

The Connection

JUNE 2021

It Simply Wouldn't Be Summer Without Simple Pleasures

Soak the kids in a water fight. Grab an ice cream cone. Pitch a tent in the backyard. Gaze at the stars. Blow bubbles. Pack a picnic and head to the park.

Summer offers the opportunity for so many simple pleasures that require little or no money—just a willingness to unplug and unwind with those we love. Runestone Telecom hopes you enjoy this season to the fullest.

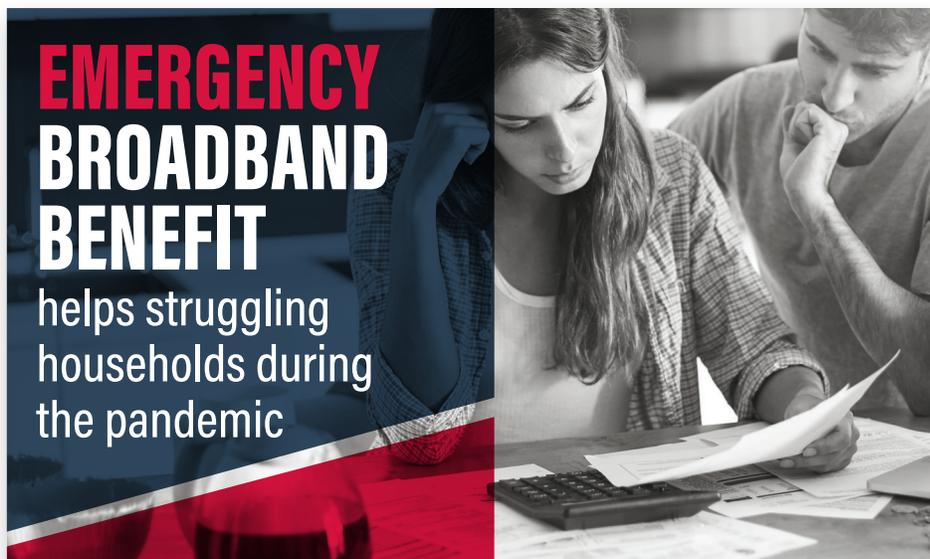
Runestone Telecom Annual Meeting

The 71st Annual Meeting of Runestone Telecom Association will be held on Wednesday, July 14th at West Central Area School in Barrett at 7pm. The 2021 Annual Report is available to view online at www.runestone.net. If you would like a copy, you can pick one up at our office, or call us if you'd like to have a copy sent to you at: 320-986-2013.

Contact Us

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Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Runestone
Telecom Association



**EMERGENCY
BROADBAND
BENEFIT**
helps struggling
households during
the pandemic

The pandemic increased the need for broadband service while reducing income for many. To help, the Emergency Broadband Benefit provides eligible households with a monthly broadband discount of up to \$50.

A household may be eligible if one member qualifies for the Lifeline program, receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or school breakfast program, received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year, meets the eligibility criteria for a participating providers' existing low-income or COVID-19 program, or experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020.

If you are a current Lifeline customer and subscribe to our 10-15, 20-30 or 40-50 Mbps Internet, you can fill out the opt-in form by visiting our website at: www.runestone.net. You can return forms to us at: rtaoffice@runestone.net, or stop into our office at 100 Runestone Dr. in Hoffman, MN.

**For complete details, visit
www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit.**

“This and That” News from Runestone Telecom

Runestone Telecom Employee Updates

We are welcoming back Riley Moore to the Runestone crew as a seasonal summer worker. We are happy to have you back Riley!



We would also like to wish a warm welcome to Brady Bauck as our new IT/Networking Intern. We are happy to have you on board Brady!



And finally, Tristan Staples, our former IT/Networking Intern, has been hired as a full-time Network Technician. We are thrilled to have you with us permanently Tristan!



