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Teleconnections

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Webster-Calhoun
Cooperative Telephone Association

1106 Beek Street, PO Box 475, Gowrie, Iowa 50543 ★ Phone: 515-352-3151 ★ www.wccta.com ★ www.wccta.net

MARCH – In like a lion...

Well the weather the first week of March certainly roared! Or maybe that was just the wind howling. At WCCTA we do everything possible to keep our customers connected. Our facilities are underground, we have back-up batteries and generators, and service people work hard 24/7. Bringing the latest technology to rural areas through the use of fiber communication is dependent on commercial power. A short power outage is not a problem. But ice, snow, wind and impassable roads that cover our serving area and leave those areas without power for days, certainly is. See the back side of the newsletter for more information about how your service is affected by power.



...Out like a lamb?

Annual Meeting of Members A Success!

Members were on the “edge” of their seats as the results were announced for the newly elected Board of Directors at the recent Annual Meeting of Members. New this year, mail ballots were sent out and resulted in 1,087 ballots returned for the election (over 300 ballots were returned for each of the three districts.)

Alan Jacobson, Board President; Daryl Carlson, General Manager; and Marcie Boerner, Office Manager all spoke about the cutting edge of technology, the theme for the meeting.

Jeff Naig, of Kiesling Associates, reviewed the financial statements. Net margins were extremely profitable this year due to outside investments and Webster-Calhoun’s shares of Midwest Wireless, which were sold to Alltel.

**See pictures and door prize winners
in next month’s newsletter...**

Newly Elected Board Members Include:

District 1

Steve Gustafson, Lanyon (3 year term)
Jim Peterson, Gowrie (2 year term)
Craig Fillman, Paton (1 year term)

District 2

Larry Winkelbauer, Somers (3 year term)
Alan Jacobson, Farnhamville (2 year term)
Perry Black, Barnum (1 year term)

District 3

Dale Thompson, Badger (3 year term)
Morris Licht, Clare (2 year term)
Jim Legvold, Vincent (1 year term)

Officers include:

Alan Jacobson, President
Morris Licht, Vice President
Craig Fillman, Secretary

Cabinets: If you have telephone and/or Internet service provided with one of these cabinets, it is powered by commercial power and an industry standard back up battery. Taking technology out of the Central Office and closer to your home allows rural subscribers the same advantages as those within city limits, but it also makes it vulnerable to the forces of nature.



When the cabinet goes into “power save” mode it uses the back up batteries and customers will only receive dial tone. Internet may not work at all. Webster-Calhoun servicemen then travel to these cabinets with generators to ensure the batteries stay charged in these cabinets.

Fiber to the Home: Where the cabinets take technology into the rural areas, fiber takes that a step further. Fiber technology is powered at the customer’s premise. When the power goes out, WCCTA provides a standard 8 hour talk time battery backup. Length of the battery is determined by how the phone is used (incoming vs. outgoing calls, or if the phone is even used at all.) Conservation mode goes into effect and does not allow high speed Internet.

Cell Phones: Some cell phones came through this particular storm very well. But again, power problems can persist. Cell phones also run on batteries and if there is no commercial power, they cannot be recharged. Cell towers rely on commercial power and some sites do not have generators.

Cordless Phones: The recent power outage made some realize that a cordless phone isn’t as reliable as it seems. Dependent on commercial power, the cordless phone is dead as soon as the electricity goes off.

Your home should retain at least one phone that is hardwired to a jack. That means the phone must have a cord attached to its receiver and is not plugged into an electrical outlet. If you don’t care to keep one in use daily, have one in storage you can pull out and plug into a jack if and when there is a power outage.

Phones are also available to purchase from Webster-Calhoun.



Tip:
**Conserve
batteries
during
power
outages.**

“I am very proud of the way the employees at Webster-Calhoun worked so hard to restore service to our customers. Whether it was braving the elements to get to a Central Office, bucking a drift to connect a generator, relaying messages, answering phones, monitoring systems, or snowmobiling equipment to make repairs... The list goes on. Their dedication and commitment was really appreciated.”

-- Daryl Carlson, General Manager, at the Annual Meeting