

# The Connection

JUNE 2020

## Have Fun But Stay Safe This Summer

Summer 2020 will be challenging for all of us due to the COVID-19 pandemic. You may not be able to take the vacations you were planning or participate in other group activities.

Runestone Telecom encourages you to follow the precautions recommended by the CDC at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). As you spend more time at home and depend heavily on the internet for communication and entertainment, let us know if you need an Internet upgrade.



### Contact Us

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

**Runestone**  
Telecom Association



## BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

We applaud our community's efforts to stay at home more to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Let's keep working together for the good of everyone.

We offer several ways to safely and securely pay your bill with us while our office is closed to the public:

- **Pay online.** Visit our website at [www.runestone.net](http://www.runestone.net) to sign up for eBill if you aren't yet enrolled.
- **Use our drop box.** Put your payment in the designated slot on our office building exterior.
- **Pay by phone.** Call 320-986-2013 during regular business hours and use a credit card.
- **Mail a check.** Send us your payment in the envelope provided with your printed bill.

**Worried about paying your bill? Call 320-986-2013 for assistance.**



## Voice Calls Make a Comeback During Pandemic

There's value in the sound of someone's voice, as more people are realizing while social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why after years of decline in voice calls —largely replaced by texting and messaging—voice call volume is up significantly.

In March 2020, Verizon reported a 25% increase in total voice use on its networks, driven primarily by more people accessing conference call services while working from home.<sup>1</sup> Personal calls, most of longer duration than average, also contributed to this increase.

For many people, text messages' brief content was perfectly fine while running around town on busy days. But during the slower pace of today's isolation, they crave the comfort of a familiar voice and the deeper connection of a leisurely conversation.

Written communication has its place, of course. But we encourage you to take this opportunity to rediscover the power of a voice call. Friends and family members who only wanted to text before may be thrilled to get a call from you now.

**Visit [www.runestone.net/phone](http://www.runestone.net/phone) to learn about the telephone services we offer.**

<sup>1</sup>[www.techrepublic.com/article/data-and-voice-usage-spike-as-more-people-work-from-home-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic](http://www.techrepublic.com/article/data-and-voice-usage-spike-as-more-people-work-from-home-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic)

# Virtual Tours Allow You to Travel Without Leaving Home

Just because you have to spend more time at home doesn't mean you can't explore some amazing tourist destinations. Many entities, from museums to beaches, have taken it upon themselves to offer free virtual tours.

**Museums** – Google Arts and Culture partnered with museums and galleries around the world to offer virtual tours of their spaces. Some of the options include New York's Museum of Modern Art and Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum ([artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en](https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en)).

**National Parks** – You can surround yourself with nature's wonders while staying in your home—no hiking boots required. Take a virtual tour of Yellowstone National Park ([www.nps.gov/yell/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtours.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtours.htm)) and Yosemite National Park ([www.virtualyosemite.org](http://www.virtualyosemite.org)).

**Hawaiian Islands** – You'll practically feel the sand in your toes when you virtually explore Hawaii. You'll see surf boards being made, people enjoying the waves, and much more ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnhZq\\_SF0ec](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XnhZq_SF0ec)).

**New York City** – This is the next best thing to being there in person. Check out the hotspots of New York City including the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and Madison Square Garden ([www.youvisit.com/tour/nyc?pl](http://www.youvisit.com/tour/nyc?pl)).



**Mars** – In the virtual world, you don't need to limit your travels to planet Earth. NASA partnered with Google to offer a tour of the surface of Mars recorded by NASA's Curiosity rover ([accessmars.withgoogle.com](http://accessmars.withgoogle.com)).

**Zoos and Aquariums** – Animal lovers rejoice! You can enjoy live webcam viewings from the San Diego Zoo ([zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams](http://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams)), the Georgia Aquarium ([www.georgiaaquarium.org/webcam/beluga-whale-webcam](http://www.georgiaaquarium.org/webcam/beluga-whale-webcam)), and the Monterey Bay Aquarium ([www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams)).

**Runestone Telecom can help you take advantage of the Internet's virtually unlimited resources with our fast and reliable Internet service. Call 320-986-2013 to learn about available speeds and pricing.**

# BBB Shares Information on Credit Freezes and Fraud Alerts

According to the Better Business Bureau (BBB), approximately 7% of U.S. households fall victim to identity theft each year. Anyone whose personally identifiable information has been compromised in a data breach should consider options to protect their credit from being misused. These options include a credit freeze or fraud alert with Experian, Transunion, and Equifax.

A credit freeze will not impact your credit score or impair your ability to use your existing credit cards. A freeze locks down your credit reports, which are used by lenders to determine your credit worthiness, not your actual credit. Once you freeze your credit reports, opening new credit will require some advanced planning. You'll need to request a temporary "thaw" with all three credit bureaus to allow lenders to access your reports.

