

Spamming, Phishing & Avoiding the Traps

Lately there have been a lot of issues with spamming and phishing emails. We want to assure you that we would **NEVER** ask you for any confidential information over email. If you receive an email stating it is from WRCTC, we will always include our name, address and phone number. If you are unsure it is from WRCTC, **DO NOT** respond and contact us immediately at 777.

WRCTC Donates \$10,000 to Rancher Relief Fund

The WRCTC Board of Directors approved a \$10,000 donation to the South Dakota Rancher Relief Fund (RRF) to assist livestock producers who experienced devastating losses due to the winter storm Atlas that struck our area in early October 2013. The RRF was established on October 8, 2013, by the SD Stockgrowers Association, SD Cattlemen's Association and SD Sheepgrowers Association; and the fund grew quickly and substantially. With over 5,000 individuals, organizations and businesses from across the state and nation donating money, the fund grew to over \$4 million. "We know that these funds will not make anyone whole again, however, we are hopeful that the money will help people get to the next step," stated Silvia Christen, Executive Director for SD Stockgrowers.

Within our service territory, WRCTC directors and employees saw our livestock producers struggling to piece their lives back together. Storm Atlas not only plagued our service territory with electrical 374-3167 and communications outages, but it created hardships for our neighbors, families and friends. Over 240 applicants from our surrounding counties applied for aid from the RRF stated Christen. WRCTC hopes this

donation will help our livestock producers and communities recover from this devastating setback. We know the effects of this storm are far from over and if you see somebody needs help – or if you feel like you need to get help yourself – please talk to someone. One place to start is the South Dakota Rural Helpline at 1-877-708-4357.



Marketing/Member Relations Supervisor Rachel Eggebo presenting the \$10,000 donation to Silvia Christen, Executive Director for SD Stockgrowers.

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*"We are so grateful for this generous donation. The Ranchers Relief Fund is making it possible for us to help the ranch families across western South Dakota as they look to the future and rebuilding their operations. Thank you."
Silvia Christen, Executive Director
SD Stockgrowers*



Manager's Column
by Reed Metzger

South Dakota's Broadband Initiative wants to hear from Ag Producers

The state's Broadband Initiative, led by the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT), partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Field Office in South Dakota to survey agriculture producers across the state for the second time to assess the availability of high-speed broadband Internet services in rural areas.

Approximately 6,500 surveys were mailed this month to South Dakota agriculture producers encouraging participation in this Internet Usage Survey. The survey requests information from 257-2391 agriculture producers asking if they subscribe to an Internet service, how they utilize the service, how availability, speed, and affordability impact their utilization. The results of the survey will guide state policy decisions encouraging providers to expand areas of service or enhance the quality of high speed broadband internet services in South Dakota.

The ultimate goal of the Broadband Initiative is to increase the usage of high-speed broadband Internet to all of South Dakota with an emphasis on rural areas. Assessment of the availability and utilization of high speed broadband Internet services within agriculture, the primary economic driver across the state, is extremely important to this project. If producers did not receive the survey or misplaced

it, you can request a copy be mailed to you by calling 1.800.338.2557 or you can simply take the survey online by visiting <http://broadband.sd.gov/AgricultureSurvey.aspx>. Survey results will be available online in 374-5880 the spring.

"Based on comments received from the 2012 survey, we learned many respondents were just beginning to subscribe to Internet services. This is the primary reason we are again asking for participation in the survey; we want to measure changes in the availability and utilization of high speed Internet services and assess the impact these services have on our agriculture community and rural areas across the state. High-speed broadband Internet services can expand educational opportunities, improve public safety, enhance health care delivery and bring economic growth to the region. Utilization also improves producers' ability to market livestock, forage and grain providing a competitive advantage and improving the state's rural economy," stated David Zolnowsky, BIT Commissioner.

For more information 797-4494 on the Broadband Initiative, connect with them on Twitter (@broadbandsd), Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/BroadbandSD>) or on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/broadbandsd>).

Meet the Metzgers!

Please join us for an opportunity to meet WRCTC's new General Manager Reed Metzger & his family.

**Friday, February 14
2 P.M. - 4 P.M.**

Grand Electric Social Room



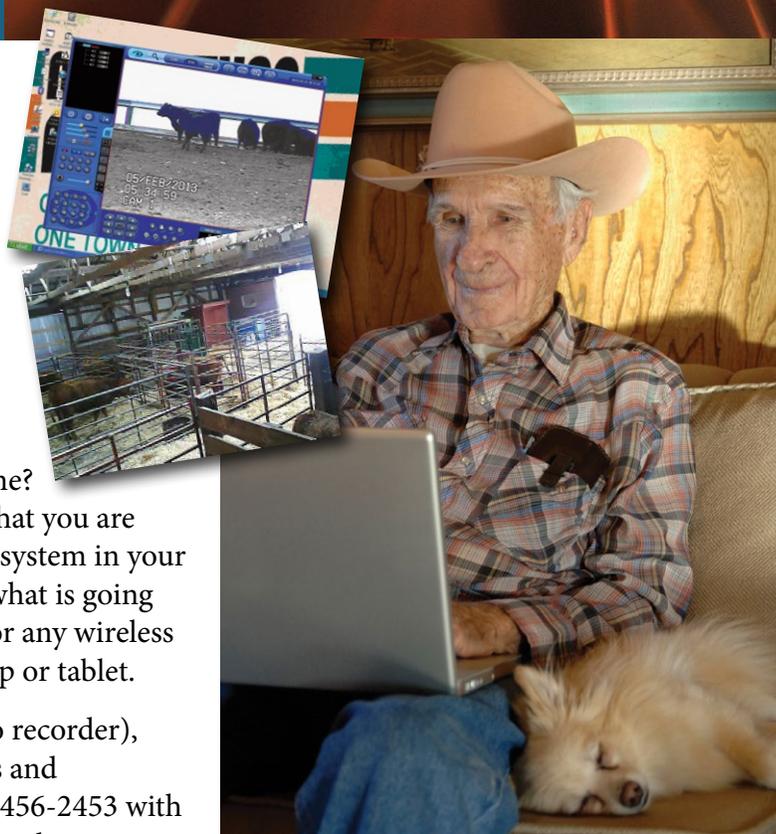
Monitor your Livestock the Comfy Way

Make your life easier and less stressful during calving season.

