VOICE of the Valley

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GARDEN VALLEY TECHNOLOGIES

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Crookston & Warren

Added to GVT Expanded Local Calling

Garden Valley Technologies is excited to announce an addition to our expanded local calling area. In July of 2019, the Garden Valley Technologies board of directors announced the first expansion of local calling for all landline subscribers. Now, effective July 1, 2021, the board of directors has approved adding Crookston and Warren, MN to our expanded local calling, meaning our members can call Crookston and Warren prefix phone numbers with no long-distance charges.

Expanded Local Calling is a FREE service that allows existing and new GVT landline subscribers the ability to make unlimited calls within Garden Valley Technologies' 26 exchanges, as well as Crookston and Warren, and also includes local cellular numbers. GVT believes strongly in our communities and this is the perfect way to keep friends and family connected. Because of mandatory 10-digit dialing, members will need to dial area code + telephone number for all local calls.

Garden Valley Technologies also offers a residential unlimited long-distance plan for calling outside of our new expanded local calling area. This service is available for $22.95/month/line.

Exchange	Prefix
Bagley	694
Beltrami	926
Brooks	698
Clearbrook	776
Crookston	275, 277, 280, 281, 289, 470, 521, 551
Erskine	687
Fertile	945
Fosston	431, 435, 490
Gatzke	459
Gonvick	487
Goodridge	378
Grygla	294
Gully	268
Lengby	358, 533, 668

Exchange	Prefix
Leonard	968
Mahnomen	261, 383, 902, 930, 935, 936
Maple Bay	574
McIntosh	563
Mentor	200, 637
Minerva	657
Oklee	796
Plummer	465
Red Lake Falls	253
St. Hilaire	964
Shevlin	785
Thief River Falls	416, 633, 653, 681, 683, 684, 686, 688, 689, 883
Warren	201, 400, 712, 745
Winger	938

News & Events

Holiday Closings

GVT business offices will be closed in observance of the upcoming holidays:
July 5 Independence Day
Sept. 6 Labor Day

Visit us at the Fair

Polk County - July 7-11
Pennington County - July 14-18
Marshall County - July 21-25
Clearwater County - Aug. 4-8

Annual Reports

2020 Annual Reports are available to members upon request.

116th Annual Meeting Highlights

Garden Valley Technologies was able to hold its 116th Annual Membership Meeting in-person at the Win-E-Mac School in Erskine. This was a welcomed return to normalcy after over a year of postponed or virtual events. On June 8th, 87 members and guests attended the meeting and 24 people viewed the meeting on GVTV and our Live Stream.

The Annual Meeting began at 10:30am with an invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the business session with confirmation, by Secretary James Ferden, that a quorum was present. Secretary Ferden also reviewed the Official Notice of Meeting and presented the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting for approval by the voting members.

The business meeting included reports from President Byron Ness, Treasurer Allen Paulson, and CEO/General Manager Tim Brinkman, who provided exciting "breaking news" regarding the addition of expanded local calling to Crookston and Warren *(see article on the front page)*.

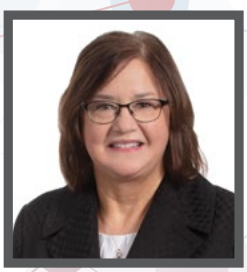
CEO/General Manager Tim Brinkman gave special thanks and recognition to CFO Mark Klinkhammer who is retiring after 32 years of service with the company.

Personnel & Administrative Manager Sue Rasmussen reviewed By-Laws information relating to Director qualification and voting; the election of Directors for Districts 3, 6 and 9 was held following the recess for district caucuses. Incumbent Director **Arlene Novak** was elected to fill a 3-year term as Director for District No. 3 *(Red Lake Falls, St. Hilaire and Plummer exchanges)*. Incumbent Director **Larry Djernes** was elected to fill a 3-year term as Director for District No. 6 *(Clearbrook, Gonvick and Leonard exchanges)*. And, incumbent Director **Ron Kiesow** was elected to fill a 3-year term as Director for District No. 9 *(Gatzke, Goodridge, Grygla and Gully exchanges)*.

GVT employees were available to answer questions about the Cooperative's many products and services.

THANK YOU to everyone who attended *In-Person & Virtually.*

CONGRATULATIONS to **Virginia Berns** of Oklee who won the **Grand Prize $150 bill credit**, which was drawn from all member names. In addition, several prizes were awarded to attendees.



