

# The Connection

SEPTEMBER 2024

## Solar Outage May Affect TV Signals

If your TV picture turns snowy or blurry around September 22nd, the date of this year's fall equinox, it's probably from a solar outage. This is a natural phenomenon which occurs when the receiving antenna on Earth, the satellite, and the sun are in direct alignment.

Fortunately, a solar outage lasts only about 15 minutes—just enough time to fix yourself a snack.

### Contact Us

100 Runestone Drive / PO Box 336  
Hoffman, MN 56339  
Phone: 320-986-2013

Office Hours: M–F 8 am to 4:30 pm

Office Closure: Monday,  
September 2nd for Labor Day

Email: [rtaoffice@runestone.net](mailto:rtaoffice@runestone.net)

24/7 HelpDesk for Internet  
Outages and Technical Support:  
320-986-6655

[helpdesk@runestone.net](mailto:helpdesk@runestone.net)

Visit Us: [www.runestone.net](http://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!



**Runestone**  
Telecom Association



## DISCOVER A WHOLE NEW WORLD

IT'S AMAZING HOW FAR TECHNOLOGY WILL TAKE YOU

What was once science fiction is becoming science fact! Virtual reality headsets can transport you to outer space, let you travel through time, or place you in the middle of a video game world. This technology can also be used to help students become more engaged in learning through immersive visual experiences.

No matter where you are in your technology journey, our super-fast fiber Internet will help you move forward and fully enjoy each adventure.

**CALL 320-986-2013 TO DOUBLE YOUR SPEED FOR AS LITTLE AS \$3 A MONTH!**

*Speed availability varies depending on location. Contact us for details.*



## Employment Scams Take Advantage of Job Seekers

Scammers advertise jobs in the same places honest employers do—in online ads, on job sites, and through social media. They promise you a job, but what they want is your money. Some of the most common employment scams feature work-from-home offers. Scammers claim you can make thousands of dollars a month working from home with little time and effort. But instead of making money, you end up spending it on starter kits, so-called training, or worthless certifications.

To avoid getting scammed:

- **Search online.** Look up the name of the company or the person who's hiring you, plus the words "scam," "review," or "complaint."
- **Talk to someone you trust.** Describe the offer to them. What do they think?
- **Don't pay for the promise of a job.** Honest employers, including the federal government, will never ask you to pay to get a job.

While looking for employment, one of your jobs is to watch for scams.

# Our Success is a Team Effort

Runestone Telecom talks a lot about the impact of technology, especially fiber, on our growth and ability to enhance our communications services for customers. However, the most valuable resources at Runestone Telecom are our Board of Directors and staff members. Their knowledge, experience, and dedication make everything possible at our company, and I want to publicly thank them all here. After all, we couldn't spell Runestone (or success) without "u."



Kent Hedstrom  
CEO, General Manager



## Network – Internet Technicians

Left to right: Joe Polzin, Russ Froemming, James Simonson, Ken Elvehjem, and Chris Schmiesing



## Customer Experience

Left to right: Dawn Bumgardner, Pam Randt, Liza Long, Michelle Martinson, and Angie Huseth



## Network Technicians

Left to right: Braeden Long, Shawn Engler, Christian McGaffey, Cyndi Gulbranson, Matt Lloyd, Brady Combs, Dan Perry, Brad Frank, Curt Hyatt, Ryan Schonhardt, Gary Ness, Nathan Richards, and Chris Veldhouse. Not Pictured: Nate Hilbrand, Marvin Perkins, and Laurel Norlien



## Board of Directors

Left to right: Dick Staples, Jolene Vipond, Bob Leegaard, Tory Belgum, and John Kappahn

# Fiber Accidentally Cut Due to Road Construction Mishap

Thank you to our amazing crew for working so diligently to get our customers up and running after the main fiber cut happened in July — which affected the Kensington, Lowry, Forada, Villard, Alexandria, and Holmes City areas. Once we were alerted of the issue, caused by an accidental mishap during road construction, our technicians were quickly on the scene to repair the damage. They put in long hours (some not getting home until 2:30 am) and were back the next day to continue with splicing and other repairs.

