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HORIZONS

A Special Annual Meeting Edition

September 2017

Closing the Distance

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*Josh Geigle, Internet savvy
rancher from Creighton*

 **Golden West**
You're In Good Company

Golden West is a Member of the SD Telecommunications Association

Closing the Distance

In rural South Dakota, distance is a normal part of life. Your home might be half an hour from the closest town, which is another two hours away from the "big city." There are ways though, to reduce distance when it comes to some of life's necessities. Golden West's reliable broadband technology can minimize this distance for rural towns, allowing for immediate access to jobs, education, and healthcare. The fact that you can live where you want and still have access to important things in life through your Internet is an exciting development for rural towns.



Josh Geigle works from home too, but you'll typically find him out in the field instead of on a computer. Josh is a rancher from Creighton who uses his broadband connection as an education tool. While attending a conference in Minneapolis, Josh witnessed a panel discussion on the pros and cons of eating beef. He realized that many people have never talked to a real rancher or even seen how cattle are raised. Inspired by this realization, Josh decided sharing his agricultural lifestyle on social media could help to educate the public about where their food comes from and who grows it.

"I started a farm/ranch Facebook page early last spring, and something I posted about the wheat harvest got over 3,500 views," said Josh. "Broadband helps me reach a lot more people than the 800 or so that live in Wall." Search for Josh's "Bell Bar Ranch" on Facebook, and you'll see photos and videos posted by Josh

that document the daily lives of his whole family. "I include photos of my kids riding and being part of our labor force because we all have to work to get the job done," Josh explains.

It's not all field work at Bell Bar Ranch. You'll often find Josh at his computer to educate others and himself, too. Josh recently Skyped (video chatted) with the National Museum of American History, as part of their "Ask a Farmer" series. "I just sat at my computer and was able to live-chat with people in Washington D.C. who had agricultural questions and had never spoken to a real farmer before," says Josh. He also takes time to educate himself, researching agricultural methods and practices shared by the extension offices at South Dakota State University and North Dakota State University. "I just pull up papers and gain the information I need to make our farm and ranch a better place," says Josh.

Jody Engel is the Communications and Foundation Director for Winner Regional Healthcare Center. Located just under 200 miles from Sioux Falls, Winner Regional relies on broadband services to help their patients. The ability to offer telemedicine in Winner not only saves patients the time it would take to drive to Sioux Falls, it's also a vital tool when an emergency arises.

In times of emergency, Winner Regional can turn to telemedicine to help their patients. The emergency room has an established bridge, like a secured line, available for doctors in Sioux Falls to call. "It's like they're in the room with the patient, using a special stethoscope to listen to the patient's heartbeat directly, rather than have the information relayed," says Jody. Telemedicine has also come in handy when Mother Nature shuts down the roads during winter. "We have been able to "move" an entire clinic for the day because of broadband. The doctor, who would normally drive to Winner for the day, calls in from their office and the patients come to Winner Regional to see the doctor via telemedicine," says Jody.

Winner Regional currently uses telemedicine in pulmonology, oncology, neurology, infectious disease, dietary, vascular surgery, and will soon be adding dermatology to that list. "We can offer specialty clinics to our patients that we would not otherwise be able to offer. Any resistance our patients have to telemedicine is gone after giving it a try. They quickly see how beneficial and worthwhile the service is," says Jody.

As Golden West's broadband network grows each year, the distances between rural South Dakotans and their access to life's necessities will only grow smaller. The stories shared here are only a glimpse of what broadband can do for rural communities. We'd love to hear how you are using broadband to minimize distance. To share your story, please email ChrisSeljeskog@GoldenWest.com, or call 605-719-3659.



Jody Engel of Winner Regional Healthcare Center

Telecommuting, or working from home, is not a new concept. However, with high-speed Internet, more companies are open to the idea of employees working remotely, realizing that the best talent might not be located in the same town as their headquarters.

Education has flourished using the Internet as a tool; students email their completed homework and watch online lectures in their classroom. Others are educating in a different way, documenting real-life experiences and sharing them online for anyone interested.

As for healthcare, consultations, follow-up appointments and test results can all be discussed over the Internet, saving rural patients the time and money required to reach hospitals hundreds of miles away. In fact, many Golden West members are already taking advantage of their reliable broadband service to live and work where they choose. Here are a few of our members' stories:

Jenn Reecy is the Chief Learning Officer for N2Growth, a global management consulting firm that counts Microsoft, eBay, Ford, and Visa among its clients. Jenn is one of the company's many employees who are able to telecommute. Jenn lives in Dell Rapids and with the help of Golden West's high-speed Internet, is able to work with clients around the world.

