VOICE of the Valley

THIS ISSUE:

- Netflix Partnership
- Annual Membership Meeting
- GV & Minkota Technologies
- Directory Sales & Cover Contest

GARDEN VALLEY TECHNOLOGIES

April 2019 | Volume 69 | No. 2

Innovate > Advance > Connect

GV Partners with NETFLIX

Garden Valley Technologies is partnering with Netflix to provide customers the highest quality viewing experience possible. In February, Netflix provided Garden Valley with two servers that are installed at the main central office in Erskine. These servers are updated daily with the most popular and trending titles Netflix has to offer.

The local servers allow Garden Valley customers to access their favorite movies and episodes quicker than from a server located farther away. Having the internal Netflix servers also provides a more reliable connection that will result in fewer networking issues which leads to better viewing.

NETFLIX

Garden Valley is a leader in providing the latest in telecommunication services with a nearly 100% fiber-to-the-home base, and this partnership with Netflix is just one more step in providing customers with the best service for online Netflix content.

BATTERY BACKUP

If you have fiber-to-the home telephone service, your voice service requires backup battery power to continue functioning in the event of a commercial power outage. To avoid disruption of your home voice service during an outage, and to maintain the ability to connect to 911 emergency service, Garden Valley Technologies provides you with a battery for backup power for your residential voice telephone service at the time of the initial installation at no additional cost. This form of backup power is expected to last up to 8 hours under normal use conditions. Standby service availability is also impacted by talk time and service is not guaranteed. If you feel this is not enough time, extended battery pack(s) are available for purchase, and each extended battery pack will last up to 24 hours. This backup battery does not provide power to any other service other than voice. In order to use your Garden Valley voice service during power outages, we suggest that you keep a corded phone on hand. The provided standby battery is the property of Garden Valley Technologies. The Company will handle all battery replacements to avoid the possibility of damage to its network components. The Company monitors its batteries and has a replacement practice when their expected life of 5-7 years is exhausted. If you would like additional information or are interested in adding an extended battery pack, please call our office at 800-448-8260.

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News & Events

Directors seeking re-election

See inside for more details.

GO GREEN!

Embrace Earth Day and go GREEN by signing up for automatic bill payments. Visit 'Account Login' on our site or go to *www.gvtel.com/pay-bill-signup*

Internship Available!

Accepting resumes for a Mass Communications Internship. Apply before noon July 1, 2019.

Details at www.gvtel.com

'Thank You!' to all of our Facebook followers and **congratulations** to **HOGAN LUNDEEN** the winner of the **$200 GV CERTIFICATE.** Thanks for LIKING our page!

SAVE THE DATE

June 4, 2019
WIN-E-MAC SCHOOL
ERSKINE, MN

114TH ANNUAL MEETING

Directors will be elected for 3-year terms from District 1 *(Beltrami, Fertile, Maple Bay exchanges)*, District 4 *(Bejou, McIntosh, Winger exchanges)*, and District 7 *(Bagley, Minerva, Shevlin exchanges)*. Qualifications for Directors are contained in Article III and Article IV (Section 2) of Garden Valley's By-Laws, printed on pages A53 to A58 in the 2019 Directory, and will be summarized in our May Voice of the Valley.

Financial reports on operations for the year ended December 31, 2018 will be presented during the Annual Meeting, scheduled to begin at 10:30am, with member registration beginning at 8:30am.

INCUMBENTS SEEKING RE-ELECTION

Byron Ness
District No. 1
Beltrami, Fertile, Maple Bay

James Ferden
District No. 4
Bejou, McIntosh, Winger

Allen Paulson
District No. 7
Bagley, Minerva, Shevlin

Board Election Process

Have you ever wondered how Directors are elected to Garden Valley's nine-member Board of Directors? Every year, three board members are up for election/re-election. This year those Districts are 1, 4 and 7.

Pursuant to the Company's By-Laws, the entire election process is handled at the Annual Membership Meeting. We do not have a nominating committee, nor do we have mail-in ballots. A person who wants to become a director must first be a member of the Cooperative (By-Law Article I) and must reside in one of the districts up for election. Members from Districts 1, 4 and 7 may attend their district caucus meeting which is held during a recess. During each district caucus meeting, a caucus chairman is chosen and nominations are called for. A person seeking to be a director cannot nominate himself/herself. The annual meeting is called back to order once the caucus meetings have concluded. The list of nominees from each district caucus is then announced to all in attendance. Nominations will also be called for from the floor. All nominees, those nominated from the district caucuses and those nominated from the floor, are given an opportunity to address the membership before the ballots are collected and counted. Members in attendance from all districts may vote for one person per district. The winner for each district is the nominee with the majority votes.

