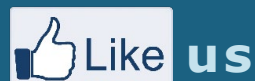


Office Closed

West River
Cooperative
Telephone
Company's
office will
be closed
Monday,
May 25th for
Memorial Day.



on facebook

facebook.com/WRCTC

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Show Us Your
PATRIOTISM

2021 Directory Photo Contest

We are looking for **PATRIOTIC** photos for the 2021 WRCTC Directory. The photos can be of your favorite person, place or thing! They just need to be patriotic!

Submit your pictures to reggebo@wrctc.coop or mail them to WRCTC, % Rachel Eggebo, PO Box 39, Bison, SD 57620.

Deadline to enter the 2021 Directory Photo Contest is **August 17, 2020.**

Contest Rules can be found on page 4.



COVID-19 Update

We are all in this Together

As you know, we are all facing unprecedented times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. West River Cooperative Telephone 456-2635 Company wants you to know that we are all in this together! WRCTC has a vested interest in the continued success of our communities now, and after the pandemic is over. As your local communications service leader, West River Cooperative Telephone Company is committed to maintaining the highest level of communications services for our members during this time.

With the need to work from home, learn from home, and businesses rapidly changing, the demand for communication is higher than ever. To ensure we continue to provide you with 374-5161 great services and meet your needs, we have recently made the following operational changes as a result of the current COVID pandemic:



1. We have postponed all non-essential network upgrades to minimize service interruptions.
2. In mid-March, due to the anticipated increase of our member's internet bandwidth usage, WRCTC increased the capacity of its connection to the internet.
3. We have upgraded critical equipment in our network to mitigate network congestion due to more internet usage during this time.
4. We are constantly monitoring our network to identify any potential causes of service interruptions or network congestion before they happen.
5. We have ensured that all elementary and high school students in our service area have access to broadband while they are learning from home.
6. We have ensured that all teachers in our service area have enough bandwidth to allow them to teach their students via video conference.
7. We have provided the free use of our business conference bridge system for business entities to help maintain their business continuity while practicing social distancing.
8. We have increased the capacity of our business conference bridge system due to the increase in usage.

While most of our office 866-4616 employees are currently working from home, we still have the same ability to serve as if we were in the office. You can still contact us by calling our office at 605-244-5213.

West River offers multiple internet speed solutions and a state of the art router to provide you with the best internet experience possible!

For more information on COVID-19, please visit the South Dakota Department of Health COVID website (<https://doh.sd.gov/news/Coronavirus.aspx>) or the CDC COVID website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>).

SDTA to Award \$4,000 in 2020 Scholarships

The South Dakota Telecommunications Association (SDTA) annually 257-2637 awards scholarships under two separate programs or scholarship funds administered by the South Dakota Community Foundation, those two programs/funds include our “SDTA Memorial Scholarships” and our “Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarships.”

This year, for the fall 2020 college semester, (SDTA) will be awarding two scholarships of \$2,000 under its Memorial Scholarship Program. The deadline to apply for these Scholarships is May 31, 2020. To be eligible for the available Memorial Scholarship awards, you must have plans to attend or already be attending a college as a full-time student (taking at least 12 semester credit hours or its equivalent) and meet the following criteria:

- Have a High School Diploma or GED equivalent;
- Be accepted into or attending a multi-year program degree at any accredited technical college or other accredited post-secondary higher education institution in South Dakota for the fall 2020 semester;
- Be majoring in a degree/program or field of study that is useful in the telecommunications or broadband industry or which significantly relies on the use of broadband services and related technologies (see examples of majors eligible for this scholarship below); and
- Be a customer/member or have a parent or legal guardian who is a customer/member of a SDTA member company, such as West River Cooperative Telephone Company.

**Previous SDTA Memorial Scholarship recipients are not eligible to apply.*

Examples of eligible majors or fields of study for the SDTA Memorial 244-5577 Scholarship include, but are not limited to: Telecommunications; WiFi and Broadband Technologies; Information Systems Technology; Satellite Communications; Health Information Technology; Office Technology Specialist; Programming Specialist; Network Specialist; Engineering (Computer Science or Systems, Electrical, CAD, Software, Industrial, Communications Systems, Network Security); Technologies or Computers (Communications Systems Engineering Technologies, Computer Programming, Computer Software Specialist, Computer Systems or Software, Computer Applications, Utilities Technologies, Network Technician, Internet Apps Developer, Laser/Electro-Optics, Marketing, Network Administration, System Administrator); Technology Education; and Communication Arts (Graphic Design or Mass Communications, Commercial Arts, Multimedia/Web Development.)

The scholarship application can be completed online, submitted by email to katie@sdtaonline.com or mailed hard-copy to: SDTA, PO Box 57, Pierre, SD 57501. Applications are available online at www.sdtaonline.com, from any South Dakota post-secondary institution student financial aid office, the SDTA office, or any SDTA member company.

Award selections 374-5689 will be announced on or about July 15th.

The Memorial Scholarship Program and Brian Meyer Memorial Scholarship programs are supported by SDTA and its member companies, including all of the following community-based rural broadband providers operating in South Dakota: Alliance Communications; Beresford Municipal Telephone; Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Telephone Authority; Faith Municipal Telephone; Fort Randall Telephone; Golden West Telecommunications; Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative; James Valley Telecommunications; Kennebec Telephone Company; Midstate Communications; RC Technologies; Santel Communications; Swiftel Communications; TrioTel Communications; Valley Telecommunications; Venture Communications; West River Cooperative Telephone Company; West River Telecommunications Cooperative. 375-3777

New WRCTC Members

Lemmon

Hegre, Douglas & Laura 374-6390

Newell

Stone, Wendy 456-7034

Nisland

Wilbur, Robert 257-2676

SECURE PAY

**Make a payment on your bill over
the phone using a
debit/credit card or check.**

**Available 24/7!
844-252-5267**

Find Your Phone

**\$10
bill credit**

Ten telephone numbers were hidden in the last newsletter. Hidden in this issue are ten new numbers. If you find YOUR number, all you have to do is notify our office. The \$10 will then be deducted off your telephone bill. New connect numbers do not count. **Deadline is May 22, 2020.**

FRS Youth Tour CANCELED

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), FRS has been forced to cancel the 2020 Youth Tour. The cancellation takes into consideration the 244-5290 safety of students, chaperones, and staff, as well as the restrictions on gatherings, curtailment of transportation, and access to Capitol Hill and the FCC. FRS and WRCTC are very disappointed the 25th annual Youth Tour will not be taking place this summer, but we hope you understand.

PHOTO CONTEST RULES: *The photo must be an original taken by a WRCTC member. If the photo contains a person who is highly recognizable and it is chosen as a winner, a picture permission form must be signed by the individual. If the subject is under 18 years of age, a parent/guardian must sign prior to receiving the money. Each customer may submit FOUR photos. Photos may also be submitted on a computer disc or e-mailed as a jpeg or pdf file. The photos must be in full-color and will not be returned to the customer. Submission of the photo releases all right of ownership of the photo and authorizes WRCTC to publish the photo on the directory cover, or use as WRCTC desires, allowing proper acknowledgment to the photographer. The winners will see their photo on the front cover of the 2021 directory and will be awarded \$100 cash prize for first place; \$50 for second place and \$25 for third place. Employees and Directors are not eligible.*

Call Before You DIG

**Don't assume you know what's
below. Protect yourself and those
around you – Call 811 every time.**

Planning a 374-4121 home improvement job? Planting a tree? Installing a fence or deck? WAIT! Here's what you need to know first:



Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, 375-3515 smart digging means calling **811** before each job. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.