

# Co-op Connection

Hamilton County Telephone Co-op

February 2021

## Board of Director Announcement:

Although we are still uncertain about the timing of our Annual Meeting, we will still be taking the normal steps for the board elections in hopes that our meeting can be held. This year Belle Prairie (648) and Macedonia (728) exchanges will be up for Director Elections.

The nominating committees for the 648 exchange nominated Alan Monroe and the 728 exchange nominated Chris Sink to serve another three year term on the HCTC Board. Although the nominees as candidates are selected by these committees, the by-laws also allow for any other certified member of these exchanges the same right in running and serving a three year term as Director for their exchange. If you are interested, you can pick up a petition (required to be signed by 10% or 15 certified members, whichever is less, of your exchange) at the co-op from the General Manager, along with the specific details and requirements of serving as a Director.

You will have until March 15 to file your certified petition with the Co-op for your name to be placed on the ballot at the annual meeting.

Speaking of the Annual Meeting, we are working to host the meeting, however, we are at the mercy of the pandemic as well as state requirements. We want to offer a safe meeting for all our members, so we pray the virus will be under control soon.

God Bless,

Kevin Pyle, General Manager & EVP

## Managed Wi-Fi can work for you!

This service is designed to maximize your Wi-Fi experience within your home. During your Managed Wi-Fi installation, we will setup the router and devices within your home. We provide you with a commercial grade router that is designed specifically for high speed internet usage, and a Wi-Fi extender when needed. With this service, we are able to diagnose 90% of Wi-Fi issues over the phone. When we do have to send a technician to your house for bandwidth or Wi-Fi related issues, the service call fee is waived. This service gives our team real-time data on your coverage areas, connected devices, and provides you peace of mind.

To inquire more about this service, call our office at 618-736-2211!

## Calendar of Events:

Feb 2 - Groundhog Day

Feb 14 - Valentine's Day 

Feb 15 - President's Day  
(Office Open)

Feb 16 - Mardi Gras

Feb 17 - Ash Wednesday

## New Directory Listings:

Mindy Turner 757-2316

Dahlgren Community Church 736-5153

*Welcome to Hamilton County  
Telephone Co-op!*

Kevin Pyle  
Executive Vice President &  
General Manager

### Board of Directors:

647 Exchange  
Steven Douglass

648 Exchange  
Alan Monroe, Secretary

728 Exchange  
Chris Sink, President

736 Exchange  
Lemuel Gage, Vice-President

756 Exchange  
Rob Kiefer, Treasurer

757 Exchange  
Justin Woodrow

773 Exchange  
Robert Abbott

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## In the News - FCC releases Rural Digital Opportunity Fund

You may have heard about the recent RDOF auction in the news. There are still millions of homes and small businesses lacking speeds of at least 25 Meg across our country including within our Co-op. The FCC recently released the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) as another step in bridging the digital divide. These eligible areas are underserved and left behind by bigger carriers such as Frontier.

Since the reduction of support in 2016, your Co-op is constantly looking at funding opportunities to help and secure the survival of our Co-op for generations to come. The cost of deploying a fully fed fiber network is expensive and monetarily not sustainable at just one or two homes per mile. This alone makes rural areas like ours a business case failure. However, we do see light at the end of the tunnel. In the past two years, there have been new funding opportunities through the USDA and the State of Illinois that are working to serve the underserved, some of which we received for our co-op. We anticipate more funding opportunities over the next year or so as well. We are looking into any and all funding available to our area.

The RDOF is no exception. Your Co-op was able to secure funding in many areas of Hamilton County. This funding opportunity is allowing us to reach our neighbors plagued with low speeds less than 10/1 Mbps and unacceptable service. It is in the Co-ops best interest to pick up additional revenue to make up for the shortfall of the lost funds to expand in our Co-op area. Our long term goal is for the Co-op to be self-sufficient and self-supporting by 2028 as federal support dollars vanish.



*Apply Today!*

### **College Scholarships Now Available:**

College scholarship applications for Hamilton County Telephone Foundation are available online at:

<https://www.hamiltoncom.net/about-hamilton-county-communications/>

or you can request a copy from your high school guidance counselor.

Deadline to submit application is April 1, 2021. Please see application for requirements and eligibility.

This is another benefit of being a Co-op Member.

## **WIN \$15 OFF YOUR BILL!**

Complete the following questionnaire, cut out this section and mail the completed form by February 10, 2020. Your name will be placed in a drawing for \$15 off your telephone bill with HCTC. There will be two winners in February.

1. Do you hope the Groundhog sees its shadow or not? Yes No
2. What two exchanges are up for re-election? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the deadline to file your certified petition to run for the director position? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the deadline for college scholarship applications? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations to January's winners: John & Roxanne Ritcheson and David & June Rubenacker.  
They each received \$10 off their telephone bill.

**Check out our website at [www.hamiltoncom.net](http://www.hamiltoncom.net) for more information about the Co-op.**