Celebrating Our Local Heroes

CTC participated in this year’s United Way Chili Cook-Off. The event took place on September 21st at the Westgate Mall in Baxter. This year’s theme was a tribute to our local heroes. CTC’s booth showcased the local Police Department, Fire Department, the Crow Wing County Sheriff’s Office, and the members of the local armed services. The United Way raised over $3,000 for the community in this energetic event.
Long Distance Dropped Calls
You may have read in our last issue of the Dialer’s Digest about customers not receiving long distance calls and/or experiencing voice quality issues. This has been a nationwide issue that CTC has been working on with many other rural telephone companies. We are proud to say our efforts are starting to pay off. The NTCA (National Telecommunications Cooperative Association), which CTC is a member of, has called on the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) to begin an investigation into the issue from a national level. The FCC has agreed to do this, creating a task force to look into the call completion issue. This is a positive step forward in helping resolve this issue as we now have the attention that this deserves at a national level. We will continue to update you on the progress of this issue as more information becomes available.

Annual Meeting - June 8th
We would also like to thank all our members who attended our Annual Meeting and Community Picnic this summer. We had a great turnout with lots of fun activities and entertainment. We would like to congratulate Paul Nieman Jr. and Jerry Palm on being re-elected as Directors to the CTC Board.

Fiber Update
Despite some challenges with obtaining fiber-optic cable earlier this year, we have made positive progress in our fiber network deployment this summer. In our Sullivan Lake exchange we installed 172.4 miles of mainline fiber, while installing 697 fiber drops to members’ homes. In Motley we have completed 33.73 miles of mainline fiber, while installing 434 fiber drops to members’ homes. We’re also in the process of staking and surveying in our Lincoln and Nokay Lake exchanges to begin deploying fiber optics to those members in 2012 with completion in 2013. Please refer to our planned sequence of events below to help give you an understanding of the process we take in our construction efforts during this time.

Taste of Technology
We want to thank all our members who joined us for our Taste of Technology picnics this summer. We had the pleasure of visiting our members in Sullivan Lake, Motley and Randall. Watch for locations and dates for future events next summer.
Save Rural Broadband

The FCC is considering radical changes that could deprive individuals, businesses and governments across wide swaths of rural America of access to affordable, high-quality broadband services. This would result in lost jobs, less comprehensive health care, and blocked access to global markets, which would stifle innovation and hamper our nation’s competitiveness.

Without an evolving, sustainable rural broadband network, our community could lose economic prosperity and our quality of life will suffer. We need the FCC and Congress to pass broadband policies that move us forward, not backwards.

Copyright Infringement

At CTC we want to take all necessary measures to ensure you are aware of laws and regulations protecting intellectual property rights when using the Internet.

Under the Copyright laws of the United States, downloading or distributing copyrighted materials can lead to a possible lawsuit (please be aware that your IP address can be tracked) and CTC could be notified to disconnect your service if you are found to be illegally downloading or distributing copyrighted materials.

For additional information on copyright laws and what they consist of, please visit these links:


http://respectcopyrights.org

http://www.copyright.gov

What is Phishing and What Should I Watch For?

Phishing (pronounced “fishing”) is a confidence trick used by individuals (usually sent in an email) to trick unsuspecting people into divulging user names, passwords, or other confidential information. This email will look as official as possible to gain the confidence of the recipient and direct the recipient to a bogus website made to appear as a legitimate site. Financial institutions and social media sites are the primary targets.

It’s important to note that due to regulations within the telecommunications industry, CTC will never ask for confidential information in an email.

Education is the first line of defense. The following are some sites with excellent information about phishing:

How to recognize a phishing attempt:
www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/phishing-symptoms.aspx

The anti-phishing working group:
www.antiphishing.org/consumer_recs.html

Technical info (a great technical security site with a detailed report on phishing):
www.technicalinfo.net/papers/Phishing.html
Eddie Dolezal - Assistant Network Engineer

Eddie joined the CTC team this past spring as an Assistant Network Engineer. He started in the telecom industry in 2005 as a Tech/Installer and then as a Fiber Splicer. After graduating from MN State Community and Technical College with a diploma in Telecommunications Engineer and Technology, he was hired by an engineering and consulting firm to work as an Outside Plant Project Engineer on many fiber-to-the-home projects. Eddie enjoys spending his spare time with his family, hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and working on his small hobby farm. When asked what he likes about working at CTC he responded, “What I enjoy about CTC, and think is really cool, is that when I started everyone welcomed me with open arms. I felt that if I had any questions, I could ask anyone and that person would go out of their way to help me. Great team!”