To our customers who were affected by this fiber cut and storms that morning, thank you for your patience and understanding while we worked to get things back to normal.



*Our crew is plowing in a replacement fiber line for the one that was cut. Chris Veldhouse is in the cab while Nathan Hilbrand and Marvin Perkins guide the fiber into the plow chute.*



*Braeden Long places repaired fiber lines housed within the BD7 fiber pedestals which are typically found in road right-of-ways on mile section lines.*



*Braeden Long and Matt Lloyd repair the damage by splicing fiber optic lines in the portable trailer while on location.*

## Notes for Our TV Customers

### Want to see what's on TV?

You can always find the most up to date show listings on our website at [www.runestone.net](http://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](http://www.tvguidemagazine.com).



### Changes made to our Cable TV lineup.

After almost 10 years, **Kool-TV** of Alexandria, MN has shut down operations. We wish the best to those who worked so hard to bring this channel to our community.

**MeTV Toons—18.4** has been added to our lineup. Watch all your favorites including Bugs Bunny and Friends, Scooby Doo, The Flintstones, and more.

## Pause Your Service While on Vacation

Are you here on a seasonal basis? You have the option to pause your Runestone Telecom services while you leave us for the season or for an extended period.

**Call our office at 320-986-2013 and ask about our "Vacation Rate."**

## Add Convenience With eBill and AutoPay

Go paperless and save yourself time and trouble.

Visit [www.runestone.net](http://www.runestone.net) to sign up or call 320-986-2013.



# 74th Annual Meeting Photos and Thank You Messages

Thank you to everyone who came out to the 74th Annual Meeting on Wednesday, July 17th at West Central Area School in Barrett. We had a great time socializing with our members and enjoying entertainment by Ken Elvehjem, singer and guitarist. Following the meeting's presentation, we gave away many door prizes to lucky members. We ended the evening with delicious homemade treats and ice cream from the WCA Trap Team.

## We extend our gratitude to the following people and organizations:

- West Central Area School for hosting our event
- WCA IT Technicians Kevin and Stacy, plus Chad and the custodial staff
- Ken Elvehjem for providing us with his talent
- WCA Trap Team and their families for baking and serving the refreshments
- All businesses who supported us by donating door prizes
- Our members, most of all, for your continued patronage

You can view the 2023 Annual Meeting Report online at [runestone.net/the-coop/](http://runestone.net/the-coop/).

We look forward to seeing you again next year to celebrate our 75th year. It'll be a fun family celebration!



Thank you to the West Central Area Trap Shooters and families for spoiling us with delectable treats.

One of our own, Ken Elvehjem, lent his voice and guitarist talent to warm up the crowd prior to the meeting.

## Lifeline Provides Monthly Discounts

Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week (formerly named Lifeline Awareness Week) is September 9th-13th. It's designed to encourage enrollment in the Lifeline Program, which offers a monthly discount of up to \$9.25 off phone or Internet service to qualifying households. This makes it more affordable to have vital access to loved ones, healthcare, and workforce opportunities.

Visit [LifelineSupport.org](http://LifelineSupport.org) to see if you qualify.

## Update Your Address Before Capital Credit Checks are Mailed

Capital Credit checks will be mailed out November 15th, refunding approximately \$1,660,000 to members. We'll be refunding the remaining portion of 2005 and 20% of 2023. Please make sure we have your current mailing address, especially if you use eBill and paperless billing.

## New Members

### Herman

Simpson, Lowell or Rick...320-677-2307

### Elbow Lake

Helseth, Dennis J.....218-685-4170

Setran, Gordon &

Brigitte.....218-685-5270

### Hoffman

Wik, Johan & Brandy.....320-986-2045

### Wheaton

Tri County Cooperative Oil

Association.....320-563-8207

Western Probation

Services.....320-422-2320