GV & MINKOTA TECHNOLOGIES TOGETHER AS ONE

If I asked you to predict how technology would be changing your life or business five years from now, what would you say? When it comes to predicting the changes in technology you cannot go wrong by leaving it to the experts. In an effort to expand our ability to offer our customers the most from technology, Garden Valley purchased Minkota Technologies, an established IT and Networking company in Winger, MN, in 2017. Over the last two years, Minkota Technologies, Powered by Garden Valley, has not only increased its customers base, they also hired a Sales Account Manager and two Computer/Network Support Specialists to broaden Minkota's service area and to augment the company's customer service.

Minkota Technologies provides specialized computer and networking solutions for your home and business. As an information technology provider, they can assist you with nearly every aspect of your IT needs including computer sales and service, virus removal and prevention, network infrastructure, system backups, and ongoing support solutions.

If you or your organization need assistance with your technology and IT needs, give Minkota Technologies a call at 800-448-8260 or email them at **sales@minkota.com.**

Local Content Channel - Student Training

A number of students and staff from area schools met in February for a peer-to-peer Tricaster training at Bagley High School. Keith Larson, club advisor of the Bagley School local content group, and his students, also known as MediaCrew162, presented helpful broadcasting tips and information to help enhance local channel productions. Special Guest, Shawn Campbell of Bemidji State University, also spoke about his career and knowledge of the broadcasting world.

It was wonderful to see the excitement and interaction that each of the students had with all of the equipment, how they interacted with each other, and the connections that they're making.

These local content channels are available FREE to all GVTV subscribers. Watch your channel guide or visit **www.gvtel.com/community-links/gv-school-local-content-channels** for upcoming events.

Win-E-Mac #30 | Fosston #31 | Fertile-Beltrami #32
Bagley #33 | Red Lake Falls #34 | RLCC #35 | Grygla #36

GVTV offers hundreds of channels including local content.
SIGN UP for GVTV & receive a $100 Visa Gift Card.

Restrictions apply. Call for details.
Offer ends June 30, 2019

TESTIMONIAL

As a small business with limited employees, hosted phone service has given our entity a new freedom. Receiving phone calls while away, receiving voice mails in my inbox, and call logging for incoming and outgoing calls all provide a more efficient way of doing business and gives me a great opportunity for success. Because of the options that hosted phone services provide, our work is not restricted to our office and this expands what we are able to do and when we are able to do it. Best of all, our monthly phone costs decreased!

APRIL SWENBY, SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

G gives back

Garden Valley Technologies believes strongly in the communities we serve. Whether it is Garden Valley participating in local parades, donating to area organizations or our employees volunteering for events. We are proud to be able to provide our time, cash or merchandise to area community organizations for over 30 years. Garden Valley's donation program has contributed over $100,000 to organizations in the last 18 years!

Our donations policy allows for an annual amount, based on the number of access lines in an exchange, that is designated to be used on a first-come, first-served basis to non-political, non-religious, and non-profit organizations within our service area. At the end of the year, any unused funds help fund the Garden Valley Education Foundation, which provides technology grants for area schools.

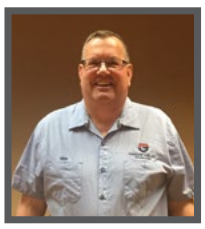
HAPPY RETIREMENT!

Facilities Supervisor **Keith Leines** retired after 35 years of service. Keith started his career as a construction lineperson, then cable splicer, followed by 20 years as Facilities Supervisor.

Keith is looking forward to the opportunity to enjoy more time hunting and fishing and being with family. Thank you, Keith, for your dedicated service to the Cooperative and being a great strength to our members. ***We all wish you a happy retirement, congratulations!***

Congratulations to **Lyle Waughtal,** who has been selected to fill the Facilities Supervisor position on March 1, 2019.

Until Lyle's recent promotion, he worked for 12 years in the construction department and most recently as a Facilities Technician.



Marc Plante has been selected to fill the Facilities Technician position on March 25, 2019.

Until Marc's recent promotion, he worked as a Construction Lineperson since June, 2000. Congratulations!

Congratulations to

District Representative

Brian Anderson

for his 15 years of loyal and dedicated service with Garden Valley.

Congratulations Brian!