Arlene Novak
District 3 | Red Lake Falls, St. Hilaire, Plummer

Larry Djernes
District 6 | Clearbrook, Gonvick, Leonard

Ron Kiesow
District 9 | Gatzke, Goodridge, Grygla, Gully

Clearbrook-Gonvick Local Channel 39 - Fall 2021

Garden Valley Technologies is excited to have the opportunity to work closely with several local schools to provide live broadcasts of student-run productions, including our most recent partnership with Clearbrook-Gonvick High School, home of the Bears.

Beginning with fall sports in August 2021, we will start airing school and local community content for Clearbrook-Gonvick on Garden Valley TV Channel 39. GVT's employees will be training staff and students on the cameras and broadcasting equipment that GVT provided to the school for their Work Study program. Joseph Skjaret will run the program and serve as the advisor. Sporting events at the Clearbrook-Gonvick High School will be broadcast on Channel 39 and, in the future, there are plans to expand content programing.

The students and staff at these schools have dedicated countless hours to learning and running the equipment to provide parents, grandparents, friends and family the opportunity to cheer on their favorite student(s) from home. Tune in to GVTV Local Channels 30-39 or Live Stream on our website to support our local media crews and students: www.gvtel.com/video/livestream

Win-E-Mac #30 | Fosston #31 | Fertile-Beltrami #32 | Bagley #33 | Red Lake Falls #34 | RLCC #35 | Grygla #36
Thief River Falls #37 | Goodridge #38 | Clearbrook-Gonvick #39 ***(Fall 2021)***

GVT Receives NTCA Marketing eXcellence Award

NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association has recognized Garden Valley Technologies (GVT) as the winner of the NTCA Marketing eXcellence Award in Sales Strategy.

GVT is a member of NTCA, the premier association representing nearly 850 independent, community-based telecommunications companies in rural communities across America. The Marketing eXcellence Awards recognize the vital role marketing, sales and communications play in the broadband industry and are announced annually at NTCA's Marketing + Sales Conference.

"In a year when everything had to pivot online, connections with customers have played an even more vital role," said NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield. "I want to commend all of NTCA's members for their work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and especially GVT. Thank you for your contributions to your communities and to our industry."

"This award is a great way to recognize the work from employees across GVT to build brand awareness, create a positive experience for new customers and connect with the Thief River Falls community," stated Heidi Haaven, Marketing & Communications Manager at GVT. "It is an honor to receive the NTCA 2020 Marketing eXcellence Sales Strategy award."

Visit our website to view the video produced by NTCA of the GVT sales strategy.
www.gvtel.com/recognized-as-ntca-marketing-excellence-award-winner

The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program is a national FCC program to help households pay for Internet service during the pandemic. The program will provide:

- Up to a $50/month discount on your broadband service and associated equipment rentals
- Up to a $75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands

Who is eligible for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program?
If you currently qualify for the Lifeline Program, you qualify for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program. If not, household eligibility requirements are:

- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, or did so in the 2019-2020 school year
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 below $99,000 for single filers and $198,000 for joint filers

How do you sign up for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program?
If you are currently on the Lifeline Program, GVT can enroll you in the EBB Program with your permission. If you are not on the Lifeline Program at GVT but meet the eligibility requirements, you can enroll at **getemergencybroadband.org**.

Questions? Please contact our customer service team at 800-448-8260.

Congratulations!

Chief Financial Officer

Help us welcome **Steve Mueller**, of Hobbs, NM, to Minnesota and to our GVT team! Steve joined us on May 17, 2021 and is the successor to retiring CFO Mark Klinkhammer. Steve has 25+ years of telecommunications industry experience and has been CFO for several companies during his career.

Welcome to the GVT family, Steve!

Service Representative

Meet **Michelle Jax,** of Erskine. She joined our team on April 14, 2021 when she was hired as a Part-Time Service Representative.

Congratulations Michelle and welcome to the GVT family!

Personnel News

With the summer construction season ramping up, we have hired several temporary constructions workers: **Mark Schmitz, Austen Hanson, Tahlor Ose, Chad Parlsey, Joey Revier, Vance Myklejord, Caleb Pahlen, and Riley Pahlen. Welcome to the GVT team!**

We would like to congratulate the following employees for their years of loyal and dedicated service with Garden Valley Technologies.

