

The Connection

MARCH 2023



Go Green for St. Patrick's Day

The obvious way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17 is to wear green. But why stop there? For extra fun, plan your meals to feature green food—such as salad made with green vegetables, guacamole, pesto pasta, pistachios, kiwi, and lime sherbet.

Speaking of green, you'll save green with our eBill. Visit www.runestone.net for details.

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

Find Us:   

Review Us: 

Runestone
Telecom Association

BIG FAN OF STREAMING SPORTS?

OUR INTERNET IS A BIG WINNER! No self-respecting sports fan can invite friends over to watch a big game without several things in place—a big screen TV, a big platter of chicken wings, and an Internet connection with big speed. After all, the last thing you want while streaming sports is too-slow Internet that causes buffering and freezes the action at key moments.

To avoid this predicament, team up with Runestone Telecom. We offer super-fast Internet plans that'll score big points with your family and guests.



CALL 320-986-2013 TO DOUBLE YOUR SPEED FOR AS LITTLE AS \$3/MO!

Speed availability varies depending on location.



Watch Out for Free Trial Scams

Scammers know how irresistible a free offer can be, which is why people sometimes walk right into a trap. Free trial scams typically work like this: You see an online offer for a free one-month trial of a product that promises incredible results, such as a weight-loss program or teeth whitener. All you must pay is \$5.95 for shipping and handling—or so you think.

Buried in the fine print, often in a text color close to the background, are terms that obligate you to pay \$79 to \$99 a month in fees. These questionable companies know that most people don't read all the fine print before clicking on "I agree." To make matters worse, they also make it extremely difficult to cancel these subscriptions.

Avoid this scam by carefully reading the fine print on all offers you're considering.

New Members

Barrett

Brakken, Devin.....320-528-6283
Dahl, Salveig C320-528-2571
Henrichs, Arlene.....320-528-2890

Cyrus

Braaten, Lloyd D.....320-795-4688

Wendell

Herman, Maija218-458-2000
Skindemoen, Kevin218-458-2531

Wheaton

Potts, Marybeth.....320-563-8559

Women Who Changed the Tech World

Since 1987, the United States has formally recognized March as National Women's History Month. As a communications technology provider, Runestone Telecom wants to take this opportunity to highlight some of the talented women who made an impact in the early developmental years of computers, WiFi, and the Internet.

Ada Lovelace: The World's First Computer Programmer

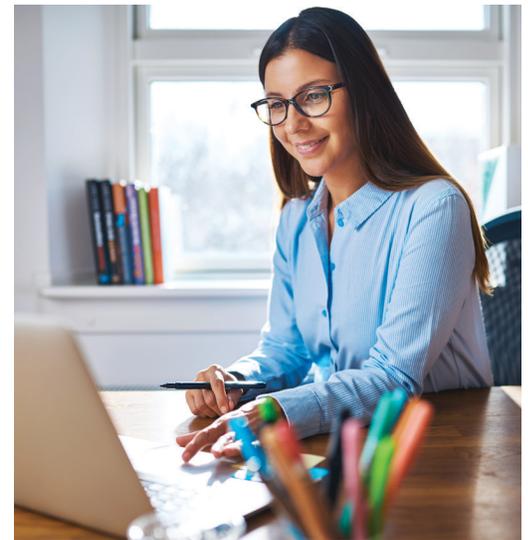
Ada Lovelace (1815-1852) was the daughter of romantic poet, Lord Byron. Her mathematical talent and interest in machines led to a working relationship with Charles Babbage, the inventor of the Analytical Engine, a complicated device that resembled the elements of a modern computer. It was Lovelace's notes on the Analytical Engine that Alan Turing used as inspiration for his work on the first modern computer in the 1940s.

Radia Perlman: The Mother of the Internet

Born in 1951, Radia Perlman is an American computer programmer and network engineer. Perlman's invention of the algorithm behind the Spanning Tree Protocol (STP) was instrumental in making today's Internet possible. Her work significantly impacted the way networks self-organize and move data, and it put the basic rules of Internet traffic in place.

