

# The Connection

AUGUST 2022

## Summer is a State of Mind

Henry David Thoreau, American author and philosopher, wrote, "One must maintain a little bit of summer, even in the middle of winter." We love this idea, and encourage you to follow Thoreau's suggestion as summer ends and the cooler months begin.

What about summer do you enjoy most? How can you tweak those activities to continue them throughout the year? If nothing else, use your Internet connection to visit the beach virtually!



### 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](mailto:rtaoffice@runestone.net)

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

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As your growing child gets ready for a new school year, think beyond shopping for a bigger backpack or a bigger pair of shoes. You may also need to upgrade to bigger speeds for your home's Internet connection—to better handle the bigger demands of more online homework (not to mention more streaming when the homework's done).

Runestone Telecom offers A+ Internet plans with speeds up to 1000 Mbps, and they all include responsive customer service and support by our local team.

**GET BIGGER INTERNET SPEEDS**

**CALL 320-986-2013**

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

# Highlights from our 72nd Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who came out to the 72nd Annual Meeting on Wednesday, July 13th at West Central Area School in Barrett. We had a great time socializing with our members, listening to entertainment by pianist Maureen Volker, getting up-to-date information on Runestone Telecom operations, and of course, eating delicious homemade pie and ice cream from the FCCLA!

## 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
- Maureen Volker for providing us with sweet sounds
- WCA FCCLA for baking and serving the pie, ice cream, and beverages
- All businesses who supported us by donating door prizes
- Our members, most of all, for your continued patronage

The winners of a \$50 account credit were Bruce Olson, Robert Shervey, John Kopacek, Rose Mary & Rich Torgeson, Karen Alvstad, Carol Reuss, Jeff Dreier, James Schreiner, Dwaine & Annabel Olson, and Don Martinson.



## FUSC Rate Change

The FUSC (Federal Universal Service Contribution) has increased from 23.8% to 33.0% effective July 1, 2022.

## New Members

### Elbow Lake

Bevins, Dana .....218-685-4645  
Leis, Leticia M.....218-685-4549  
Setran, Gordon  
& Brigitte .....218-685-5270  
Westrom, Myron  
& Alice .....218-685-5464  
Wilson, Hope.....218-685-3118

### Wendell

Gulbrandson, Brent  
& Kim .....218-458-4033

### Villard

Adolphsen, Darin .....320-554-2446

## What You Can Do With Old Remotes

Most of us have at least a few remotes lying around that are broken or belong to devices no longer used. Before we suggest what to do with old remotes, here's what not to do: Don't throw them in the trash. Remotes contain toxic materials and plastics which shouldn't end up in a landfill.

### Consider these eco-friendly options:

#### Recycle at an authorized recycling location.

Go to a recycling website like [Earth911.com](http://Earth911.com) to look for electronics recyclers in your area. Remotes can also be dropped off at many major electronic stores, such as Best Buy or Office Depot, and recycled through their electronic recycling programs.

#### Donate to a vocational or trade school.

Students in electronics programs work with all sorts of electronic devices. Their instructors may want old remotes for use in the classroom.

#### Bring to a charity/thrift store.

Drop off working remotes at Goodwill, The Salvation Army, and other local charity/thrift stores. They will resell them to people looking for a bargain.

#### Be creative.

Remove the batteries from an old remote and use the space to hide cash or other valuables.

# A Workstation Shouldn't Be a Pain in the Neck (or Back)

If your household includes a home office and/or student desks, it's important to pay attention to the ergonomics of these spaces to avoid neck and back strain.

## Keep these guidelines in mind:

**Choose a chair that provides lumbar support.** Adjust the height of your chair so your feet rest flat on the floor or on a footrest and your thighs are parallel to the floor. Adjust armrests so your arms gently rest on them with your shoulders relaxed.

**Keep frequently used objects close to you to minimize reaching.** Stand up to reach anything that can't be comfortably reached while sitting.

**Place your mouse within easy reach and on the same surface as your keyboard.** While using your mouse, keep your wrists straight, your upper arms close to your body, and your hands at or slightly below the level of your elbows.

**Make sure there's clearance for your knees, thighs, and feet under the desk.** If the desk is too low and can't be adjusted, place sturdy boards or blocks under the desk legs. If the desk is too high and can't be adjusted, raise your chair.

**Place all screens directly in front of you, about an arm's length away.** The top of the screen should be at or slightly below eye level. Viewing a display should not require significant turning of your neck from side to side or up and down.

**Laptops may require additional equipment.** If you use a laptop, a separate keyboard and a laptop stand may be needed to create an ergonomic setup with everything at the correct height.

**Regularly stand up and move around.** Once an hour, stand up and take a few minutes to walk down the hall, get a drink, look out the window—anything that gets you out of your chair.

**A workstation that's poorly designed isn't the only thing that can give you a pain in the neck. So can WiFi troubles. Call 320-986-2013 and ask about our Whole Home WiFi.**



## August 31 is World Distance Learning Day

World Distance Learning Day was established to raise awareness of the many learning resources and options available to students outside of the physical classroom and to celebrate how far this type of education has come over the years.

Back in 1728, Caleb Phillips was advertising his teachings on a new method of shorthand in the *Boston Gazette*, with the lessons to be delivered via mail on a weekly basis. Sir Isaac Pitman took the idea one step further in England in the 1840s. Pitman also taught shorthand via mail, but his students would send him a postcard containing their own efforts, which he would correct and send back to them.

The Internet revolutionized distance learning, making it much easier, faster, and cheaper for students to learn. In 1984, the first completely online course was offered. When the COVID-19 pandemic led to school closures in 2020, more students than ever turned to distance learning.

**Is your home's current Internet speed keeping up with the demands of distance learning and other online activities? Call us at 320-986-2013 to discuss your options for a speed upgrade.**



Kent Hedstrom  
General Manager - CEO

## Great Customer Service Starts with Great Employees

We should know! Runestone Telecom has an amazing team of 25 employees, who bring strong experience, specialized skills, and a positive attitude to their jobs each day. If you're one of our employees—or you have a friend or family member who works for us—consider this a public thank you for everything!

It's because of our employees that Runestone Telecom is able to consistently provide an excellent customer experience. Our goal is to make things easy for you, whether you're signing up for service, getting service installed, or seeking answers to a technical issue or account question. Because our employees are local, their help is never far away and always responsive. You can also count on neighborly friendliness that stands out compared to the lackluster service from so many national providers.

# Meet the Faces of Runestone Telecom

Runestone Telecom is here to serve our communities with high-speed Internet, Cable TV, and phone services, and it's our dedicated team of employees who make it all happen. You may recognize some of us from technician visits or office calls. Other faces may be new to you. Either way, you can be sure we're all working hard to keep you connected.

### Network Technicians

**Left to right:** Dan Perry, Chris Veldhouse, Matt Lloyd, Riley Moore, Nathan Richards, Brady Combs, Ryan Schonhardt, Gary Ness, Braeden Long, Brad Frank, Shawn Engler, and Curt Hyatt  
**Not Pictured:** Cyndi Gulbranson



### Network – Internet – IT Technicians

**Left to right:** Jacob Veldhouse, Joe Polzin, Chris Schmiesing, Ken Elvehjem, and Russ Froemming



### Customer Service

**Left to right:** Pam Randt, Michelle Martinson, Michelle Jenson, Angie Huseth, and Dawn Bumgardner

