

THE

LINK



DAKOTA
CENTRAL



PAGE 2 | GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Cheers to 20 Years of Fiber

PAGE 6 | BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Cows & Co. Creamery

FALL 2023
dakotacentral.com



A letter from our General Manager

It's hard to believe it's been more than twenty years since we brought Fiber-to-the-Home technology to our communities! It was a progressive decision by our board of directors, but we are thankful for that move.

Being pioneers in the nation to embrace fiber optic technology, our communities have witnessed a transformative journey over the past two decades, whether we are aware of it or not. The introduction of high-speed broadband through fiber optics has redefined the way we live, work, and communicate. With lightning-fast internet connections, our residents have experienced a surge in productivity, education, entertainment, and innovation. The benefits have been profound, as local businesses have flourished in the digital landscape, remote work has become seamless, and online education has reached new heights. However, the true significance of this technological advancement became

evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to reliable rural broadband played a pivotal role in maintaining a semblance of normalcy during lockdowns. It enabled remote work to continue uninterrupted, allowed students to pursue online learning, and facilitated vital telehealth services. As the world grappled with unprecedented challenges, our connected community stood resilient, demonstrating that access to high-speed broadband isn't just a luxury, but an essential lifeline today.

Dakota Central's board of directors and employees have continued the commitment to bring you the highest quality services available. Our network is not the same as the original fiber network we installed twenty years ago, nor do you use the service the same as you did then. We've evolved drastically over the last two decades, continually making necessary updates to our technology and infrastructure to ensure our customers have the best experience possible. We are happy to say we provide our customers with the latest equipment, powered by Wi-Fi 6 technology, at speeds up to 10 Gig!

At the risk of sounding cheesy, you're not just a number to us; you are our family, friends, and

neighbors. Our priority has always been and will always be taking care of our customers and communities.

We know you have options for internet, TV, and phone services, and a one-size-fits-all solution doesn't "fit" every home. We are here to help you decide what is best for YOU! Additionally, we understand that cost is often a deciding factor when looking at communications service. We are proud to participate in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program, which provides a \$30 per month savings on internet service, if qualified. To find out if you qualify or to apply, visit dakotacentral.com/lifeline-support/, or give us a call to learn more!

Whether you find yourself gearing up to attend sporting events, harvesting, going back to school or just recovering from a busy summer, I wish you all the best this fall season!

Warm regards,

Holly Utke
Chief Executive Officer/
General Manager



VOLUNTEERS

Because we live in the communities we serve, Dakota Central employees are committed to giving back to our communities by lending a helping hand where needed. Here are some of the organizations our employees are currently involved in:

School Board • City Council • Job Development Authority • Community Development Board
Park Board • Rotary Club • Lions Club • Eagles Club • Kiwanis Club • Knights of Columbus
Rural/City Fire Department • McHenry Ambulance • Church Committees • 4H Leaders •
Make-A-Wish • Jamestown Chamber • Carrington Chamber • Young Professionals of Jamestown
Pheasants Forever • Garrison Diversion Conservancy Board • McHenry Legion Auxiliary
Binford EDC • Jamestown Arts Center • CHI Hospital Foundation • Carrington Youth Center
CCEDC • CCD • Cemetery Board • Great Plains Food Bank • Jamestown Classic Car Club
Buffalo City RC Squadron • Disabled American Veterans • Telecom Training & Safety

Company News

Summer Happenings

Our summer has been jam-packed with events, and we've loved every moment of connecting with our communities, especially with you – our valued customers. We kicked off the season with a picnic to express our gratitude, followed by our annual membership meeting in June. One of the highlights of that month was Kid's Night at the Jamestown Speedway – an event we eagerly await every year. A huge shout-out to the Speedway for making it such a blast!

In June and August, we proudly sponsored the Great Plains Food Pantry in Carrington (keep an eye out for the next mobile food pantry coming up in October!).

July saw us participating in the Carrington 4th of July parade and the Buffalo Days parade, spreading joy and fun all around. As August arrived, we had a fantastic time sponsoring the Downtown Art Market, a musical event organized by the Jamestown Arts Center showcasing local talents. And let's not forget the hit of our sponsored bike night with Jamestown Park and Rec!

In August, we were delighted to take part in the University of Jamestown's Block Party, a warm welcome to new college students in our community. These events truly define our summer, and we're beyond excited to be part of them.

Speaking of summer, our plant department has been bustling with activity. We've been managing construction projects, ensuring everything falls into place, and working diligently to wrap up outdoor setups before winter arrives. Here's to hoping for a late fall!