Elizabeth Feinler: The Original Search Engine

From 1972 to 1989, Elizabeth Feinler ran the Network Information Center (NIC) in California, which could be described as a "pre-historic Google." The NIC was the first place to publish the resources and directories for the Internet, developing the original "white pages" and "yellow pages" directories. Feinler's group also developed the domain naming scheme of .com, .edu, .gov, .net, and many more. She is 91 years old.



Hedy Lamarr: The Inventor of WiFi

Hedy Lamarr (1914 – 2000) was an Austrian-born American film star during Hollywood's golden age and has been described as one of the greatest movie actresses of all time. She was also a self-taught inventor, who was awarded a patent in 1942 for her "secret communication system," designed with the help of the composer George Antheil. This frequency-hopping system was intended as a way to set radio-guided torpedoes off course during WWII, but the idea eventually inspired WiFi, GPS, and Bluetooth technology.

What's New (and Antique) Around Runestone Telecom

New Information Regarding Runestone Telecom Payment Options

Effective May 1st, 2023, local bank locations will no longer accept drop-off payments for Runestone Telecom. Runestone Telecom continues to accept payments via AutoPay from a checking or savings account, credit card or debit card — we accept Visa and Mastercard. You're always welcome to visit or call Runestone's office to make your payment.

New Milestone Achieved by Cyndi Gulbranson

Cyndi Gulbranson, our fabulous service coordinator here at Runestone Telecom, celebrates her 20th work anniversary in March. Congratulations, Cyndi! We're so fortunate to have you on our team and thank you for everything you do behind the scenes for our customers and our staff.

New Employee Joined Our Team

We're excited to have Liza Long join our Customer Service team! She comes to us with a strong background in helping people, which will be an asset to Runestone Telecom. Liza lives on a farm by Hoffman with her husband, Matt, and their three children. She enjoys the outdoors, especially camping with her family.



Antique Phone Equipment Enhances Our Office

If you've ever been to the Runestone Telecom office, you can't miss the grand old switchboard that greets you just inside the entrance. We purchased the switchboard in 2010 from Paul Ekstrand, a Lowry resident, who had it in his personal collection from the Lowry Telephone Company. Runestone Telecom acquired this area in 2010.

Our office also displays an old operator's phone donated to us this fall by Karen Groneberg, a Runestone Telecom customer. Thank you, Karen, for your generosity!



Know the 5 Steps in the 811 Process

Any type of digging on your property requires a call to 811 to have underground utility lines marked. This prevents you from unintentionally damaging lines and causing service outages in the neighborhood.

1. Notify your local one-call center by calling 811. The one-call center will transmit information to affected utility operators.
2. Wait 2-3 days for affected utility operators to respond to your request. On average, between 7-8 utility operators are notified for each request.
3. Confirm that all affected utility operators have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the one-call center notified.
4. Respect the marks (flags or paint) provided by the affected utility operators. They're your guide for the duration of your project.
5. Dig carefully. Avoid digging near the marks and remember that some utility lines may be buried at a shallow depth. You may need to move your project to another part of the yard.

