

FEBRUARY 2024

RINGER

A PUBLICATION OF NORTHWEST COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE.

RDFC Grant Winners



NCC Director, Roger Manger, delivering \$500 to Jennifer McNamara & Jamie Bolduc for the Sunset Park in Grenora.



NCC Director, Nate Jepsen, delivering \$1,500 to Rosemary Schweyen at the Bowbells Food Pantry.



NCC Director, Leslie Grubb, delivering \$500 to Diane Douts at the Burke County Historical Society.

Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) grants were given to the following organizations sponsored by NCC:

- Burke County WWII Memorial Hall renovation - \$1,100
- Lignite Senior Citizens Club furnace replacement - \$900
- Sunset Park in Grenora toddler play area - \$500
- Burke County Historical Society cement slab - \$500
- The Society of St. Stephen Food Pantry in Bowbells was provided \$1,500 on behalf of the Broadband Association of North Dakota (BAND) sponsored RDFC grant.

NCC is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). RDFC makes these funds available in order that more people become aware of their larger loan program that funds community-based projects and non-profit entities with low interest loans.



**CHANGING LIVES.
MAKING CONNECTIONS.**



Scholarships available for students!

– **APPLY TODAY** –

For more details and applications go to
nccray.com/scholarships

2024 NCC Scholarship Programs

In support of continuing education for rural youth, Northwest Communications Cooperative (NCC) is proud to sponsor three scholarship programs. To qualify, the applicant, or the applicants parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must be members of NCC.

Applications for the following scholarships are sent to area schools and colleges/universities. Additional applications may be obtained by contacting NCC at 701-568-3331. The scholarship applications are also on our website at www.nccray.com/scholarships.

Arthur S. Johnson Scholarship:

For the 39th year, NCC is sponsoring this scholarship which was established in honor of previous manager, Art Johnson, who worked for NCC from 1951 to 1985. NCC will be awarding four (4) \$1,000 scholarships in 2024. These scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors and students in post secondary institutions. *Application deadline is March 15, 2024.*

Kenneth Lund, Jr. Scholarship:

For the 22nd year, NCC is pleased to sponsor a technology scholarship. This scholarship was established in honor of previous General Manager Kenneth Lund, Jr., who worked for NCC from 1969 to 2003. NCC will be awarding two (2) \$1,000 technology scholarships in 2024. These scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors and undergraduate students. Preference will be given to students enrolled in a curriculum studying the telecommunications, information technology, and/or computer technology field at an accredited technical school or a two or four-year college/university. However, all high school seniors and undergraduate students are encouraged to apply. *Application deadline is March 15, 2024.*

The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship:

For the 20th year, NCC is excited to offer students in our local school districts the opportunity to apply for

this national scholarship program sponsored by our national affiliate, NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association. In 2024, FRS will award thirty (30) \$2,500 scholarships to rural high school seniors. This scholarship is not available to students in post-secondary institutions. Local students in our service area will be competing with other rural students in our NTCA region, which includes ND, SD, MN, and WI. Should a student from our service area be selected to receive one of the 30 scholarships, FRS will fund \$2,000 and NCC will fund \$500. The FRS scholarship is not a scholarship based on grade point average. Rather, it is geared toward seniors who are good, solid students, but may not qualify for scholarship programs based solely upon GPA. Some preference may be given to individuals expressing an interest to return to work in a rural area following graduation. *Applications must be submitted online to FRS by February 16, 2024, using this link:*
<https://www.frs.org/scholarships>

The FRS Staurulakis Family Scholarship:

The FRS is proud to announce the 13th year of four scholarships funded by Manny and Leo Staurulakis, of John Staurulakis, Inc. (JSI) in honor of their parents, John and Chresanthe Staurulakis and to celebrate 50 years of service to the rural telephone industry. In 2024 JSI will award four (4) \$5,000 scholarships to rural high school seniors. This scholarship is not available to students in post-secondary institutions. The application used for the above FRS Scholarship will be used for this scholarship. Students with a focus in the science, math, medicine, or engineering will be automatically considered for these JSI Staurulakis Family Scholarships. As stated above, *applications must be submitted online to FRS by February 16, 2024, using this link:* <https://www.frs.org/scholarships>

NCC Universal Telephone Service

Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, “universal service” means basic telephone service that is available to all consumers. Universal service is voice grade access to the telecommunications network, including local usage, touch-tone calling, single-party service, access to emergency 911 service, access to operator service, and discounted services to qualifying low-income consumers. All of these services are available from Northwest Communications Cooperative in these areas: Alamo, Bowbells, Columbus, Crosby, Epping, Flaxton, Grenora, Lignite, Marmon, McGregor, Noonan, Portal, Powers Lake, Ray, Round Prairie, Tioga, and Wildrose.

– Monthly charges for these Universal Services are –

Basic local resident service:	\$22.46 - \$24.50 (Charges vary depending on extended area service (EAS) to designated service areas)
Touch-tone Service:	No additional charge
Single Party Service:	No additional charge
Access to emergency service:	No additional charge (Local government assesses a tax to pay for special equipment)
Access to operator services:	No additional charge (Charges for services vary and are determined by the long distance carrier you have chosen that provides your operator service.)
Access to directory assistance:	No additional charge (Charges for services provided by Directory Assistance vary and are determined by the long distance carrier that provides the service.)