Get to Know...

New Faces and In Our Community

Eddie
Assistant Network Engineer

Scholarship Winners

Each year CTC Awards $500 scholarships to students in our service areas that are beginning their college careers. For 2012 scholarships, please request an application at the area school guidance offices in January.

Golden Fisk
Little Falls High School
Parents: Gayle Nielsen & Lawrence Fisk
Intended Major: Nursing

Heather Brown
Onamia High School
Parents: Dawn Brown & David Brown
Intended Major: Marine Biology

Jamie Prax
Northland High School
Parent: Jean Prax
Intended Major: Graphic Design

Lauren Wheeler
Crosby-Ironton High School
Parents: Kelly & Gary Robinson
Intended Major: Psychology

Loretta Sullivan
Pierz Healy High School
Parents: Shari Sullivan & Dean Sullivan
Intended Major: Dental Hygienist

Sara Frie
Staples-Motley High School
Parents: Jill & Robert Frie
Intended Major: Psychology

Jamie Whitehead
Brainerd High School
Parents: Denise & Tom Whitehead
Intended Major: Nursing

Lauren Wheeler
Crosby-Ironton High School
Parents: Kelly & Gary Robinson
Intended Major: Psychology

Loretta Sullivan
Pierz Healy High School
Parents: Shari Sullivan & Dean Sullivan
Intended Major: Dental Hygienist

Sara Frie
Staples-Motley High School
Parents: Jill & Robert Frie
Intended Major: Psychology

Trevor Rohloff
Pillager High School
Parents: Merry & Todd Rohloff
Intended Major: Psychology
The CTC Wellness Committee has been very active in coordinating events to promote healthy lifestyles to our employees and to encourage community involvement.

Our employees collected and donated numerous items to New Pathways, a local organization that provides services and transitional shelter for homeless families with children. They also provide families with skill building educational opportunities.

CTC also helped out Kinship Partners in their annual winter outerwear drive, Coats for Kids. They donated coats, hats, mittens, gloves and boots to be distributed to families in need.

In addition, the committee once again provided a Flu Shot Clinic for employees and their families and hosted a Blood Drive.

CTC won this year’s United Way Legacy Award for outstanding contribution to our community. CTC has almost 100% employee commitment to financially supporting our community, families and individuals in need. We also received the Pillar Award, which is awarded to companies that give over $10,000.

The CTC United Way Committee is very active throughout the year in their efforts to raise funds for the United Way. The United Way Chili Cook-Off is the kick-off event with CTC employees hosting an employee chili cook-off that determines which recipe will be used for the United Way event. Other events throughout the year include Jeans Day, raffles for various items, games, gift baskets, and a silent auction.

We’re excited to now offer the NFL Network as part of our CTC TV offering when you add our Big Value Tier. Your business can now experience the NFL year round with CTC TV, and with eight NFL games this season you’ll be able to show every game for your customers or employees. Below is a list of games you can enjoy on the NFL Network this season:

- Thursday, November 10: Raiders vs Chargers
- Thursday, November 17: Jets vs Broncos
- Thursday, November 17: Jets vs Broncos
- Thanksgiving Day: 49ers vs Ravens
- Thursday, December 1: Eagles vs Seahawks
- Thursday, December 8: Browns vs Steelers
- Thursday, December 15: Jaguars vs Falcons
- Saturday, December 17: Cowboys vs Buccaneers
- Thursday, December 22: Texans vs Colts

*Available in HD for customers with both HD and Big Value Tier Packages
**Not available in all areas.
Special Public Notice

Consolidated Telecommunications Company “CTC” Statement of Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity

“Consolidated Telephone Co. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, or admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization’s programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization’s nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Kristi Westbrock, Director of Human Resources. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202)720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.”

Statement of Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of Consolidated Telephone Company “CTC” to provide equal employment opportunity to all individuals without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, public assistance, sexual orientation, veteran status, and local Human Rights commission activity or other factors identified and protected by Federal, State, and Local legislation. This program will be taken into full consideration by all concerned in the recruiting, hiring, training, placement, and promotion of employees.

Applicants for employment who believe they have been discriminated against have the right to notify the Equal Opportunity Commission; 1801 L Street, N.W., Washington DC 20507; the Federal Communications Commission; Washington, DC 20554; or other appropriate agency.

Caller ID Spoofing Customer Awareness

As of the effective date, every existing customer of Caller ID services, or a package of services that includes Caller ID services, will receive the following Caller ID Spoofing Customer Awareness information on a basis no less than annually and will include, at minimum, the following information:

• More information is available at “fcc.gov”. Search for “spoofing”.