Cameron Hoyt, Nikki Boote, Ryan Zink and Ashley Kramer handed out drinks and goodies as they enjoyed live music at the Jamestown Arts Center Downtown Art Market.



Ryan Fisher helped kids launch t-shirts into the crowd at the Jamestown Speedway on Kid's Night at the Races.



Brittany Paulson, Joanie Somsen, Deedra Aasand, Nikki Boote and Deb Clifton serving up a delicious lunch at our customer appreciation picnic in Carrington.

Welcome to the team!

As the trend has been, we have again welcomed two new employees, and another has transitioned to a new role in the company. Here's to embracing more change and growth together!



Natasha Hintz

Customer Service Rep, Jamestown

Hometown: Steele, ND

College attended or previous job/experience: "Attended Valley City State University (Go Vikings!) and three years customer service experience in telecommunications."

Favorite part of the job so far: "My favorite part of the job so far has been the community. My colleagues and Dakota Central customers have been very welcoming."

Fun Fact: "My eyes are different colors."



Tyler Volk

Field Tech, Jamestown

Hometown: Harvey, ND

Previous Job: "Engineer on the railroad."

Favorite Part of the Job So Far: "Working around great colleagues."

Fun Fact: "I enjoy hunting and fishing."



Promotion!

Ryan Zink Network Tech

Previously a Jamestown Field Technician, you might remember Ryan from his visits to your homes, ensuring smooth service installations and addressing any issues that arose. Now, you'll find him making more appearances in local businesses, installing and helping to get your services up and running flawlessly!





To check out Cows & Co. Creamery online, visit cowsandcocreamery.com

Business Spotlight: Cows & Co. Creamery



Maartje and Casey Murphy, the founders of Cows & Co Creamery, serve as the driving force and visionaries of the business based just outside Carrington on a quaint farm. In just over five years, the small homemade gelato company has grown to reach customers nationwide. Now selling made-from-scratch artisan gouda cheese, cheese curds and gelato, you can purchase their products from their on-farm store (the Milkhouse) or Creamery Café, at their Brewhalla location in Fargo, pre-order online for delivery to ten different cities state-wide, or have gouda shipped nation-wide.

“Cows & Co was inspired by the feeling of enjoying a fresh scoop of gelato on the patio where I’m from in the Netherlands,” Maartje explained. “I wanted to bring that piece of home here to North Dakota, using fresh milk right from Vanbedaf Dairy, my family dairy farm.”

Before establishing her original business, Duchessa Gelato, in 2018, Maartje attended Gelato University in the Netherlands to learn the craft. Her mother contributed her

expertise in making gouda cheese, a skill she also acquired in the Netherlands.

Even though you can purchase their products online for delivery, Maartje and Casey are passionate about creating an experience for their customers at the Creamery Café. A couple times a month you can visit the creamery and enjoy a unique menu of treats and beverages, including lattes, Dutch pancakes, fried cheese curds, gouda mac & cheese, and more!

“We love giving our customers an opportunity to ‘meet the makers’ and see where everything is made,” Maartje said.

As a small business, Maartje explains that it’s challenging working with such a small team while trying to keep up with demand as the business grows.

“We never want to sacrifice quality or being able to serve our customers,” she said.

Despite challenges, Maartje and Casey have leveraged the technology and resources available to them to help run their business smoothly and efficiently, while still preserving

much of the history from the original farm on which the creamery sits. Cows & Co is connected with Dakota Central’s Small Business Managed Wi-Fi, which allows customers to connect to their guest Wi-Fi when visiting the café or make credit card purchases at the Milkhouse.

“It might sound cliché, but we couldn’t run our business without Dakota Central services. We do everything online, from marketing our product, to operating our point-of-sale systems, managing online orders, updating the website, and offering guest Wi-Fi,” Maartje said.

While their business has taken off successfully in five short years, they are always scheming and dreaming at Cows & Co. In the future Maartje and Casey hope to offer additional dairy products like yogurt and milk, host workshops, and achieve the big goal of shipping frozen gelato nationwide. Cows & Co. has grown to cater to customers across the nation, yet we take pride in their connection to Carrington, which they call home. Dakota Central is honored to support them in delivering their products to you!



HOW TO: PROGRAM YOUR AMAZON FIRE TV STICK REMOTE

Step-by-Step instructions for programming your Amazon Fire TV stick remote to your TV

If you're using an Amazon Fire TV stick and missed the remote set up prompt or moved your firestick to a different TV, don't worry! You can program your Amazon remote to any compatible TV which allows you to control the TV volume and turn the power on/off.

