

Phonotes

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The Official Newsletter Of Halstad Telephone Company

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HALSTAD TELEPHONE COMPANY

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Annual Meeting And Customer Appreciation A Big Success!

Halstad Telephone Company held its annual meeting of members and customer appreciation event on June 18, 2008 in Halstad. Those attending the event were treated to sandwiches from Subway of Ada, door prizes, and entertainment by the band Q5 before the meeting. The full-house crowd had a chance to preview the new HTC web site being launched this year, and got to try firsthand how Nintendo® Wii™ – the latest generation in video gaming – works by doing a little batting practice.

The meeting featured addresses from Board President

Chester Mauritson and CEO Ron Laqua. Mark Forseth, HTC's Office Manager, reviewed the financial health of the cooperative and was happy to report a solid bottom line. Michael Nowick, Director of Member Services at Minnesota Telecom Alliance, also spoke to the crowd. Lori DeLong was elected as a new director for the Halstad exchange in a contested race.

Q5, which includes Halstad residents Tom Anderson and Kurt Vandermeer, provided entertainment during the meeting. Prize drawings concluded the meeting.



Front Cover:
Park in the city of Shelly





Local Celebrations



HTC took part in the Hillsboro Days parade with the help of HTC Office Manager Mark Forseth and his family.



Halstad celebrated its 125th anniversary July 18th-20th. HTC was there with a float in the parade.



CEO Ron Laqua jokes around with Deb Schweigert while greeting folks at a free-will dinner sponsored, in part, by HTC.



HTC employees served up some good food at the free-will dinner for Halstad's 125th.

Conrad Connects With HTC

Sen. Kent Conrad held a town hall meeting in Hillsboro during the first week of August, where he met with over 30 business leaders. Several topics were discussed, including a House Act that would offer tax credits to telecommuters and HTC's commitment to the Red River Valley Research Corridor.



(l to r) HTC's Mark Forseth, Senator Kent Conrad, and HTC's Ron Laqua



Telecommunications Runs In The Family For New Director

Lori DeLong has a history of telecommunications in her family. Lori's great-grandfather was Amund Pederson, the man who built the first new line for the young Halstad Telephone Company in 1905. In fact, the Amund Pederson family has produced many contributors to the history of HTC over the years. Lori is the most recent addition to that line. She was elected as a director for the Halstad Exchange, as well as picked to be the board Secretary/Treasurer, at the HTC annual meeting June 18th. Incidentally, Lori is also the first woman elected to the cooperative's governing board.

Lori is employed by Red River State Bank and has lived in Halstad for 29 years, but has had ties to the community all her life. "I really care about Halstad," says DeLong. "It is

home. This gives me a chance to do something for the community and its people." DeLong says that keeping HTC here and growing is very important to her. "To ensure service is economical, fair, and up-to-date is my personal mission," comments DeLong.

Lori is also proud to be the first woman elected to the board of directors. When asked how she felt about it, her reply was simply "awesome!" "Lori is a great addition to our board," remarks Ron Laqua, CEO of HTC. "I look forward to working with her for the future of HTC."



Third Quarter Universal Service Fund Contribution Factor To Increase

The Federal Communications Commission has announced that the proposed universal service contribution factor for the third quarter of 2008 will increase to 0.114, or 11.4 percent. Contributions to the federal universal service fund support mechanisms that are determined using a quarterly contribution factor calculated by the FCC.

Win Cash From HTC!

Submit your entry to be one of two \$25 winners. Also, all entries that we receive during the year (winners or not) will be eligible for two \$100 cash prizes to be drawn at the annual meeting in June 2009! (Must be present to win the \$100.) Just return this coupon by September 30, 2008 to be eligible for the drawing.

Congratulations To Last Issue's \$25 Winners:

Eddy Bernhardson & Ruth Siegert

Congratulations To The \$100 Winners:

Rosalie Anderson & John Knecht

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Fill in the blank in this sentence:

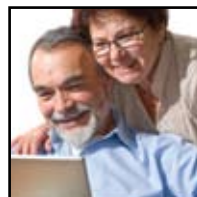
"... consider the extra value that

comes with HTC's 5-cent,

14-cent, or 25-cent _____

_____ and ..."

(Answer can be found somewhere in this issue.)



Make The Most Of Your Capital Credits

As a member of Halstad Telephone Company, you are entitled to accumulate capital credits for the telephone, TV, Internet, and long distance services you receive from HTC. These capital credits entitle you to a share of your cooperative's profits over time, based on the money you spend with HTC. Long distance plans from HTC, the 5-cent, 14-cent, and 25-cent plans, are more profitable for HTC

than long distance service from other providers. Therefore, members who opt for long distance service from HTC will receive greater capital credit allocations.