20 Years

Byron Ness
GVT Director

Sandy Bixby
IT Help Desk Technician

Shannon Brekke
Installer-Repairperson

Pat Jackson
Cable Splicer

15 Years

Amy Parsley
Administrative Assistant

10 Years

Kelly Solie
Construction Lineperson

5 Years

Jessica Nelson
Administrative Assistant

Congratulations & Thank You

Billing Information

Universal Service Charge

The Federal Universal Service Fund Charge (FUSC) will decrease in July from $2.17 to $2.07 per line for most residential customers and $3.17 to $3.02 per line for single-line business customers. Multi-line business customers increased from $4.08 to $3.88 per access line.

The new FUSC amount for cellular service is calculated by multiplying the FUSC factor against your cellular plan charges. Effective in July, that FUSC factor will decrease from 12.3914% to 11.7978%.

More Than $2,400,000 of GVT Capital Credits Paid

Over 16,000 checks, totaling more than $2,400,000, were issued on May 20 to Garden Valley Technologies members who had service with the Cooperative in 2001 and/or 2020.

More than $18.6 million in capital credits have been authorized by the board of directors for payment to Garden Valley members over the last fifteen years.

These payments are not dividends for tax purposes because they are a return of contributed capital.

GVT Capital Credit Payout

The GVT board of directors voted to give members 85 years or older the option to receive 100% of their unretired capital credits. This is the second year in a row for this program and it is limited to $1.6 million. Please watch for more information coming soon.

Unclaimed Capital Credits

Capital Credit Checks were mailed in May. Unfortunately, sometimes checks are unclaimed. A list of members who have unclaimed patronage checks has been posted on our website at **www.gvtel.com/about-gv/capital-patronage.** If your name is on the list, call us at 800-448-8260.

Local Student Scholarships Awarded

Minnesota Telecom Alliance Foundation

The Minnesota Telecom Alliance announced that they received 158 scholarship applications from across the state and two winning students are from the GVT service area. **Alex Jacobson**, from Erskine, MN, was selected to receive the $1,000 Jon Tollefson IT scholarship and **Wyatt Halvorson**, from Thief River Falls, MN, was selected to receive a $1,000 scholarship. Both scholarships are applicable for the 2020-2021 academic year and are awarded by the Minnesota Telecom Alliance Foundation.

Jacobson graduated from Win-E-Mac High School and plans to attend North Dakota State University. He is the son of Steve and Dawn Jacobson.

Halvorson graduated from Lincoln High School and plans to attend the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. He is the son of Rhonda Halvorson.

In awarding the scholarships to Jacobson and Halverson, Tim Brinkman said, "We're happy to have this chance to make an investment in this students' college education. Rural communities need educated and talented young people to be our leaders of the future. It makes us all proud at Garden Valley Technologies when two of the statewide winners are from our area."

The Foundation is part of the Minnesota Telecom Alliance, a trade organization based in St. Paul representing over 44 telephone companies and cooperatives in the state. Congratulations to Alex and Wyatt for winning these scholarships.

FRS Good Neighbor Scholarship

In addition to the Minnesota Telecom Alliance scholarships, GVT is excited to announce that **Alanah Mack**, graduate of Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls, was awarded the Good Neighbor scholarship through the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS). Founded in 1994, FRS is the philanthropic arm of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association, of which Garden Valley Technologies is a member.

The FRS Scholarship Program awards one-time scholarships to students from rural communities for their first year of college, university or vocational-technical school. Each student is sponsored by an NTCA member company that also contributes a portion of the scholarship award. The foundation received over 750 applications from across America and selected 33 recipients.

This scholarship is awarded to students who demonstrate what it means to be a "good neighbor" through humanitarianism, inclusion and kindness to others. Congratulations to Alanah for winning this national scholarship.

Alex Jacobson pictured with GVT Director Lee Hoaas.

Wyatt Halvorson pictured with GVT Director Jim DeVries.

Alanah Mack pictured with GVT Director Jim DeVries.

COVER CONTEST

2021 GVT Directory

$100 Cash Prize

Deadline: July 31, 2021

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

We no longer accept printed photo submissions.

VOICE of the Valley

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Retail Stores & Office Hours

Erskine: Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm
Bagley: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm
(Closed 1:00pm – 1:30pm)
TRF: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm

Contact Us

Customer Support 24/7/365, Business Office, Retail Stores or Service Requests
800-448-8260, 218-687-5251, or
888-879-4968 *(GV Long Distance)*
www.gvtel.com

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7:00am - 8:30pm Monday - Saturday
11:00am - 6:30pm Sunday

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

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SMART RURAL COMMUNITY

GIG-CERTIFIED PROVIDER

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