

The Connection

SEPTEMBER 2021

Snuggle Up and Enjoy Fall

According to a recent BuzzFeed poll, fall was the favorite season overall. It received 45% of the votes, followed by summer at 24%.

We hope you make the most of everything fall offers, from the warm tones of changing leaves, to the cool days of sweater weather. And should you notice that your current Internet speed is "falling" short of what you need, contact Runestone Telecom about an upgrade.

911 and TAM Fees Decrease

The 911 fee will decrease from \$0.95 to \$0.80, and the TAM fee will decrease from \$0.07 to \$0.06, effective October 1st, 2021.

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

Email: rtaoffice@runestone.net

Visit Us: www.runestone.net

Holiday Observed

Runestone Telecom will be closed on Monday, September 6th for Labor Day. Trouble calls will be handled by our on-call technicians.

Runestone
Telecom Association



Movie Movie Night
OUTSIDE ★

What could be more fun than movie night in your own backyard? It's like summer camp meets drive-in theater. Just get a projector and screen—very affordable options are out there—to pair with your laptop or streaming device. Then make sure your Internet connection is fast enough to support the movie magic.

If you're experiencing buffering while streaming movies, it could be time to sign up for faster Internet. Runestone Telecom offers a variety of speeds at affordable prices, all backed by the support of our local "cast and crew."

**CALL 320-986-2013
FOR AN INTERNET
UPGRADE** ★ ★



Highlights from Our 71st Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who came out to the 71st Annual Meeting on Wednesday, July 14th, at West Central Area School in Barrett. We had a great time socializing with our members, listening to entertainment by pianist Shirley Hanson, getting up-to-date information on Runestone Telecom operations, and of course, eating homemade pie and ice cream from the FCCLA!

We would also like to extend our gratitude to the following organizations:

- West Central Area School for hosting our event.
- Shirley Hanson for the lovely piano music.
- West Central Area FCCLA for preparing and serving the pie, ice cream and beverages.
- All of the businesses who donated door prizes.

Most of all, thanks to you, our members, for your continued patronage.

A Word About Spam

Runestone Telecom has begun using a new spam filter from a company called FortiMail. As with any change, there will be some differences from the old system.

You are likely to notice that more emails of the kind we call “legitimate advertising” may come through for a time.

To explain this, we need to talk about two different kinds of spam. The first kind comes in batches to millions of email addresses indiscriminately. They’re kind of like the unwanted advertisements delivered by the United State Postal Service; if you have a mailbox, you will get them. Our new spam filter is already very good at removing these.



The second kind, which we refer to as “legitimate advertising,” are from companies who have a reputation to uphold, like General Motors, Sunbeam, or Runestone Telecom. It is very likely that at some time in the past, you requested information from them, or gave a representative your email address.

While these may be annoying, they should (by law) have an “Unsubscribe” or “Email Preferences” link at the bottom of the email so you can choose to be removed from their mailing list.

Your login for the new spam filter will be <https://spamfilter.stellarllc.net>, where you can customize it for your use by logging in with your email address and password.

One thing that stays the same: we will be here to help you navigate the Internet with 24-hour support.

ACCN Channel Added to Runestone Basic Cable TV

On September 1st, the ACCN channel will be added to the Runestone Basic Cable TV package. The channel can be viewed on 28.2. ACCN is your home for unrivaled coverage of the conference that wins all year long, with 40 football games, 150 men’s and women’s basketball games, and 250 Olympic sports events.



Reasons Why Theft by Porch Pirates is So Common

With the dramatic rise in online shopping, more packages are being delivered to porches than ever before, and some sit there for hours until the purchaser gets home. This is one of the major reasons why porch theft has become so common. Here are others:

It's an easy crime. Porch pirates can follow an Amazon Prime or UPS truck around and grab the packages shortly after they're delivered. Or they might simply spot a package while driving down a street and decide to take advantage of the opportunity.

Porch pirates think they won't be caught. Swiping a package can be done quickly, and they may assume neighbors won't notice or that the home doesn't have cameras.

