

RINGER

FEBRUARY 2023



Photo by Keith Torgerson

RDFC Grant Winners

Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) Awards Grant in NCC's Service Area!

- Divide County Public Library (\$500)
- Ray High School FACS class (\$500)
- St. Luke's Hospital (\$500)
- Society of St. Stephen's Food Pantry in Bowbells (\$500)

NCC is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area are eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$2,000 for community-based projects. RDFC is making 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. For more information about RDFC and the loans they offer, you can go to: ndarec.com/content/rdfc-rural-development-finance-corporation



NCC Director, Jim Simonson, delivering \$500 to St. Luke's Hospital in Crosby.



BAND awarded their RDFC grants to Ray High School FACS class (\$1000) and Lil Ranchers Daycare in Powers Lake (\$1000).



CHANGING LIVES.
MAKING CONNECTIONS.



Scholarships available for students!

– **APPLY TODAY** –

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

2023 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 available on our website at www.nccray.com.

Arthur S. Johnson Scholarship:

For the 38th 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 2023. These scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors and students in post secondary institutions. ***Application deadline is March 17, 2023.***

Kenneth Lund, Jr. Scholarship:

For the 21st 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 2023. 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 17, 2023.***

The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship:

For the 19th 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 2023, 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 8, 2023, using this link:*** www.frs.org/programs/youth-programs/scholarships.

The FRS Staurulakis Family Scholarship:

The FRS is proud to announce the eleventh 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 2023 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. With the generous addition of the Staurulakis Family Scholarships, the Foundation will offer nearly \$100,000 annually to help rural students attain a higher education. As stated above, applications must be submitted online to FRS by February 8, 2023, at this link: www.frs.org/programs/youth-programs/scholarships.

Backup Power

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



A group of telephone cooperatives realized, more than half a century ago, that they could get farther by working together.

NCC board members and some staff attended the BAND Annual Meeting in December, and visited with local legislators.



Senator Rust with NCC board members.



Lorena Lambrecht, NCC board member was awarded a plaque for serving as BAND board president.

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, 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

Affordable Connectivity Program: \$30.00/mo. discount

– 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 \$2.12
Single-Line Business \$3.10
Multi-Line Business \$3.98
ISDN \$7.66

Access Recovery Charge:
Single-Line Business \$1.50
Multi-Line Business \$3.00

Telecommunications Relay Service \$0.04

E911-Emergency Services \$1.50 - \$2.00

Call NCC at 701-568-3331 with questions on Universal Services.

Important Notes

- **Returning Snowbirds:**
Call NCC at least seven business days before you would like your services to be restored. This will allow our service technicians plenty of time to include on their schedule.
- **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.
- **NCC After-Hours Support:**
Call our office at 568-3331. Employees will be on call for any emergency outages.
- **Daylight Savings Time begins** on Sunday, March 12th at 2:00 a.m. Remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour.
- **Happy St. Patrick's Day** on Friday, March 17th!

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



NCC TV Video Rate Changes:

NCC Advanced TV and NCC Video rates will go up beginning with your February 2023 statement based on the annual programming fee increases from the Cable TV networks and the local networks retransmission agreements. Subscriber rates for each package will be as follows:

Economy - \$31.95/mo.

Basic - \$88.00/mo.

Expanded - \$114.00/mo.

These are subscriber fees only and are in addition to the Local Broadcast Fee that all TV customers are assessed for your local channels. Local broadcast fee will go to \$26.75/mo.

For more information about TV rates, please visit: **tvonmyside.com/ncc**. Internet Only subscribers with multiple services from NCC receive a discount. Call us to ask about them today!

SMARTHUB CONVENIENCE & CONTROL

*Easy-to-use app that lets you
manage your NCC account on
your own time!*

- **NEW!** Add or upgrade your services
- View and pay your bill
- Sign up for automatic payments
- Monitor usage 24/7
- Report service issues
- Receive important notices
- Update your account information



701.568.3331 | nccray.com



**SIGN UP OR
DOWNLOAD TODAY!**
nccray.smarthub.coop

*Happy
Valentine's Day!*
Tuesday, February 14th

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