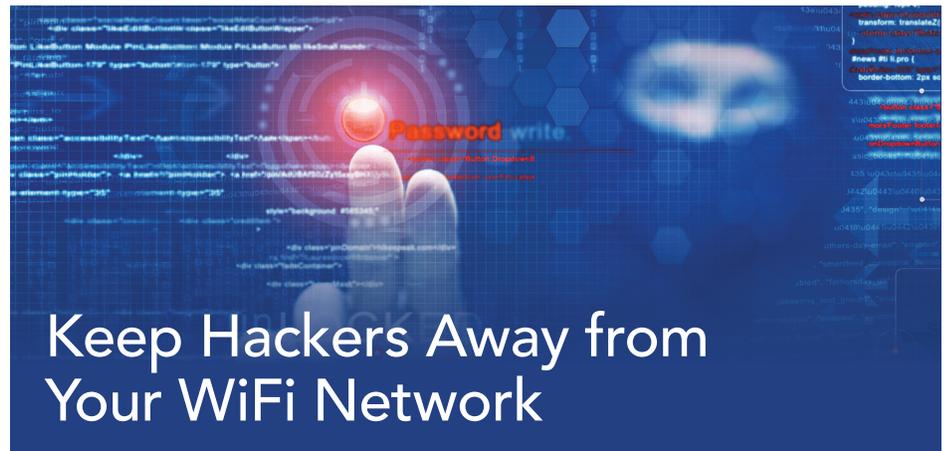
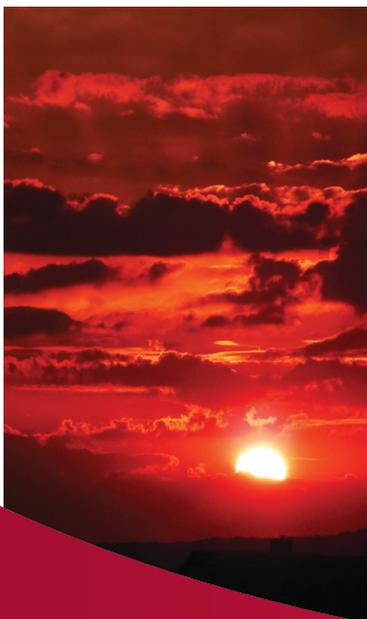
Runestone Telecom thanks you in advance for your cooperation. To learn more, visit call811.com/before-you-dig.

Why Do Sun Outages Impact TV Service?

Sun outages occur twice a year—around the spring and fall equinoxes—when the sun is in a direct line behind a satellite transmitting cable TV signals. This natural phenomenon can briefly overwhelm the satellite receiver. (Think of it like driving west when you're staring straight into the setting sun, which makes it hard to read the road signs.)

During a sun outage, you may experience pixelated pictures, picture freezes, audio distortions, or a total loss of the channel while watching TV. The exact time and duration will vary from channel to channel since channels are received off different satellites as the sun moves. There's nothing that can be done from a technical standpoint to prevent the sun outage effects. Fortunately, they typically last for just 5-15 minutes and happen only during daylight hours.

The spring equinox takes place on March 20th, 2023. If you notice TV issues that last longer than 15 minutes or happen after the sun goes down, please call us at 320-986-2013 for assistance.



Keep Hackers Away from Your WiFi Network

It's important to make sure your home's WiFi network is as secure as possible to reduce the risk of getting hacked and having someone access the sensitive information stored on your connected devices. A secure WiFi network will also help keep away other unauthorized users—such as a next-door neighbor using your WiFi instead of paying for their own Internet service.

Take these steps to increase WiFi network security:

Encrypt your network. Encrypting scrambles the information sent through your network, making it harder for other people to see what you're doing or get your personal information. You encrypt your network by simply updating your router settings to either WPA3 Personal or WPA2 Personal. WPA3 is the newer and best encryption available.

Turn on the firewall. Most routers have a firewall to prevent outside hacking. It's typically active by default, but you'll want to check to ensure your firewall is on.

Change your router's preset passwords. Some routers come with preset passwords out of the box. But hackers can easily find these passwords, so it's important to change them to something more complex. You'll need to reset both the WiFi network password and the router admin password. For a secure home network, it's a good idea to change your passwords every six months or so.

Place your router in a central location. Not only does this distribute network access more evenly for you, but it also helps keep your network out of reach/view from people outside of your home.

Set up a guest network. Many routers let you set up a guest network with a different name and password. It's a good security move for two reasons:

1. Having a separate login means fewer people have your primary WiFi network password.
2. In case a guest (unknowingly) has malware on their phone or tablet, it won't impact your primary network and devices.

Verify connected devices. Frequently check the devices connected to your network and verify that you know what they are. If anything looks suspicious, disconnect it and change your WiFi password.

If you'd like help with the security of your WiFi network, call 320-986-2013 and ask about our managed router leases that include WiFi troubleshooting.