Office Now Open to the Public

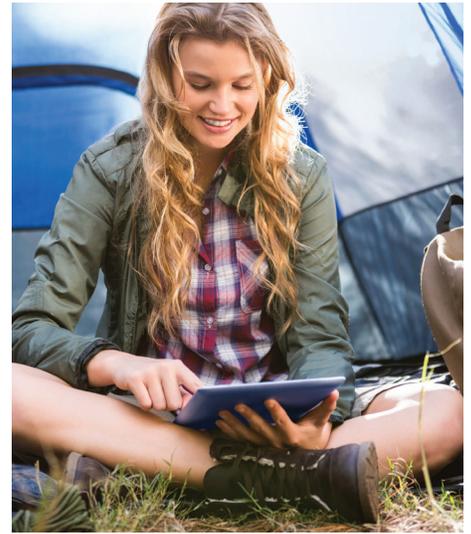
The Runestone Telecom office is officially open to the public! You can visit us in person, Monday-Friday from 8am-4:30pm. If you prefer to do your business remotely, we still have a dropbox outside for 24/7 payment deposits, or try our online eBill pay.

Cable TV Channel Updates

Bally Sports North Plus has been added to the Runestone Telecom cable TV lineup. You can view the station on channel 29.2.

Check Out These Apps for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Many people go camping, biking, climbing, or hiking to “get away from it all” and focus on nature. Yet bringing along at least some technology can help make the great outdoors even greater.



Outdoor apps are a case in point. They provide easy access to vast amounts of accurate real-time data, which can help you explore more ground and do it more safely. Below are several of the most popular apps in this category.

Cairn - cairnme.com

This app will help you get home safely from any adventure. It offers safety tracking and alerts, cell coverage, and navigation. For example, enter the details of your hike to update your friends and family members as to your status.

Leafsnap - plantidentifier.info

Part of the fun of going outside is learning about all the plants around you. Use this app to snap a photo of a leaf and learn details about the plant it came from.

PeakVisor - peakvisor.com

Want to know the name and the altitude of a mountain you see in the distance? You can find out easily with PeakVisor, your personal mountain guide.

RadarScope - radarscope.app

It's best to anticipate weather changes when you're spending your time outside. RadarScope gives you detailed storm information with precision weather radar.

Spyglass - happymagenta.com/spyglass

Known as the swiss army knife of the outdoor navigation category, this app will help you navigate and track your off-road travel. It features an augmented reality view compass, a speedometer, and celestial navigation.

New Members

Cyrus

Thomson, Janell R.....320-795-2059

Elbow Lake

Anderson, Christopher...218-685-2087

Hagerle, Erik218-685-3067

Hoffman

Vipond, Mary Ann.....320-986-2993

Kensington

Redding, Kenneth D.....320-965-2064

Lowry

Bromely, Brittani.....320-283-2931

Quick Answers to Common Questions About WiFi

You probably use WiFi on a regular basis at home, at work, or in public spaces such as libraries, coffee shops, and hotels. But how much do you really know about WiFi? Here's a Q&A overview of this popular technology:

Q. What does WiFi stand for?

A. Many people think that WiFi stands for Wireless Fidelity. However, that's incorrect. WiFi is not an acronym, and it doesn't mean anything. It's a made-up word created for the Wireless Ethernet Compatibility Alliance (now called the WiFi Alliance) to replace the decidedly non-catchy technical name of "IEEE 802.11b Direct Sequence." IEEE refers to the *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers*.

Q. How does WiFi work?

A. WiFi uses radio waves to provide network connectivity. It works with no physical wired connection between sender and receiver by using radio frequency (RF) technology. When an RF current is supplied to an antenna, an electromagnetic field is created that then is able to propagate through space.

With WiFi, a wireless adapter is used to create hotspots—areas in the vicinity of a wireless router that are connected to the network and allow users to access Internet services. Once configured, WiFi provides wireless connectivity to devices in the vicinity.

Q. What's new in the world of WiFi?

A. WiFi has evolved in recent years and is no longer just about connecting to the Internet. WiFi has also become an alternative for video cables, audio cables, and USB cables. In addition, new technology is improving both WiFi speeds and wireless routers to enhance the overall experience for users.

