senior Commodity Food Program, or volunteer at a distribution event in Carrington!



Jamestown Speedway sponsor night with First Community Credit Union and Bomber Feature Winner #22 Dylan Steele.



You Will be **Missed**

On behalf of the Dakota Central family and board of directors, we are deeply saddened by the loss of Marty Bauer, Chief Plant Officer. Marty started working for Dakota Central in Carrington in 1991, later moving to the Jamestown location. We celebrated his 30 years of service in July of this year.

Our deepest sympathies go out to family, friends, and coworkers of Marty for your tremendous loss.

YOU'RE THE LIGHT TO OUR FIBER

We're glad you're here.

Lunch is on us!

Join us for burgers, brats and prizes-
because we appreciate you!

DAKOTA CENTRAL - CARRINGTON

630 5th St. N Carrington, ND

**SEPTEMBER 9TH
11AM - 1 PM**





CONNECTED CAREERS

DO IT ALL, ALL FROM RURAL
NORTH DAKOTA

With broadband, North Dakotans are building successful businesses right from the rural communities they love

There was a time when folks had to move to big cities to pursue their big dreams—but times have changed. Today, small towns in North Dakota have access to faster Internet than some of the largest cities in America.

The member organizations that form the **Broadband Association of North Dakota**, including **Dakota Central**, have laid over 40,000 miles of fiber across the state, enabling speeds exceeding 1 Gig and empowering dreamers to build successful businesses right from the rural communities they love.

From a guitar instructor in **Kindred** to a medical spa in **Williston**, BAND member providers and their customers are proving that you don't have to give up small-town life just to pursue your big-city dreams.

Small Towns, Big Dreams

In Kindred, Fargo native **Steve Stine** relies on broadband from **MLGC**

to live-stream guitar lessons to aspiring artists around the world. As the face of **GuitarZoom**, Steve has amassed almost a million subscribers across two YouTube channels and become a mentor to some of music's biggest stars, like pop sensation Shawn Mendes.

"My videos are getting viewed all over the world, all the time," Steve said. "I'm able to do things that a lot of my friends that live in bigger cities can't even do. They don't have those speeds at their homes."

A few hours north, in **Edinburg**, **Katie Skoog** has turned her passion for crafting into profit through **Simple Life Pattern Company**. Katie specializes in creating PDF sewing patterns for women, girls, and babies. And with high-speed Internet from **Polar Communications**, she is able to sell her patterns to an international market without ever leaving her home.

"I'm able to do things that a lot of my friends that live in bigger cities can't even do."

- Steve Stine
GuitarZoom Founder



Simple Life Pattern Company currently sells PDF sewing patterns in Germany, Australia, Norway, Singapore, and more—and Katie can control it all from the comfort of her home in rural North Dakota.

“I love my little town of Edinburg,” Katie said. “Being able to work from home, on my computers, and do everything in my living room to support my family, that’s the best



Katie Skoog
Founder of The Simple Life Company

feeling ever and I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

And on the other side of the state, in **Williston, Victoria Clair** is caring for her community as the General Manager of **Destiny Med Spa**. Drawn by the easy-going pace of small-town life, Victoria moved from the bustling metropolis of Las Vegas to western North Dakota in 2015. Today, she relies on broadband by **Nemont Telephone Cooperative** to communicate with patients and connect them with industry-leading health and wellness solutions.

“Having broadband internet is vital to our business because it gives us greater efficiency,” Victoria said. “We couldn’t operate without it.”

The Perfect Combination

Whether it was escaping the hustle and bustle, reconnecting with nature, or

providing a better quality of life for their children, Steve, Katie, and Victoria each had their own reasons for relocating to rural North Dakota. Much like their motivation, their businesses run the gamut: from e-commerce to brick-and-mortar, from music to medicine.

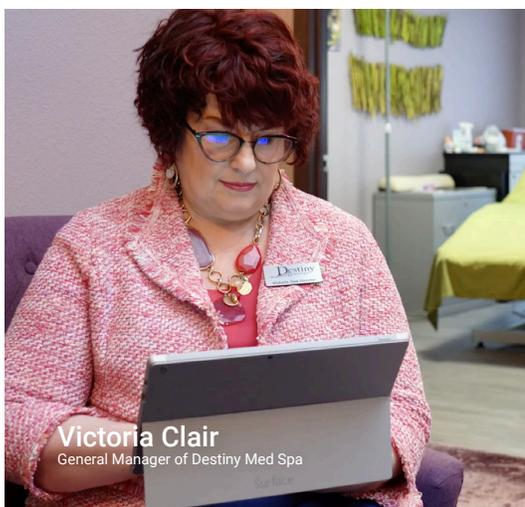
Despite their differences, these three all have one thing in common: with access to high-speed internet, they do not need to leave the rural communities they love in order to run their businesses.

“For me, it’s the perfect combination,” Steve said. “I’m able to do what I do and send it out to the world, yet maintain this relaxed environment of living in the rural community.”

And they are not alone. Across the state, hundreds of rural residents are beginning new careers, working remotely, and building businesses, powered by broadband. They are living proof that, with the fastest Internet in America, you can do it all—all from rural North Dakota.



Steve Stine
Instructor at GuitarZoom



Victoria Clair
General Manager of Destiny Med Spa

To see what we can do
for your business please
contact us at
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Tech Tips
WHAT IS THE CLOUD?

Next, uploading large files like photos, videos, and documents in the cloud can free up disk space. And don't worry, once they're up there, they're not gone for good—you can easily download all of your files back onto your hard drive.