Merchandise might be valuable. People often shop online for big ticket items — such as phones, computers, and video game systems — they can get for less money than at a retail store. Porch pirates know this. If they like what's in the box, they can keep it for themselves. If not, they can sell it online on sites like eBay and Craigslist or at a pawn shop.



How can you reduce the odds that your packages won't be stolen? Use these strategies:

- **Have packages delivered to your workplace.** Not all employers allow this, but if yours does, it's one of the best options.
- **Ask the delivery company for signature-required delivery.** That way, if the delivery person does not follow protocol and leaves the package without obtaining your signature, you may be entitled to a full refund or replacement if the package is stolen.
- **Place a vacation hold on deliveries.** You can do this with the United States Postal Service as well as delivery companies including FedEx and UPS.
- **Sign up for delivery alerts.** That way you'll know when the delivery is made. If you aren't home, you at least have the opportunity to ask a neighbor you trust to retrieve the package for you.
- **Install security cameras.** Visible cameras can serve as a deterrent. Should a theft still occur, the footage can be made public by police to assist in identifying, finding, and charging the thieves.

Runestone Telecom offers home monitoring with cameras. For details, call 320-986-2013.

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

While suicide prevention is important to address year-round, Suicide Prevention Awareness Month provides a dedicated time to come together around a difficult topic. The goals are to raise awareness about suicide prevention, reduce stigma around the topic, and encourage people in need to utilize available resources.

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, or background. In fact, suicide is often the result of an untreated mental health condition. We can all benefit from honest conversations about mental health conditions and suicide, because just one conversation can change a life.

The 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides free and confidential counseling to those in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. People can reach the hotline by calling the 10-digit number: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). In addition, the FCC has finalized 988 as the three-digit number Americans will be able to call to be directed to this hotline. All phone providers are required to implement the 988 dialing code by July 16th, 2022.

Runestone Telecom is making plans for the implementation of the 988 number in our service area and will let you know when it's available for use.



Jeanne Meidl Retires After 40 Years

On September 2nd, Jeanne Meidl, Office Manager at Runestone Telecom, will retire after 40 years of service. We wish you a happy and relaxing retirement, Jeanne, and we'll miss seeing you every day at the office!



Notice on Phone Directory Advertising

We're working on the 2022 Vikingland Directory, which will be mailed in February 2022. Sales representatives from the Pinnacle Marketing Group are now contacting businesses. If you're interested in advertising for the first time, please contact our office at 320-986-2013.

New Members

Barrett

Miller, Susan..... 320-528-3111

Elbow Lake

Schlusser, Cory 218-685-2145

Tintah

McClernon,
Jacob & Katie 218-369-4062

Looking for the Internet Plan That's Just Right for You?

Like Goldilocks in the fairy tale—who tried to find the bowl of porridge, chair, and bed that were just right for her—you may be looking for the Internet plan with speeds that are just right for your household. You don't want a plan that's too slow, which can cause frustrations such as buffering while streaming. And you don't want one that's too fast, since there's no point in spending more per month than necessary.

To figure out which Internet plan will work best for you, you can take the short Bandwidth Helper questionnaire on our website at Runestone.net. The most popular speed among our customers is 20-30 Mbps.

Your "Goldilocks" Internet plan will be the one that provides everyone in your household with a good online experience, while staying within your budget. Ask yourself these questions to help determine your specific needs:

- How many devices in your home are typically connected to the Internet and in use simultaneously?
- How often are family members watching movies and series on streaming services? Is buffering a problem?
- Are there gamers in your household that have issues with reaction time and lags?
- Does anyone in your household regularly send large files for work or participate in video conferences?
- Do you hear complaints about your current Internet plan from family members? Do speeds slow down when you also have guests using your network?

Once you've thought about these factors and taken the Bandwidth Helper questionnaire, call Runestone Telecom at 320-986-2013. One of our Customer Service Representatives can help you choose the Internet plan that's just right for you.

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.