"Broadband seamlessly allows the world's most recognized organizations to turn to my company for professional advice," Jenn says. "We are able to coach, mentor and collaborate not only across South Dakota but across the globe thanks to this technology." Jenn points out that it is more than just email that her broadband connection provides. "To overcome the distance challenge, we utilize cloud storage systems, instant messaging, file sharing and live, interactive video conferences," she adds.

"Golden West provides an invaluable service to those of us who enjoy the quality of life in the Midwest and are able to work from home," said Jenn. "I've built a powerful professional network while decreasing travel costs, saving time, and increasing my productivity."



HORIZONS

Volume 17, Number 5

The award-winning Horizons customer newsletter is published bimonthly by Golden West Telecommunications.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to Golden West, PO Box 411 Wall, SD 57790.

Katie Fleming, Editor
www.goldenwest.com
1-855-888-7777



DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

Four-Year Terms

Golden West Cooperative members will elect four members to the Board of Directors. To vote, members must be present at the September 23rd annual meeting and may vote for a candidate in each district that has a director opening.



JADE HLAVKA, District I – Unopposed

Jade Hlavka has served on the Golden West Board of Directors since September of 2013. Jade and his wife, Annie, own and operate H&H Repair and also help operate the family ranch near Howes. Jade attended Faith High School and then graduated from Western Dakota Tech in Rapid City, with a degree in Diesel Tech.

Jade is a volunteer fire fighter for the Enning Fire Department. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, hunting, and spending time with his family. Jade and Annie have one son and another on the way.



KENNETH ZICKRICK, JR., District IV – Unopposed

Kenneth is a lifelong resident of Long Valley, where he farms and ranches with his brother. Kenneth and his wife Echo have one adult son. Kenneth attended National School of Business, taught school for one year, and has worked at an auto repair shop and implement dealer.

Kenneth has been a member of the Long Valley Fire Department since it started, and is also involved in other community activities. His hobbies include old cars, car races, auction sales and farming.



DALE GUPTILL, District VI – Incumbent

Dale Guptill was born in Martin and raised on a ranch near Kyle. He graduated from Kadoka High School and attended SDSU in Brookings. He and his wife, Valerie purchased the home ranch and raised three children, along with grain, seed, cattle, grasshoppers, and even a few prairie dogs!

Dale has served on the Golden West Board of Directors since September of 1985. Dale and Valerie still live on the home ranch and have three grown children and six grandchildren.



SAMUEL O'ROURKE, District VI – Challenger

Samuel O'Rourke is from Porcupine and is a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. He and his wife, Kristy, have seven children. They own a Subway franchise in Martin. They also own O'Rourke /Badlands Enterprises LLC, an auction and general contracting company specializing in commercial and residential building, trucking and septic services.

Samuel is a graduate of Red Cloud High School, and attended Chadron State College, SDSU and Oglala Lakota College. He later attended Western College of Auction in Billings, MT. Samuel has also been a professional rodeo announcer since 2012. In his spare time, he loves taking his children to rodeos, spending time with family and friends, and traveling to new places.



BART BIRKELAND, District VII – Unopposed

Bart Birkeland is a proud graduate of Northern State University, having received his degree in Business Administration.

Bart worked for 38 years in the rural electric business, and served as a General Manager for the last 25. Now retired, Bart and his wife Karen reside in the Gregory area. They have two adult sons, Jeff and Jason, and three grandkids "that are just the best," boasts Bart. When he isn't doting on his grandkids, Bart likes golfing, woodworking, riding his motorcycle and enjoying life.

Connections

Please Join Us for the

65th Annual Meeting

Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative

Saturday, September 23rd, 2017

Wall Community Center, Wall, SD

Registration: 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Free Lunch: 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Meeting Called to Order: 1:00 p.m.

**Register for the
\$500 grand prize
plus numerous cash
and merchandise prizes.**

You must be present to win.

AUTHORIZATION TO VOTE

Non-individual members of Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc., such as school districts, towns, churches and corporations may vote at the annual meeting by completing this form and presenting it at the registration desk on September 23, 2017. Each member organization should designate a representative who is an officer, stockholder or member of their organization.

This form must be signed by an officer or member of the governing body.

This is to certify that _____ is hereby designated the delegate to the Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc., Annual Meeting on September 23, 2017, from _____ whose telephone number is _____.

Named delegate is authorized to vote on all issues that may come before the meeting including election of directors.

By: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



Annual Meeting Entertainment THE NESTERS

Love of the banjo and prairie narratives brought singer/songwriters Eliza Blue and Jami Lynn together to form The Nesters. While both enjoyed successful recording and touring careers before their paths crossed, something special happened when they began making music together. "I knew of Eliza's music years before she moved to a ranch in Western South Dakota," said Jami. "When we first connected through Facebook, I had no idea there was another woman just a few hours north of me, making the same kind of music."