– Low-income Programs –

Lifeline Telephone Only Subscriber:	\$5.25/mo. discount
Lifeline Telephone/Internet or Internet Only:	\$9.25/mo. discount

Qualifying for Lifeline assistance is open to individuals whose income is 135% or less than the federal poverty guidelines or by participating in one or more of the following programs:

- Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Program
- Tribal eligibility programs

Individuals who might be eligible can visit nccray.com/residential/home-phone/ to fill out an application form and provide documentation of eligibility of one of the above programs or income level. One Lifeline discount per household is available. For more information you can visit: www.usac.org/lifeline

– Fixed Federal, State and Local Prescribed Charges –

Federal Subscriber Line Charge:	
Residential & Single-Line Business	\$6.50
Multi-Line Business	\$9.20
Federal Universal Service Charge:	
Single-Line Residential	\$2.25
Single-Line Business	\$3.29
Multi-Line Business	\$4.22
ISDN	\$8.13
Access Recovery Charge:	\$3.00
Telecommunications Relay Service	\$0.03
E911-Emergency Services	\$1.50 - \$2.00

Call NCC at 568-3331 with questions about Universal Services.

FRS Youth Tour

Do you know of a High School student, ages 15-17, who may be interested in an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C.? NCC would like to sponsor a student for the Foundations for Rural Service (FRS) Youth Tour trip on June 3rd – 7th, 2024.

FRS Youth Tour information and the application can be found on our website at www.nccray.com/scholarships, or by contacting NCC, or your school guidance counselor. The completed application and a written 1-page essay needs to be submitted to NCC by February 21st.



JOIN US!

FRS YOUTH TOUR IN WASHINGTON, DC

ALL
EXPENSES
PAID!



The chosen student will be contacted during the first part of March to verify interest and make travel arrangements. The student will be asked to come to an NCC board meeting after the Youth Trip tour to make a short, verbal presentation to share their experience with the board members. Interested students should contact us as soon as possible!



Coming Soon!

The NCC March Mania Pick-It Challenge will follow the upcoming men's college basketball playoff games. It's a chance for you to have some fun and win a prize! Watch our social media and eNewsletter for more details.

Important Notes

- **NCC Advanced TV and NCC Video rates will go up** beginning with your March statement based on the annual programming fee increases from the Cable TV networks and the local networks retransmission agreements. For more information about TV rates, please visit: tvonmyside.com/ncc. Internet-only subscribers with multiple services from NCC receive a discount. Call us today at 568-3331.
- **Beginning March 1st**, all broadband only customers who are registered SmartHub users will automatically be switched to receiving paperless statements. To opt out of paperless statements and continue to receive a paper statement in the mail, please call 568-3331 or email ncc@nccray.com
- **Moving soon?** Even if you plan to move outside of the NCC service area and will no longer have service with NCC, please keep your address current with us. You don't want to miss any future capital credit disbursements.
- **Daylight Savings Time begins** on Sunday, March 10th at 2:00 a.m. Turn your clocks ahead one hour.

NCC YouTube

Check out our NEW 'How To' videos and learn all about:

- ▶ *How to setup email on your Android phone.*
- ▶ *How to setup email on your iPhone.*
- ▶ *How to organize your SPAM filter emails.*

These videos are on the NCC YouTube channel at youtube.com/nccray or on the NCC website at nccray.com/ncc-email-settings.

Happy Valentine's Day
Wednesday, February 14th



POWER OUTAGES

Battery Power for Home Phone Service During Power Outages:

A backup power supply (battery) is required for your digital voice service to be in service in the event of a power outage. A backup battery will allow regular corded land line phones to work during a power outage and to maintain the ability to connect to 911 emergency services.

Purchase and Replacement Options:

NCC provides (1) battery back up at no extra charge, which should provide up to eight hours of emergency service. You will need to contact NCC if you would like this option. If more backup power is desired, additional backup batteries are available directly from NCC for purchase. Customer will be responsible for costs to install and replace any additional batteries.

Please call our office if you have any questions at 701-568-3331, or visit nccray.com/terms-conditions.

PROTECT THEM ALL.

Defend against unwanted cybersecurity threats.



Call to add ProtectIQ 701.568.3331 | nccray.com/myNCC-connect

my
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NCC is Your Local Provider of Internet, Telephone, TV and Security Monitoring and Surveillance services!



Report Trouble: 611
Email: ncc@nccray.com
Ph: 701-568-3331 or 800-245-5884
Directory Assistance: 411
Call Before You Dig: 811
Newsletter Editor: Angela Schepp
Design: lori@leutzgraphics.com

Business Hours: M-F 8am to 5pm.
NCC Message Center will take calls outside of these hours.

Make a payment anytime by using Secure Pay 1-888-816-8068 or SmartHub www.nccray.com or download the app