**You must have an Amazon Fire TV generation 3 or higher to control power and volume. Older TV's may not be compatible with the Amazon remote.*

1. Press the Home button to go to the Amazon Home screen
2. Press up to highlight the top Menu items, and scroll all the way to the right and select Settings
3. Scroll to the right and select Equipment Control
4. Select Manage Equipment
5. Select TV
6. Scroll down and select Change TV
7. Message will say "Change TV?" Select Change TV to confirm and start setup. You'll get the message "Please wait while we prepare your remote for setup"
8. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete remote setup.

You're ready to go!



You're Invited!

Community Class Streaming 101:

Sign up for one of our upcoming community classes! In this class, we'll be teaching you all about the basics of streaming TV, so bring all your burning questions for our knowledgeable support team! Registration required. Call 952-1000 or 652-3184 to RSVP!

**Tuesday,
September 26**
at 12 PM
Carrington Office

**Wednesday,
September 27**
at 12 PM
Jamestown Office



Equipment Update Notice

We need your help! If you have a "switch" in your home that looks like one of these devices and has a label that says "10/100", it needs to be replaced! Possible brands of this equipment includes D-Link, Comtrend, Cisco/Linksys and Zonet. These devices do not support the speeds we are able to provide going forward, and will hold you back when connecting to the internet.

In addition, if you use your own Wi-Fi router (one that is NOT provided by Dakota Central) and it also has a label reading "10/100" we recommend replacing that, as it will not support speeds over 100 Mbps.

If you think you have one of these devices, or question whether you do or not, please give us a call at 652-3184 or 952-1000 and we would be happy to walk you through what to look for!



Fall BEK Sports Broadcast Schedule



BEK Sports (Ch. 722/723) BEK Sports+ (Ch. 720/721)

Visit BEKSports.com for the complete live broadcast schedule

Thursday, September 7

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Jamestown vs St. Mary's

Tuesday, September 12

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Medina-Pingree-Buchanan vs South Border

Tuesday, September 19

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Carrington vs LaMoure-Litchville-Marion

Tuesday, September 26

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Carrington vs Ellendale

Thursday, September 28

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Medina-Pingree-Buchanan vs Kidder County

Friday, October 6

High School Football @ 7:00 P.M.
Valley City vs Jamestown

Saturday, October 7

College Football @ 1:00 P.M.
Mt. Marty vs University of Jamestown

Thursday, October 12

High School Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Carrington vs Kidder County


Tuesday, October 17

High School Volleyball @ 7:00 P.M.
Napoleon-Gackle-Streeter vs Carrington

Wednesday, October 25

College Volleyball @ 7:30 P.M.
Morningside vs University of Jamestown





AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

WHAT IS IT?

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC program that helps connect families and households struggling to afford internet service.

The benefit provides:

- Up to \$30/month discount for internet service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if the household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if a member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Participates in any of the following assistance programs: SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in any of the following Tribal specific programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or Tribal Head Start (income based);
- Participates in the Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income internet program.

TWO STEPS TO ENROLL

1

Go to **AffordableConnectivity.gov** to submit an application or print a mail-in application

2

Contact your preferred participating provider to select an eligible plan and have the discount applied to your bill.

Some providers may have an alternative application that they will ask you to complete.

Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.

LEARN MORE

 Call **877-384-2575**, or

 Visit **fcc.gov/acp**





**DAKOTA
CENTRAL**

604 18th St SW,
Jamestown, ND 58401

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
BISMARCK, ND
IMAGE PRINTING, INC.



2022 Global InfoSec Award

**Best in Anti-Phishing, Network Security
& Management**



Get Cyber Safe with **ProtectIQ®**

WIN CREDIT ON YOUR
**DAKOTA
CENTRAL BILL!**

Win a \$25 credit on your next Dakota Central bill!
Congratulations to last issue's winner: **Sandra Rose, Cathay**
Next drawing date: **November 30th, 2023**

NAME
PHONE NUMBER

Scan here to sign up online



CARRINGTON OFFICE
630 5th St. N Carrington, ND 58421 p: 701.652.3184 f: 701.674.8121

JAMESTOWN OFFICE
604 18th St. SW Jamestown, ND 58401 p: 701.952.1000 f: 701.952.1001

OFFICE HOURS
8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. M-F To report trouble call your local office and follow prom

INTERNET HELP DESK HOURS
24 hours a day, 7 days a week



**GIG-CERTIFIED
PROVIDER**