Did you ever wish you could watch livestock or view the inside of your barn from the comforts of your home?

A monitoring system may be just what you are looking for. Installing a monitoring system in your barn or corral allows you to watch what is going on from your home computer, TV or any wireless device, such as a smart phone, laptop or tablet.

WRCTC offers a DVR (digital video recorder), multiple outdoor and night cameras and installation. The DVR provides you 456-2453 with the option of recording the activities when you are not around, and it enables you to check your cameras from a TV, computer, tablet or smartphone. Call us today at 605-244-5213 or 777 for a free quote to see how we can help!



\$2,500 FRS Scholarship

The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS), a branch of the National Telephone Cooperative Association, is offering 30 scholarships nationwide. These scholarships are \$2,000 each, and all high school seniors whose parents are a member of West River Cooperative Telephone 374-5304 Company (WRCTC) are eligible to apply.

Should a student from our service area be selected to receive one of the 30 scholarships, WRCTC will make a \$500 matching contribution to the scholarship, bringing the total scholarship award to \$2,500! Preference will be given to individuals 244-7117 expressing an interest in returning to work in a rural area following college graduation.

Applications are 866-4614 available online at www.wrctc.coop, through the Guidance Counselor at your school or from WRCTC in Bison. **Completed applications require the signature of General Manager Reed Metzger PRIOR to March 1, 2014, to ensure applications are postmarked to FRS before the deadline.**

\$500 WRCTC Scholarships

ATTENTION High School Seniors from Bison, Buffalo, Lemmon and Newell: Here is your chance to win a \$500 scholarship! One senior from each school district will be 456-1406 awarded a scholarship for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year! Applications are available online at www.wrctc.coop, through the Guidance Counselor at your school or from WRCTC in Bison. **Deadline to apply for this scholarship is March 28, 2014.**

Scholarships and Washington, D.C. Youth Tour information can be found online at www.wrctc.coop. For more information regarding the scholarships or Youth Tour, please call us at 605-244-5213.

New WRCTC Members

Bison, Meadow, Sorum

Fisher, Tyler & Carrie Collins 244-7597
Veal, Greg (House #2) 788-2941

Buffalo, Camp Crook

Beck, Tyler 797-4676
Clark, David & Kelly 375-3815
Denney, Benjamin 375-3231
Hafner, Ella 375-3461
Henderson, Michael 375-3269
Latham, Jason 797-4451
Long, Chris & Colleen 797-4450

Lemmon

Kling, Jessica M. 374-4347
Whitmer, Jessica 374-4345

Newell

Campion, Karen 456-5564
Hannah, Ryan & Stacy 456-3679
Mulholland, Gerald & Karen 456-3694
Ost, Adam & Charity 456-3534
Richter, Keith & Lylette 456-3624

Nisland

Carlson, Richard & Cindi 257-2870

Change

Tift, Chelsey from 456-3557
to 257-2850

Find Your Phone Number

Ten telephone numbers were hidden in the last newsletter.

Those members who hunted and found their number were:

Ernestine Miller, Meadow; Michelle Teigen, Camp Crook and Frank Vetter, Bison.

Hidden in this issue are ten new numbers. If you find YOUR number, all you have to do is notify our office.

The \$10 will then be deducted off your telephone bill. New connect numbers do not count.

Deadline is February 20, 2014.

**\$10
bill credit**

From the Mailbox

Our mailbox has been overflowing with "Thank You" notes! We appreciate every single one of them. Due to the limited space, however, we are unable to include them all.

I want to thank the Round-Up Committee for selecting me to receive a round-up check. Much appreciated.

Came in handy for gas to and from Rapid City.

Kathy Edwards, Vale

WRCTC,

Thank you so much for the money from Round-Up. It was so appreciated.

Anita Kling, Lemmon

Dear Round-Up Committee:

Thank you very much for your consideration and choice of Ron Cornelius as a recipient of your committee's funds this season. Over the past three years, he has quietly dealt with cancer and the challenges that cancer brings. He is so very appreciative of your gift and the thought behind it. Thanks again for your generosity.

The family of Ron Cornelius, Lemmon

Thank you West River Cooperative Telephone for the money from the "Round-Up" Program. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated, as this will help with medical expenses. Thank you again.

Gilbert & Kathy Wood, Newell

Dear WRCTC,

Thank you so much for your generous donation of \$4,000 approved by your board. As you know, needy families and individuals in our community go without proper food, shelter and essential medical care every day due to a variety of factors including 375-3626 low wages, job loss, injuries, illness, age, domestic violence, or divorce. While all of us are susceptible to hard times, elderly are among the most at risk, and they make up the largest number of clients we serve.

With the generous support of people like you, we will be able to help many of these families and individuals to meet essential daily needs associated with elderly assistance and residential housing...Thank you again, and we look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,

Five Counties Nursing Home Staff, Lemmon