Is it time to replace the old wireless router you have at home? Call us at 320-986-2013 to see if one of our leased, managed routers would be right for you.

5 Ways to Help Keep Your Computer Secure

These tips will go a long way toward protecting your computer from viruses and hackers:

1. Enable automatic updates.

Security issues develop with any operating system or program, so make sure you allow automatic updates to benefit from their security patches.

2. Use antivirus and anti-malware applications. Check to see they're installed and updated regularly.

3. Pay attention to passwords.

Create long passwords with a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols. Use a different one for each site and service.

4. Think before clicking links in emails.

Malicious links can come from friends whose computers or accounts have been hacked. They can also be in emails that appear to be legitimate at first glance, but are actually fake — a scam known as phishing.

5. Never download or install something based on a pop-up message.

If a website you're visiting tells you Chrome needs to be updated or a plug-in needs to be added, don't do it. It's a common trick to get you to install malicious software.

Get ready for
**10-DIGIT
DIALING**
for local calls



In July 2020, the Federal Communications Commission adopted an order approving the designation of 988 as the 3-digit dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. To facilitate implementation, area codes across the country where the 988 prefix is a working prefix and which now use 7-digit local dialing must transition to 10-digit local dialing. This includes the 218 & 320 area codes in our service area.

Starting October 24, 2021, you'll need to dial the 218 or 320 area code, plus the 7-digit phone number to make local calls. In addition to changing your dialing routine, you'll also have to reprogram 7-digit local numbers to 10-digit numbers if you use speed dial or any other system that automatically makes calls for you.

For more details, call us at 320-986-2013.

Social Media Day is June 30

Seems like there's a day to celebrate practically everything, and social media is no exception. The news and entertainment company Mashable launched Social Media Day on June 30, 2010, to recognize social media's impact on global communication and its ability to easily connect people.

Given how prevalent social media is today, it's easy to forget that it hasn't been around all that long. The first modern social media platform was Friendster in 2002. LinkedIn launched in 2003, followed by MySpace and Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, and Instagram in 2010.

You can best observe Social Media Day by posting about it using the hashtag #SMDay. Perhaps you could share your thoughts on the role social media has played in your life, or repost some of your favorite social media moments from the past year.

Runestone Telecom is active on Facebook, so please follow us there to get the latest on tech tips, employee highlights, job listings, and more.



Remember What Life Was Like Before the Internet?

Internet access—in dial-up form—was first sold to consumers in 1995, and virtually nothing about daily life has been the same since. Just for fun, we're taking a trip down memory lane to look back at the way things used to be.

When you mentioned Amazon, people would think of the river in South America. These days, Amazon first brings to mind the enormous e-commerce company.

Families had sets of encyclopedias for research purposes. Before the Internet and Google arrived, you had to look up topics in the encyclopedia to learn about them. More thorough research would require a trip to the local library.

Messages for everyone to see were posted on a real wall. The predecessors to social media posts were printed flyers attached to walls or bulletin boards, and messages scrawled on the whiteboards hung on dorm room doors.

Trolls were mythical creatures or dolls with big hair. Don't you long for the time when the term "troll" simply meant a creature from folklore or a strange little doll whose hair was taller than it was? Today Internet trolls hide behind the relative anonymity of some platforms to spew mean messages.

People used paper maps for navigation. These maps were your only option, other than stopping for directions at a gas station, to figure out how to get where you wanted to go. Plus, you had to figure out how to fold them back up again when you were done!

Personal letters were sent often. There was no email yet and long distance calls were expensive, so letters via "snail mail" were how people kept in touch with out-of-town family and friends. Although the pace was slow, writing and receiving letters was a treasured activity.

Now that we've looked back at the pre-Internet years, let's look forward to what your household's Internet needs will be down the road. Call us at 320-986-2013 if your Internet use is growing and you want to discuss a speed upgrade.