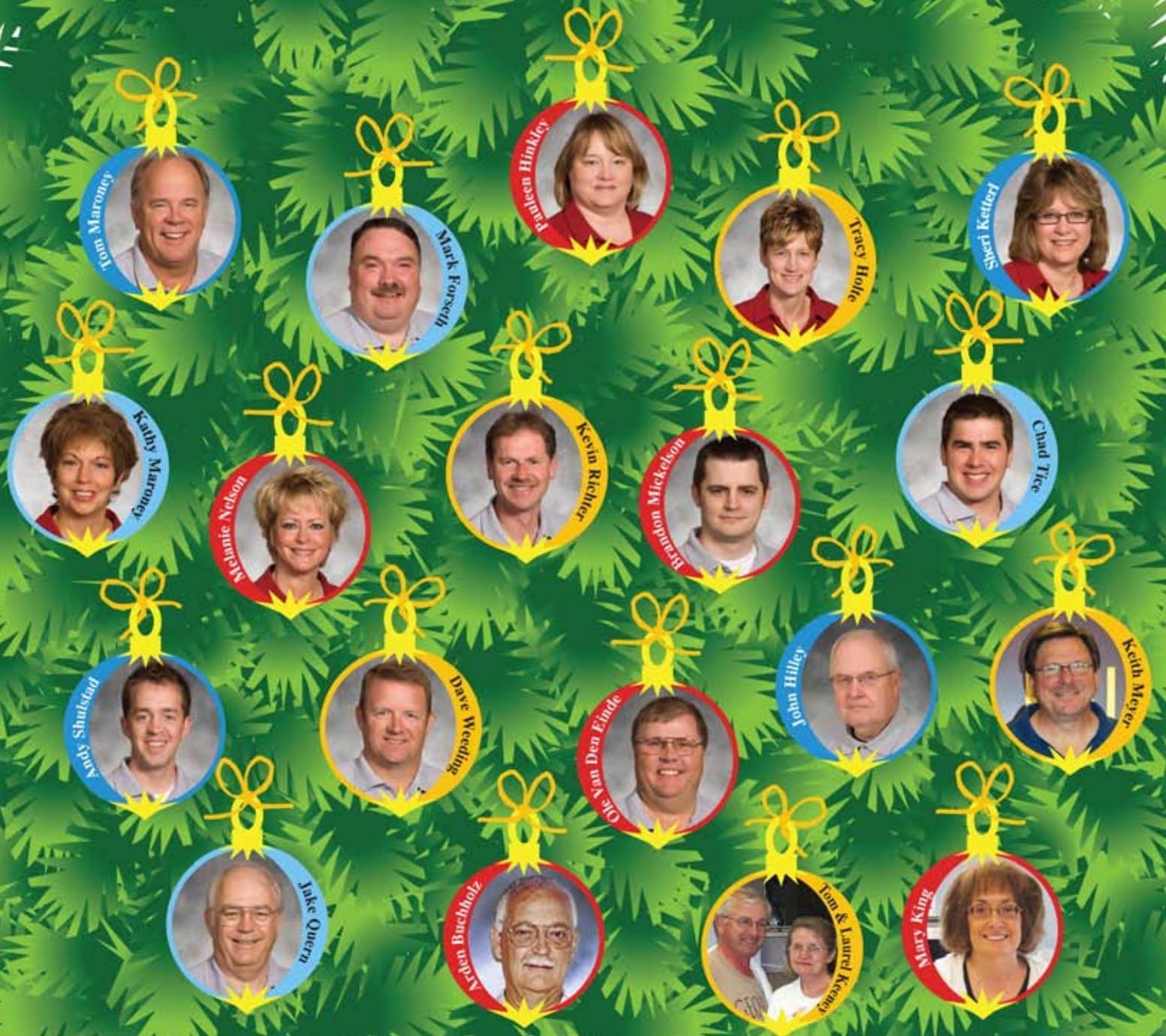


Phonotes

Volume 43, Issue 4 • Winter 2009-10

The Official Newsletter Of Halstad Telephone Company



In This Issue...

Ceo's Report

2009 Unclaimed
Capital Credits

Win Cash

New Connections

How To Connect

CEO's Report

The long wait for digital video recorders (DVRs) is almost over!

We at Halstad Telephone Company strive to put together packages that meet and exceed what you, our cooperative members, have been asking for. These new packages will include dozens of base package channels, high-definition (HD) channels, different channels on multiple TVs at once, and digital video recording!

Let's take a look at some typical home scenarios and the options available with each. As always, keep in mind that these options can be limited by the bandwidth available to and the wiring in your home. However, with HTC's new TV system, we expect to expand our services to you.

The Multiple TV, Multiple Viewer Home

Many of you, members of HTC, have multiple TVs and multiple TV viewers in your home and aren't always there to watch your favorite shows. For around \$50 per month, you can view three different channels in your house at the same time – one HD channel and two standard-definition (SD) channels. In this scenario, your set-top box would also include a DVR to record your favorite shows for viewing at your leisure. Plus, you will have a great basic channel lineup that includes HD channels.