Another key benefit of the cloud is safety. If your house was burning down, what would you save first? For many of us, the first answer that comes to mind is "My family photo albums." When you upload your photos and other important documents to the cloud, you don't have to worry about losing them if there is a fire, or if your computer is stolen or damaged. When you want to access them again, they will be right in the cloud where you left them.

However, no data is completely safe, even in the cloud you should still back up your cloud data to protect against accidental deletion, other user errors, and ransomware.

Finally, with cloud collaboration services like Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive, you have the ability to share documents with other users, who can all edit in one place. This can be very helpful for colleagues collaborating on a report, students working on a group presentation, or even couples creating a guest list for their upcoming wedding.

The cloud is everywhere, and it's not going away anytime soon. Please give us a call if you have any questions, and one of our experienced technicians will help you make the most of the cloud.

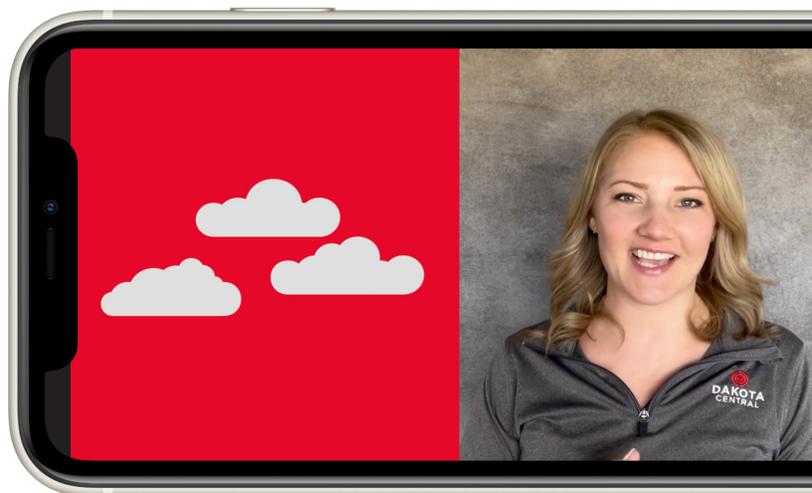
Tech Tips: What is the Cloud?

Have you ever wondered what this "cloud" is that everyone seems to be talking about, but felt too embarrassed to ask? Well have no fear, that's why Tech Tips is here! Let's talk about the cloud-- what it is, how it works, and how you can use it to store and share your files.

First, let's clarify: When we say the "cloud," we're not talking about the fluffy white thing you see in the sky. In the tech world, "the cloud" refers to a vast global network of servers that use the Internet to store data, run applications, and deliver content. These days, the cloud is everywhere—literally. Some examples of cloud-based services that you are probably familiar with include Google Drive, Yahoo! Mail, Dropbox, and Microsoft OneDrive. When something is "in the cloud"—for example, an email you send over Yahoo! Mail or a document you write in Google Docs—this simply means that it is being stored on Internet servers instead of on your computer. Think of it like an extra hard drive that can be accessed anywhere you go, as long as you are connected to the Internet.

So now you know what the cloud is. But why should you use it?

The main advantage of the cloud is that you can access your content remotely. You can begin a document in Google Docs from your home computer and pick up right where you left off when you get to the office or your local coffee shop.



HOW TO: PROGRAM YOUR AMAZON FIRE TV STICK REMOTE

Step-by-Step instructions for programming your Amazon Fire TV stick remote to your TV

If you're using an Amazon Fire TV stick and missed the remote set up prompt or moved your firestick to a different TV, don't worry! You can program your Amazon remote to any compatible TV which allows you to control the TV volume and turn the power on/off.

**You must have an Amazon Fire TV generation 3 or higher to control power and volume. Older TVs may not be compatible with the Amazon remote*

1. Press the Home button to go to the Amazon Home screen
2. Press up to highlight the top Menu items, and scroll all the way to the right and select Settings
3. Scroll to the right and select Equipment Control
4. Select Manage Equipment
5. Select TV
6. Scroll down and select Change TV
7. Message will say "Change TV?" Select Change TV to confirm and start setup. You'll get the message "Please wait while we prepare your remote for setup"
8. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete remote setup.



You're ready to go!



604 18th St SW,
Jamestown, ND 58401

Help us locate these members!

These members had a Capital Credit check or statement issued by Dakota Central Telecommunications Cooperative in May 2021 that remain unclaimed or uncashed. If your name is on the list or if you can help us locate someone whose name is on the list, please contact Dakota Central at 652.3184, or contact Deedra Aasand at daasand@dakotacentral.com.

- Nathan Adamson
- Julie Beerbower
- Charles E Harris
- April Lusby
- Craig Scott
- Hurdsfield Housing
- Joyce McKee
- Wayne Keplin
- Sherron L Peters

Helping Households Connect During the Pandemic Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

The Federal Communications Commission has launched a temporary program to help families and households struggling to afford Internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Emergency Broadband Benefit provides a discount of up to \$50 per month toward broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.

Eligible households can enroll through a participating broadband provider or directly with the **Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)** using an online or mail in application.

You can learn more about the benefit, including eligibility and enrollment information, by visiting www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit, or by calling **833-511-0311**.



WIN CREDIT ON YOUR DAKOTA CENTRAL BILL!

Win a \$25 credit on your next Dakota Central bill! Just return this coupon by November 30th, 2021 to be eligible for the drawing.

Congratulations to last issue's winner:

Jim Hare
Wimbleton

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

CARRINGTON OFFICE
630 5th St. N Carrington, ND 58421 p: 701.652.3184 f: 701.674.8121

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

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