And The Company will provide the information in one or more of the following manner(s):

• Webpage

Otherwise, the Spoofing Awareness education provided to subscribers will include similarly relevant and updated information as technology, regulation or legislation require or are provided on other prevailing regulatory information website as provided on the website of the FCC that provides the appropriate information on this issue here: http://www.fcc.gov/cib/consumerfacts/callerid.html
Special Public Notice

Are you having trouble using the telephone due to a hearing or speech disability?

Minnesota Relay is a free service that uses a specially trained communications assistant (CA) to relay the telephone conversation between a person who has a hearing loss or a speech disability and the person they wish to speak with. Calls can be made to anywhere in the world (long distance charges apply), 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. All calls are completely confidential.

Now it is easier to make a Minnesota Relay call. Just dial 7-1-1! Once connected to the relay service, tell the CA the type of relay call you wish to make. Or, you may dial the specific toll free number for the type of relay call you wish to make.

Types of Relay Services Available

Captioned Telephone (CapTel™)
CapTel is an amplified telephone and relay captioning service that allows people who are hard of hearing to see word-for-word captions of their telephone conversation on a bright, easy-to-read display window built into the CapTel phone, while also listening to what is being said using their residual hearing (much like TV captioning). Requires a CapTel phone. If you wish to contact a person who uses a CapTel phone, dial: 1-877-243-2823.

Voice Carry Over (VCO): 1-877-627-3024
Allows a person who has difficulty hearing on the phone to voice their conversations directly to a hearing person. The CA then types the hearing person’s response to the VCO user. Requires a special telephone.

2-Line VCO: 1-866-855-4611
Allows a VCO user to use one telephone line for speaking directly to the other person, while the second line is used to receive the CA’s typed response from the other person. This enhanced feature provides a more natural flow of conversation without the pauses of single-line VCO calls. Additional service and equipment requirements.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO): 1-800-627-3529
Allows a person who can hear but who has very limited or no speech capability to make and receive phone calls. The HCO user types his/her conversation for the CA to read to the hearing person, and listens directly to the hearing person’s response. Requires a special telephone.

Text Telephone (TTY): 1-800-627-3529
Allows a person who is deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled to use a TTY to communicate with the other person on the call.

Standard Telephone: 1-800-627-3529
A hearing person may use a standard telephone to place a relay call and easily converse with a person who is deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled.

Speech-to-Speech (STS): 1-877-627-3848
Allows a person who has difficulty speaking or being understood on the phone to communicate using his or her own voice or voice synthesizer. The CA revoices the words of the person with a speech disability so the other person on the call can understand them. No special telephone is required.

Computer (ASCII): 1-800-627-3529
Computer users can also access Minnesota Relay. Set your communications software to the following protocols: speeds ranging from 300 to 2400; 8 Bits; No Parity; 1 Stop Bit; Full Duplex. When calling at a rate of 300 or below, follow the above using Half Duplex.

Spanish Relay: 1-877-627-5448
The CA relays calls between a Spanish speaking person with a hearing or speech disability and a Spanish speaking hearing person.

900 Pay-Per-Call Services: 1-900-230-3324
Allows a relay user to connect to any pay-per-Call service.

Important Information

Emergency Assistance
TTY callers should dial 9-1-1 directly in an emergency. All 9-1-1 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but this may delay the response to your call.

Billing Options for Long Distance Relay Calls
• Direct • Collect • Third-party billing • Pre-paid or carrier calling card

Filing a Complaint
To file a complaint regarding Minnesota Relay, please call 1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY). You will need to provide the date and time of the relay call, the CA’s identification number and the nature of your complaint. To file a relay complaint with the Federal Communications Commission call toll-free at 1-888-225-5322 (voice) / 1-888-835-5322 (TTY), or file on line at http://esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm.

For More Information on Minnesota Relay Services: www.mnrelay.org or 1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY)

TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION (TED) PROGRAM
The TED Program provides free specialized telecommunications equipment to income eligible Minnesotans who are having trouble using the telephone due to a hearing, speech or physical disability. For information on the TED Program go to their Web site at: www.tedprogram.org or call 1-800-657-3663 (voice) or 1-888-206-6555 (TTY).
Introducing...

Add our **Big Value Tier** to your current CTC TV Entertainment lineup.

If you have our CTC TV Entertainment channels (channel numbers 2-103), you can add our Big Value Tier for only $7.95/month!

Channels include:

*Not all services available in all areas. Please call CTC to find out if the Big Value Tier is available in your area.*