The "I want a TV in every room, the garage, and the shop" Home

Some of you want to watch TV wherever you are in your home and you want to record your favorites when you aren't able to watch them. For around \$80 per month, you can have EIGHT different channels showing at the same time – four HD channels and four SD channels. Your equipment would include four set-top boxes, one with a DVR for recording. You'll also have our expanded lineup of HD and SD channels.

The Occasional Viewer Home

Some of you watch a little TV in the morning and in the evening and you rarely have more than one TV on at once. For around \$40 per month, you can have two different HD channels showing at the same time and you'll have our great basic channel lineup.



Tom Maroney

The "I want 80 HD channels and free installation for \$29.95" Home

Some of you like the thought of free installation, a boatload of HD channels, and free movie channels for \$29.95 per month. I'm sure you've heard and seen TV providers advertise such bargains. Before you make any decisions, make sure you find the answers to these questions:

1. What is the length of the contract I have to sign?
2. What is my monthly charge later in the contract, after the introductory period?
3. What is the cost of continued service when the contract expires?
4. What is the cost for additional channels?
5. What is the cost for local channels?
6. What is the cost for additional equipment?
7. What will it cost when I have trouble?

Don't be fooled by these bargain advertisements. You will pay for the services you are provided in one way or another or at some time during your contract period. We can show you the bill of a satellite TV customer who signed up for a low introductory rate and is now paying around \$80 per month for these services:



1. A channel lineup comparable to our base package
2. No premium movie channels
3. Only two set-top boxes with only one output each (only one in HD)
4. Local channels in SD
5. 80 HD channels, including The Deals Network, The Bargain Network, The Jewelry Network, The Rummage Sale Network, etc.

The point of showing you this type of home is that you will eventually pay for what you get, and what you get won't always be better than what HTC, your hometown cooperative, has to offer. And with us, there is NO CONTRACT to sign.

The rollout of our new TV system and packages is right around the corner. We have been testing this new Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) system for about four months. The crew has been installing equipment in the cabinets and splicing fiber and copper in preparation for the deployment. Our plan is to send out information with the December bills to gauge the interest of those that have been waiting for DVR.

Let's talk about some of the great new features of IPTV and DVR. With DVR it is no longer necessary to use older video cassette recorders (VCRs) or digital video disk (DVD) recorders. With VCRs and DVDs it's not always easy to record your favorite programs. DVR lets you record single programs or a series of programs much easier than you could with older systems.

The price for a DVR will be \$9.95 per month. The DVR will work at one location in your home or business, just like VCRs do. In about one year the software will be upgraded so any of your set-top boxes

can connect to the DVR box and you will be able to view your recorded programs on any of your TVs that have a set-top box.

Also, customers can have HD programming on more than one TV with this new system. The new system will enable all of your HD TVs to display crystal-clear HD pictures. The price of having HD TV will drop from \$18.95 per month to just \$9.95 per month beginning with the December billing period. This is great news for new, as well as, existing customers!

The new plan will enable customers to have two choices of set-top boxes in the base plan:

1. Up to two HD set-top boxes that can service one TV each, or
2. One set-top box that has one HD output and two SD outputs

Family Vision will also be included in this plan for one low rate. Additional set-top boxes for additional TVs will be \$10.00 each per month, making the possibility of adding another three-output boxes an attractive option.

Some of the current features that you enjoy will not be available in the short-term. For just a few months, you will not have caller ID on your TV when someone calls you. This feature is currently being tested and should be available soon. Also, the new system will not provide Pay Per View (PPV) programming, a feature that was not widely used but was used heavily by some customers. We will maintain both the new system and our current system for some time so those customers who desire PPV can have this service as long as our current system is maintained.

I would be remiss if I did not mention one more feature of the new system. Any customers that have broadband internet will have wireless access at their



house as well. In the past you've had to buy additional equipment to have wireless internet; now we will provide you the equipment you need.

I know this is a complicated article that probably is making your head hurt, but it is a start toward new features that you, our members and customers, have been asking for. We have had a great TV system since early 2000, and now it's time to move to the next generation of TV systems.

Now, on a personal note from your new CEO who has been at Halstad Telephone for almost 35 years, I have had many different positions, and it is my pleasure serving Halstad Telephone Company in whatever capacity the board sees fit. We are very excited to bring out the next step in our continued evolution of products that you, our members, have asked for. HTC is a great place to work with great employees and a great board.

Tom Maroney

CEO
Halstad Telephone Company
tmaroney@rrv.net

Do you have trouble using a regular telephone?

There are telephones that can help — and they're available at no charge!

For an application, contact the Minnesota Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program.



Call MNTEd 1-800-657-3663 or 1-888-206-6555 (TTY).

 Eligibility requirements do apply.

The Telephone Equipment Distribution Program is administered by the Department of Commerce Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) and funded by a telephone surcharge.

