

The Connection

MAY 2024

Runestone Telecom Annual Meeting

Runestone Telecom's 74th Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, at 7 pm at West Central Area High School in Barrett. Registration will be at 6:30 pm as will entertainment by Ken Elvehjem. The WCA Trap Shooting Team will serve refreshments following the meeting. Prizes and Runestone swag will be given out, too! Please save the date and plan to join us.

Contact Us

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Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320-986-2013

Office Hours: M-F 8 am to 4:30 pm

Email: rtaoffice@runestone.net

24/7 HelpDesk for Internet Outages and Technical Support:
320-986-6655
helpdesk@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Find Us:   

Review Us
on Google

Please let others know about your experience as a Runestone Telecom customer. Scan this code and leave a review on Google. Thanks!



Congratulations
2024
CLASS OF

HATS OFF TO THE GRADUATES

Runestone Telecom joins our community to celebrate the accomplishments of this year's graduates. They've worked hard, learned a lot, and used their talents to grow as individuals. While there were undoubtedly challenges along the way, the tassel is worth the hassle.

Did you know the graduation hat, with its stiff square top from which the tassel hangs, is often called a mortarboard since it resembles the square tray bricklayers use when applying mortar? Think of it as a reminder to graduates to keep building throughout life.

Best of luck in the future!

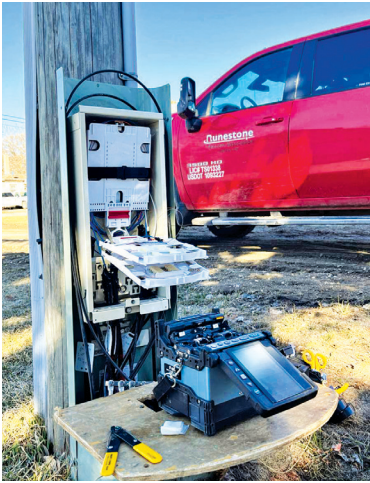


Photo credit to Braeden Long

Herman Fiber Optic Project

Runestone Telecom is excited to move all Herman customers to the fiber optic connection! Our project is well underway in transitioning wireless connections into the experience of Fiber Optic Internet.

We are proud of our amazing and knowledgeable technicians as they continually work hard to bring high-speed Internet to our rural communities. This is vital with so many people working from home, taking online classes, and participating in esports.

See TV Guide

You can always find the most up to date show listings on our website at www.runestone.net > Cable Television > Additional Services > TV Guide or scan this QR code to go directly to the TV Guide.

You may also opt to purchase a subscription directly from www.tvguidemagazine.com.



Annual Notice of Lifeline Program and Telephone Assistance Plan

You may be eligible for help paying your telephone bill through these two programs:

The Lifeline Program is a federal one which offers a monthly discount up to \$9.25 on some landline telephone service plans and/or Internet plans. Lifeline also offers discounts on some wireless telephone service plans and some broadband Internet service plans. You may receive the Lifeline discount on one service per household. The definition of a household is anyone living at an address — including children, relatives, or people not related to you — who share income(s) and household expenses.

Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) offers a monthly credit of \$10.00 on your landline telephone service. You can receive the TAP credit on one landline per household.

Qualifications

The telephone or broadband service must be in your name. You must show proof that you or a member of your household participates in at least one of the following programs or is income eligible:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Programs

If you do not participate in any of the programs listed above, you may qualify if your income is at or below 135% of the 2024 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines:

Household Size	48 Contiguous States, D.C., and Territories
1	\$20,331
2	\$27,594
3	\$34,857
4	\$42,120
5	\$49,383
6	\$56,646
7	\$63,909
8	\$71,172
For each additional person, add \$7,263	

For more information about Lifeline, go to www.lifelinesupport.org. Note to our RTA customers: These programs are not available to our customers in Alexandria, Glenwood, Herman, Holmes City, Stearns County, Villard, and Wheaton.

Watch Out for Fake Celebrity Scams

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) is warning consumers to be suspicious of social media posts of celebrities endorsing a weight loss product, health supplement, or other item. There may be photos showing the celebrity using the product or a video with their voice sharing the amazing results they've seen. With ever-improving AI technology, phony endorsements are more convincing than ever.

According to the BBB, here's how to spot fake celebrity scams:

- **Get familiar with deepfake technology.** Scammers use deepfake technology to trick people. They take real video clips and photos of a person and use them to create new videos and audio clips. Deepfake images and videos can be surprisingly realistic, so take a closer look to spot isolated blurry spots, double edges to the face, changes in video quality during the video, unnatural blinking or no blinking, and changes in the background or lighting.
- **Understand how AI-generated images work.** With AI image generators, you can type in a few words describing the image you want to be created, and AI generates an image based on your text. It's valuable technology, but scammers can abuse it to create images to back up their stories, products, or outright lies. Don't assume a photo is proof that something is trustworthy.
- **Know that scammers often impersonate celebrities.** Don't assume celebrity posts, images, or videos are legitimate until you verify they came from an official source. Just because something is shared widely on social media doesn't mean it's real. Always do your due diligence before you purchase or reshare something you saw on social media.
- **Only do business with companies you know and trust.** If you want to purchase a product or donate to a cause, do so through a reputable business or nonprofit. If you're interested in something from an unfamiliar company, do plenty of research first. Look up the company name, website, and contact information. Read reviews on BBB.org and do a general search with the company's name and the word "scam." Don't skip this step. It's the best way to protect yourself from fraud.