Just one more reason to consider the extra value that comes with HTC's 5-cent, 14-cent, or 25-cent long distance and make the most of your capital credit accumulation.

Telemarketers Required To Honor Do-Not-Call List Registrations Indefinitely

Original Rules Provided For Five-Year Registration Period

The Federal Communications Commission has amended its rules to require telemarketers to honor registrations with the National Do-Not-Call Registry indefinitely. The previous rules provided that registrations would expire after five years.

This action is consistent with Congress' mandate in the Do-Not-Call Improvement Act of 2007, which prohibits the removal of numbers from the registry unless the consumer cancels the registration or the number has been disconnected and reassigned or is otherwise invalid. The Federal Trade

Commission has already committed to retain numbers on the registry indefinitely.

This rule change serves to minimize the inconvenience to consumers of having to re-register their phone numbers every five years and furthers the underlying goal of the registry to protect consumer privacy rights.

The Commission also said it will continue to coordinate with the FTC on additional ways to improve the Registry's accuracy.



New Connections

BYGLAND

893-2775 Dahlstrom, Shane

CLIMAX

857-3536 Chandler, Justin

857-2165 Columbia Grain

857-2205 Columbia Grain – Fertilizer Plant

857-3338 Grove, Jeremy

857-3563 Reitmeier, Kevin

857-3553 Roper, David & Brianna

857-3315 Rouland, Shanna

857-6295 Sanchez, Tina

857-3398 Stortroen, Mark

FISHER

891-2299 Dykstra, James

891-2312 Marshall, Nicolas

891-2295 Monda, Gaylord & Kathy

891-2280 Rodriguez, Guadalupe

891-2418 Schultes, Jesse & Kathryn

HALSTAD

456-2200 Black, Blayne & Amber

456-2261 Burd, Terry & Kathi

456-2528 Gayton, Nikki

456-2399 Kubitz, Emily

456-2372 Roquet, Chantelle

456-2462 Thompson, Donald

HILLSBORO

636-2699 Erickson, Donald

636-2664 Garza, Vanessa

636-2694 Jalbert, Francis

636-2691 Ketterl, Mike & Melissa

636-5311 MeritCare - Hillsboro

636-2688 Olson, Harold & Doreen

636-2697 Sailor, Jeremiah

636-4568 Siegert, Marvin

636-5283 Stop-N-Go

636-2698 Vosgerau, Dennis & Kris

636-2700 Wolsky, Katherine

636-2689 Zerface, Lester & Olive

NIELSVILLE

946-3116 B & M Recognition

SHELLY

886-6160 Anderson, Dale

886-8252 Beech, Marilyn

886-6365 Columbia Grain

886-8590 Fettig, Deanna

886-7882 Hanson, KC & Nancy

886-8131 Holland, Pearl R.



Halstad Telephone Company Broadcasts Shrine Bowl Live, Donates To Shriners

Halstad Telephone Company, along with telecommunications companies in North Dakota, donated \$2,500 to the North Dakota Shrine Bowl. The donation was presented to Shriners from the El Zagal and Kem Temples on Saturday, July 12 during halftime of the nine-man Shrine Bowl game. This donation was given by HTC and several ND telecommunications companies, which joined together to air the Shrine Bowl live across the state.

These companies recognize the importance of the North Dakota Shrine Bowl, which was started in 1973 as a way to honor high school athletes and raise money and awareness for the Shriners Hospitals for Children. Shriners Hospitals for Children consists of a network of 22 state-of-the-art pediatric hospitals dedicated to improving the lives of children by providing pediatric specialty care, innovative research, and outstanding teaching programs. Founded by the Shriners International



Derrick Bulawa, CEO and General Manager of BEK Communications, presented Shriners Dale Duchscherer and Matt Sturlaugson with a check for \$2,500 on behalf of ten North Dakota and Minnesota partnering telecommunications companies.

in 1922, the Shriners Hospitals provide medical care for orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate to children under the age of 18 absolutely free of charge.

Last year, the North Dakota Shrine Bowl raised more than \$25,000 for the Shriners Hospitals and transportation fund to send children to the Shriners Hospitals from North Dakota and Northwest Minnesota.

The North Dakota Shrine Bowl consists of two football matches with an East vs. West format. The teams are made up of graduating high school seniors

nominated by their coaches and selected by members of the coaches association. This year's 35th Shrine Bowl was played at the FargoDome in Fargo, ND, on Saturday, July 12, 2008. HTC joined other participating companies in delivering the live broadcast of this game to more than 24,000 homes.