While Eliza and Jami both play guitar and banjo, Eliza is also a classically trained violinist who weaves together simple, melodic phases with American folk music. Together, Jami and Eliza make delicate, thoughtful songs that will delight fans of folk and pop music alike.

The Nesters were recently named a "favorite" by South Dakota Public Broadcasting for their song and video "Cowboss." To learn more about Eliza and Jami, and hear a sampling of their music, search for "The Nesters" on Facebook.

Brian Meyer Scholarships Available for 2018 Spring Semester

The South Dakota Telecommunications Association (SDTA) is now accepting applications for the Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarship. Two scholarships in the amounts of \$1,250 and \$500 will be awarded for the 2018 spring semester.

The scholarship is available to applicants who have completed at least two semesters of course work at an accredited post-secondary school in South Dakota and reside in an SDTA member company service area. The scholarship can be used at any post-secondary educational institution in South Dakota including public and private universities as well as technical schools.

Applicants must complete an application and write a short outline of their career plans following completion of their post-secondary education. They must also submit a brief essay on the future of small town South Dakota and what can be done to enhance the quality of life in rural areas through the use of technology. A copy of the applicant's most recent transcript and at least two letters of recommendation are needed as well.

The deadline to submit an application for the Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarship is October 31.

For more information on the Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarship, contact any post-secondary institution financial aid office, the South Dakota Telecommunications Association at 605-224-7629 or admin@sdaonline.com. The application is also available online at sdaonline.com/resources/scholarships.



2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting of the members of Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc., was called to order at 1:00 p.m., September 24, 2016 at the Wall Community Center, Wall, South Dakota by President Jeff Nielsen. Said meeting was held pursuant to notice thereof as required by law. Brandon Jones and The Thirsty Fish sang the National Anthem. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Nielsen.

President Nielsen called upon Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney for the Cooperative, who gave the Credential Report. A motion was made and seconded to approve a quorum. Motion carried.

Next, President Nielsen called upon Kenneth Zickrick, Jr., Secretary, to read the Notice of Meeting and the Proof of Mailing, after which a certified copy of each was duly filed as part of the Minutes of this meeting.

President Nielsen introduced the special guests in attendance at the meeting.

President Nielsen welcomed the Cooperative members and asked that the minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting be approved, if there were no additions or corrections, as written. On a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the President declared the Minutes approved.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the financial report.

President Nielsen then delivered his presidential report. He introduced the Golden West Board of Directors, and told of the beginnings of Golden West. He spoke of the determined spirit and commitment Golden West has maintained over the past one hundred years. He then introduced a special 100th Anniversary video highlighting members of Golden West and the Tour of Independence.

Next, President Nielsen called on Denny Law, General Manager/CEO, to present his annual report. Mr. Law welcomed all in attendance. He reported on the 100th Anniversary and the Tour of Independence. He invited guests to visit the "Fence Posts to Fiber Optics" exhibit and Golden West's progress over the last one hundred years. Mr. Law then spoke of the Cooperative's regulatory advocacy and Golden West's dedication to its customers through community investments and scholarships.

President Nielsen called on Darla Pollman Rogers, attorney, to report on the nominating petitions for the Board of Directors. Vacancies on the Board of Directors were as follows:

- District II Rodney Renner (four-year-term) unopposed;
- District III Lee Briggs (four-year term) unopposed;
- District V Stewart Marty (four-year term) Danny Defries (four-year term)
- District IX Jeff Nielsen (four-year term) Scott Nelson (four-year term)

A motion was made, seconded and carried to seat the uncontested incumbents:

- District II – Rodney Renner
- District III – Lee Briggs

Darla Pollman Rogers introduced the director candidates for District V: Stewart Marty and Danny Defries. District IX: Jeff Nielsen and Scott Nelson. Each candidate was allotted three minutes to address the membership.

Next, Darla Pollman Rogers advised the membership of the balloting process and requested that the ballots for the election of directors be handed out. After the membership had the opportunity to vote, the ballots were collected by a three-member balloting committee appointed by Darla Pollman Rogers to count the ballots and report to the membership. The members of the balloting committee were Brenda Carmichael, Norman Payne and Christine Niedan.

President Nielsen called for any old business. Frank Kloucek spoke on becoming a member of the Golden West Cooperative and congratulated the Cooperative on their 100th anniversary.

President Nielsen called for any new business. There was none.

Next, President Nielsen called on Member Services Manager Jody Bielmaier to introduce the entertainment for the afternoon, Brandon Jones and The Thirsty Fish of Rapid City.

Following the entertainment, Darla Pollman Rogers announced the election results: Stewart Marty was elected for District V and Jeff Nielsen for District IX.

During the course of the meeting several drawings were held to award prizes. The grand prize, \$500, went to Mary Hendricksen of Wall.

President Nielsen adjourned the meeting.

Kenneth Zickrick Jr.

Kenneth Zickrick, Jr. - Secretary