Minnesota Department of Human Services

Officers and Directors

Chester Mauritson – President Shelly
Steve Williams – Vice President Fisher
Lori DeLong – Secretary/Treasurer Halstad
Duane Evenson Climax
Ron Gotteberg Halstad
Dan Christianson Hillsboro
Elroy Hedde Nielsville
Kent Wavra Bygland
Tom Maroney CEO

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Mark Forseth Operations Manager
Keith Meyer Business Systems Technician
Kathy Maroney Customer Service Coordinator
Pauleen Hinkley Customer Service
Tracy Holte Customer Service
Sheri Ketterl Customer Service
Melanie Nelson Customer Service
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 Custodian



Halstad Office
345 2nd Ave. W. • 218-456-2125

Hillsboro Office
124 E. Caledonia Ave. • 701-636-2125

After Hours Troubles 800-300-1687

**Help Desk 218-891-3006
or 888-891-3006**

halstadtel.com • 800-457-2125



2009 Unclaimed Capital Credits

If you know how to contact any of the people listed, please call Tracy Holte at HTC - 218.456.2125.

BYGLAND

Jill Dudgeon
Brian & Chastity Pierce

CLIMAX

Kris & Cal Boe
C & E Construction
Managers
Dwayne M. Duckworth
Irwin Erickson
Harold Ertsgard
Lori Herberg
Lawrence Johnson
Jeremie Larson
Gerardo Martinez
Salvador Martinez
Donna Russell
Kory & Teresa Skistad

FISHER

Tracey Bangen
Walter & Ellen Beaman
Ed Dauphanais
David Garrett
George Gund
Tyrone Joseph
Vern & Patty Markey
Clancy Mcintosh
Helen Mueller
Northern Net Inc.
Jason & Michelle Slover
David Solberg
Clifford Stalemo
Laurie Staton
R. Stewart
Dean Tougas

Jim Yahnke

HALSTAD

Jason Anderson
Peter Buchholz
Jesse Ellis
James & Marilee Flath
Clement & Susan George
Scott Gilbertson
Dave & Jody Hagenson
Dale Hartel
Stanley Hauschild
Jeffrey & Leah Hodd
Jose Marichalar
Jose Salas
Mary Trapp
Jonathan Witten

NIELSVILLE

Tony & Trista Balzarini
Matthew & Angel
Schelske
Martin C. William

SHELLY

Donna Brown
David & Malinda
Donner
Melissa McCormack
Jeanne Robison
Gerald Wagoner

Community Cooperation Grant Awarded

HTC recently awarded a \$5,000 Community Cooperation Grant to the Red River History Museum in Shelly, MN. Pictured (l-r): HTC CEO Tom Maroney and Chester Mauritsen of the Red River History Museum.



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 2010! (Must be present to win the \$100.) Just return this coupon by **January 15, 2010**, to be eligible for the drawing.

Congratulations To Last Issue's \$25 Winners:

Viola Paulsrud, Halstad, MN
Jim & Kay Martine, Shelly, MN

Name: _____

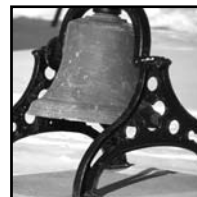
Phone: _____

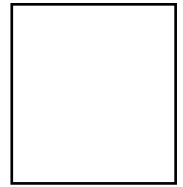
Fill in the blank in this sentence:

“The long wait for

(DVRs) is almost over.”

(Answer can be found somewhere in this issue.)





HTC Offices Will Be Closed...

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25
New Year's Day: Friday, January 1

Our offices will be closing at 2:30 p.m...

Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24
New Year's Eve: Thursday, December 31



New Connections

BYGLAND

893-2568 Zavoral, Dave

CLIMAX

857-2005 Crowell, William

857-2116 Michaels, Heidi S

857-2006 Morken, Kristen

857-2004 Riddle, Stacey

857-2118 Tubby, Martin & Juli

FISHER

891-2100 Bakken, Mitch

891-2014 Hickman, Lloyd & Carol

HALSTAD

456-2219 Bekkerus, Megan

456-2376 Bellingham, Alfreda

456-2265 Benson, Nial

456-2208 Berg, Roxann

456-2251 Encinia, Elpoidio

456-2399 Henderson, Neal

456-2209 Larson, Bill

456-2012 Martinson, Andrew

456-2372 Martinson, Kristi

456-2259 Ostgaard, Ceclia

456-2299 Proximity Salon

456-2205 Schalesky, Jerrod

456-2238 Schaumburg, Wayne

456-2146 Scholl's SuperValu

456-2215 Tovar, Ricky

HILLSBORO

636-2625 Anderson, Audrey

636-4065 Christianson, Margaret

636-2214 Floberg, Katie

636-2007 Goldammer, Eric & Sarah

636-2211 Henn, Lucille

636-2224 Jacobson, Kimberly

636-5089 Lemm, Liz

636-5056 Meyer, Beverly

636-2217 Moore, Jack

636-5125 Schlichtmann,
Raymond & Sharon

636-2213 Sundseth, Irvin & Cora

636-2011 Watson, Hjerdis

NIELSVILLE

946-2120 Vargas, Salvador

SHELLY

886-6004 Balgaard, Deborah

886-6007 Cota, Jamie Lee

886-8822 Holte, Michael

886-6003 Santana, Jose

886-6005 Schweigert, Deborah

886-6133 Selland, Thor