Capital Credit Checks

Garden Valley will be paying out 100% of the remaining capital credits allocated for 2000 and 10% of the capital credits allocated for 2018, totaling approximately $570,000. Checks will be mailed to GV members the latter part of May.

A summary of capital credits allocated to members for 2018 will be included on the check stub. Margins are allocated to members based on patronage dollars with the Cooperative for the year.

Universal Service Charge

Effective in April 2019, the Federal Universal Service Fund Charge (FUSC) decreased from $1.80 to $1.69 per line for most residential and $1.90 to $1.79 per line for most single-line business customers, and from $2.44 to $2.29 per access line for most multi-line business customers.

The new FUSC amount for cellular service is calculated by multiplying the FUSC factor against your cellular plan charges. Effective in April 2019, that FUSC factor decreased from 7.4200% to 6.9748%.

Audit Confirms Successful Operations in 2018

Operating margins for 2018 are $3.56 million on revenues of $27 million. Net margins ($5.4 million) are up from 2017 due to the sale of Verisign stock in 2018 which netted $3.2 million. Operating margins increased from 2017 to 2018 mainly due to an increase in Network Access Revenues which included some significant prior year reimbursements. Allocation statements will be included on the members' check stubs when capital credits checks are delivered in May 2019. The audit was conducted by the certified public accounting firm of Olsen, Thielen & Co., Ltd. of St. Paul, MN.

HBO®, Cinemax®, and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. All Rights reserved.

Subscriber Mailing Address

Is your mail delivered to a Post Office Box address? If so, in our 2020 directory you can list your Post Office Box address in addition to, or in place of, your 911 address. Please note that the default directory listing will be your 911 address unless you instruct us otherwise. Please contact Garden Valley before July 1 if you would like us to make a change to your listing.

Statement of Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulation and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, officers, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs (including Garden Valley Telephone Company) are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, local human rights commission activity, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442, or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

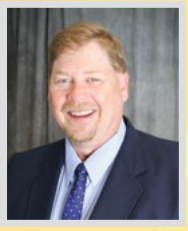
Garden Valley agrees with, and has fully complied with, all nondiscrimination and equal employment requirements. The Company has not received any complaints in regard to these provisions.

Garden Valley Telephone Company is an equal opportunity provider and employer. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business needs.

2020 DIRECTORY ADVERTISING

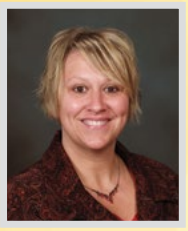
Marketing/Sales Consultants from Pinnacle Marketing Group will be in our area starting April 22 until the middle of July selling advertising for the 2020 Garden Valley telephone directory. When you advertise in the GV directory your ad will automatically be featured in our online directory, with all website and email addresses conveniently accessible by your customers.

Get the most out of your advertising investment, increase visibility, and connect with your customers with a fresh new ad, a website or social media page by contacting Pinnacle Marketing Group at 800.343.8086 or pinnaclemgp.com for more information.



Greg Meyer

Rod Wentzel



Kelly Gordon

Melissa Schwartz

Enter to win $50 cash prize

COVER CONTEST

Deadline: July 31, 2019

Garden Valley Technologies Directory

View Rules & Submit Entries:
www.gvtel.com/about-gv/directory-photo-contest

VOICE of the Valley

Published by Garden Valley Telephone Company
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Retail Stores & Office Hours

Erskine: Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:30pm
Bagley: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm
TRF: Monday - Friday 10:00am - 6:00pm

Company Telephone Numbers

Customer Support 24/7/365
800-448-8260, 218-687-5251, or
888-879-4968 *(GV Long Distance)*

Business Office, Retail Stores or Service Requests
800-448-8260 | 218-687-5251

Gopher State One-Call
800-252-1166
811 *(call toll-free before digging)*

GV Internet

Email: helpdesk@gvtel.com
Website: www.gvtel.com

Internet Support 24/7/365
877-546-7495

Live Chat *(7:30am - 10:30pm)*
www.gvtel.com

Board of Directors

Jerry Freitag, President | Plummer
Byron Ness, Vice President | Fertile
Arlene Novak, Secretary | St. Hilaire
James Ferden, Treasurer | McIntosh
Larry Djernes, Director | Clearbrook
Lee Hoaas, Director | Erskine
Casey Holland, Director | Fosston
Ron Kiesow, Director | Goodridge
Allen Paulson, Director | Shevlin

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Erskine, MN 56535

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Internet Service for 6 Months
Available to new Internet customers
Restrictions apply. Call for details.
Offer ends April 30, 2019