Warren Olson Retires As Halstad Director

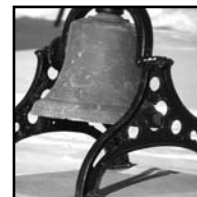
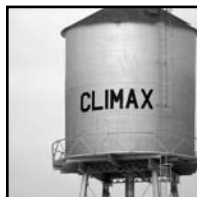
Warren Olson has retired as one of the directors from Halstad on the HTC board of directors. Olson was first elected to the board in 1996. In that time, he has seen HTC through many changes, including the expansion of internet service, growth into Hillsboro, the release of wireless internet, and the launch of cable TV throughout all communities and most rural areas HTC serves. "It is mind-boggling to think how far telephone service has come, even in the last 12 years," says Olson. "The staff and board at HTC have been a pleasure to work with. I've enjoyed helping the local people, and feel honored to have

served the members and customers of HTC."

Warren now plans to take life a little easier. "Warren has been a great asset to our cooperative in his time as director," comments Ron Laqua, CEO of HTC. "His commitment to our members and customers has been invaluable."



We wish you all the best, Warren! Thanks for your dedication and service.



Halstad Telephone Company CEO Receives Leadership Award

Halstad Telephone Company CEO Ron Laqua was recently awarded the Excellence in Leadership award from the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA). Excellence in Leadership awards are given to NTCA member directors, managers, and telecommunications company employees who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to telecommunications and leadership education.

“Keeping current on telecommunications issues is extremely important to me,” comments Laqua. “By staying on top of, and hopefully ahead of, the changes that are happening in the industry, we can make sure our members and customers continue to receive the excellent services to which they are accustomed.”

Laqua has been with HTC more than 15 years. He was General Manager until 2006; now he’s CEO of the 104-year-old cooperative. Before coming to HTC, Laqua worked with telephone cooperatives in Montana and North Dakota.



Alfred C. Lindem, Jr.

Alfred C. Lindem, Jr. passed away on July 27, 2008 after a courageous battle with cancer. Mr. Lindem, a former resident of Bygland, was a leader in the Bygland Rural Telephone Company in the 1950s. He served on the last board of directors of Bygland Rural Telephone, and in 1955

helped in its merger with Halstad Telephone Company. Mr. Lindem was also the first HTC board member from the Bygland exchange. Since 1997, he and his wife, Connie, have lived in Carol Stream, Illinois.

Halstad Telephone Company Gives Back With Community Cooperation Grant Fund

Halstad Telephone Company (HTC) is proud to introduce the Community Cooperation Grant Fund, a program designed to assist projects in HTC’s service area. Projects eligible for the Community Cooperation Grant Fund sustain and enhance life, safety, and growth of a community. Grants through the Community Cooperation Grant Funds are available to bona fide community organizations for projects of more than \$500. Projects must primarily benefit people who reside within HTC’s service area, namely Halstad; Shelly; Nielsville; Climax; Bygland; Fisher, Minnesota; and Hillsboro, North Dakota.

“We are looking forward to the opportunity to help our service area grow and enhance its facilities, organizations, and townships,” says Ron Laqua, CEO of HTC. “Groups in our area always have a need for donations, and as an established business of the Red River Valley, we look forward to helping our service communities.”

For more information and an application, please visit halstadtel.com and click on the link under support, or contact the HTC office at 800-457-2125. Please note that this grant does not replace or include small donations, which HTC provides from this grant on an individual basis.





HALSTAD TELEPHONE COMPANY

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PO Box 55 • Halstad, MN 56548

**Our offices will be closed
November 27th & 28th
for Thanksgiving.**

Officers and Directors

Chester Mauritsen – President Shelly
Steve Williams – Vice President Fisher
Lori DeLong – Secretary/Treasurer Halstad
Duane Evenson Climax
Ron Gotteberg Halstad
Elroy Hedde Nielsville
Kent Wavra Bygland
Ronald Laqua CEO

Office Employees

Mark Forseth Office Manager
Pauleen Hinkley Customer Service
Tracy Holte Customer Service
Kathy Maroney Customer Service
Melanie Nelson Customer Service
Sheri Nelson Customer Service

Plant Employees

Tom Maroney Plant Manager
Brandon Mickelson Network Service Coordinator
Chad Tice Network Service Technician
Kevin Richter Operations Coordinator
Andy Shulstad Technician
Ole Van Den Einde Technician
Dave Weeding Technician
John Hilley Technician
Jake Quern Technician
Arden Buchholz Custodian
Tom & Laurel Keeney Custodians



HALSTAD TELEPHONE COMPANY

How To Connect

345 2nd Ave. W.
Halstad, MN

218-456-2125

124 E. Caledonia Ave.
Hillsboro, ND

701-636-2125

**After Hours Troubles 800-300-1687
Help Desk 218-891-3006 or 888-891-3006
halstadel.com • 800-457-2125**