A fraud alert is a less drastic, but potentially less effective, protective measure. A fraud alert flags your credit reports, alerting potential lenders to verify the identity of anyone attempting to open an account in your name. Fraud alerts don't interfere with your ability to receive instant credit. However, they rely entirely on the diligence of the person performing the credit check.

The BBB advises you to regularly check your credit reports at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) for unauthorized charges or other signs of fraud.



**FAST** ←  
*Mornings*  
→ **FAST**  
*Internet*

*Fathers quickly become heroes.*

Early morning wake-up cries from the baby. Mad scrambles to get kids dressed and fed. Emails with family and friends. Online searches for the latest news and entertainment. Plus more and more and more.

Considering the fast-paced demands of fatherhood, he clearly needs high Internet speeds. **Call 320-986-2013 now to put a smile on Dad's face this Father's Day with increased Internet speed.**

\*Service availability and Internet speed will depend on location.



## Strike a Pose on National Selfie Day

Start perfecting your smile! National Selfie Day is coming up on June 21. For best results when taking selfies, follow these tips:

### Hold the camera up and your chin down.

This is the first rule of selfies. For the best angles, hold the camera above you and tilt your chin slightly down. You may also want to try tilting your head at an angle.

### Show off your sense of humor.

Have some fun when taking selfies by contorting your face into a strange position or using goofy props.

### Follow the rule of thirds.

In general, try to have your eye line about one-third down from the top of the frame. To improve composition, keep your face to one side rather than putting it in the center.

### Stay close.

Keep your shots tight to your face to avoid distracting backgrounds.

### Choose the right light.

Pick an area with flattering lighting—either outside or inside near a window.

**Don't forget to share the fun using the hashtag #NationalSelfieDay.**

## Anti-Robocall Measure

The measure signed into law is called the Pallone-Thune TRACED Act, which stands for Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence. It was created to take aim at the illegal robocalls and spoofed calls often used by scammers.

### Under the TRACED Act:

- Phone companies over time must implement call-authentication technology to ensure the information that appears on Caller ID is correct.
- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) within a year must ensure consumers are offered robocall-blocking services with no additional line-item charge.
- The FCC will have greater powers to deter violators with larger fines (as much as \$10,000 per call) and a longer statute of limitations.

Certain robocalls remain legal, such as those from legitimate charities, and informational calls about school closures and the like.

## New Members

### Elbow Lake

Hanson, Ronald ..... 218-685-4610  
Hegerle, Erik ..... 218-685-3067

### Hoffman

Dunn, Rebecca ..... 320-986-2188

### Kensington

Christians, Terria ..... 320-965-6249  
Plocker, Alex ..... 320-965-3097

### Lowry

Menssen, Gary & Sharon.. 320-283-2194  
Onken, Marc & Patricia..... 320-283-3020  
Schuett, Michael J..... 320-283-4269

### Tintah

Williams, Christopher ..... 218-369-2009

## Ever Wondered How WiFi Works?

You probably use WiFi every day to connect your devices to the Internet. But how much do you actually know about this technology?

WiFi networks transmit data over the air with the help of radio waves, similarly to traditional radio. Wi-Fi radio waves typically have a frequency of 2.4 gigahertz or 5.8 gigahertz. These frequency bands carry multiple WiFi channels, with a multitude of networks using them.

Downloading a file from the internet over a WiFi network

requires your router to first receive the data via the broadband Internet connection and then convert it to radio waves. These radio waves are then emitted by the router into the surrounding area and the device that initially requested a download receives the radio signal. It decodes the signal and fetches the data.

The introduction of the WiFi standard revolutionized the way people accessed the Internet by allowing devices within a particular area to connect to the Internet (and each other) without being physically connected by a cable.

Because information is transferred using wireless transmitters and radio signals, physical proximity to the WiFi router is necessary for a good connection. But once connected, people can move around freely with their devices without losing their connection to the Internet.

While WiFi offers convenience, it can also present security concerns. WiFi routers are designed to allow all WiFi-enabled devices that are “in range” to connect, which is not always desirable —especially if someone wants to use your WiFi network to piggy-back on your Internet service. For this reason, you should make sure your home WiFi network is password-protected so that only authorized users can connect to it. Furthermore, when you access someone else’s WiFi network, the owner of that network can potentially see all the information you’re sending and receiving, including user names and passwords.

**Your friends at Runestone Telecom want to help keep your Internet connection secure. If you have questions about protecting your Internet connection, or want to change your WiFi password, call 320-986-2013 and ask to talk to our Internet department.**