For more about scams, go to [BBB.org/ScamTips](https://www.bbb.org/ScamTips). If you've been scammed or targeted for a scam, you can file a report at [BBB.org/ScamTracker](https://www.bbb.org/ScamTracker).



A Mesh WiFi Network is Best for Larger Homes

While a traditional router is a singular, centralized access point, a mesh network is created from multiple WiFi nodes that all provide web connectivity. For example, you could have a central hub in the kitchen and satellite nodes in the home office, kitchen, and bedroom.

The main benefit of a mesh network is extended WiFi coverage. Mesh networks can often cover up to 5,000 square feet — much more than you can expect from one central router — to eliminate the annoyance of dead zones. They're a particularly good fit for large or multistory homes where the WiFi network has a lot of ground to cover and walls to travel through. In a home that's smaller than about 1,500 square feet, a mesh network might be more hardware than you need.

Runestone Telecom offers Managed WiFi, and our team will select the right network equipment to give your home the best coverage and signal strength. To learn more, call 320-986-2013.

Try eBill and AutoPay

Still mailing a check to pay your Runestone Telecom bill? Switch to eBill for more security, lower costs, and less time required. For an even faster option, choose AutoPay and we'll automatically deduct your bill amount on the 20th of the month from the account you designate.

Visit www.runestone.net to sign up. Call 320-986-2013 if you need help.

You All Know What to Do on National Streaming Day

Roku started National Streaming Day in 2014 to mark its 10th anniversary, and it's been celebrated annually on May 20th ever since. Today, almost everyone uses some sort of streaming device to watch movies and TV series. The most popular ones are Roku Stick 4K Plus, Chromecast, Amazon Fire, and Apple TV.

Many of the major streaming services celebrate National Streaming Day by releasing or announcing new content. So, be on the lookout on May 20th for some major releases from your favorite places to stream.

For the best experience while streaming series and movies, make sure your Internet connection has sufficient speeds. For details on our Internet plans, call 320-986-2013.

New Members

Barrett

Barrett Lake Resort..... 320-528-2598

Donnelly

Strand, Burdell..... 320-246-3240

Elbow Lake

Westrom, Lyle 218-685-2057

Herman

AJ's Gas & Grocery 320-677-2300

Ekberg, Gay A 320-677-2687

Stenger, Jerome

& Mary 320-677-2012

Lowry

Lowry Transfer Inc..... 320-283-5308

Wheaton

Anderson, Anne Marie .. 320-422-2295

Davis, Rick & Joy 320-422-4085



Internet Speed Matters, But So Does Reliability

Discussions about what to consider when choosing an Internet plan tend to focus on speed. That's certainly understandable, given that the more the speed you have, the less time you'll spend waiting for big files to load or video buffering to stop. However, the way families and businesses evaluate Internet service is evolving beyond just speed to also include reliability.

You can think of it this way: Internet speed is like the speed limit of a highway versus the number of lanes and the likelihood of roadblocks. How valuable is the ability to travel quickly if there's congestion and unreliable conditions that often hinder you from doing so?

For many businesses and homes, Internet access is nearly as important as other utilities such as electricity, natural gas, and water. Having unreliable Internet is stressful and counterproductive. If there's downtime, businesses simply can't operate in an efficient manner and productivity suffers. For families, unreliable Internet can be an annoyance that occasionally prevents the enjoyment of streaming services and social media. For those who work from home, the consequences are more serious. It can severely limit the ability to complete projects and connect with colleagues.

You can rest assured that Runestone Telecom makes Internet reliability a high priority and proudly maintains an uptime of 99.999%. We've invested heavily in our fiber network, and we proactively monitor it to minimize service interruptions. Our network is also designed with redundant paths, meaning if a cable is accidentally cut, Internet traffic can instantly be rerouted to another path to continue flowing.

The Internet reliability you experience from Runestone Telecom is further enhanced by the knowledgeable, professional support you receive from our local team of employees. After all, customer service goes hand-in-hand with reliability. Should issues develop — after all, no technology is foolproof — our goal is to get you back up and running as soon as possible.

CALL 320-986-2013 TO DOUBLE YOUR SPEED FOR AS LITTLE AS \$3 A MONTH! Service availability and Internet speed will depend on location. Certain restrictions apply. Contact us for details.