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Keeping You
CONNECTED

March/April 2021



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Published for members of

TRIANGLE
COMMUNICATIONS

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OUR COVER

Steve Leitner's photograph of the sun setting behind the twin elevators in Turner took second place in the 2020 Photo Contest. Steve captured this shot after the last basketball game of the season.

Please call
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 24/7 to report
 any phone or
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CONTACT US

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Triangle Communications is a recipient of Federal assistance from the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA

(not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination

Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at **www.ascr.usda.gov/how-file-program-discrimination-complaint** and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: **program.intake@usda.gov**.

Triangle Communications is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

MYSTERY PHOTO AND TELCO QUIZ

Two Lucky Subscribers Per Issue Will Win \$25!

We received 86 entries that correctly listed one of the factors to consider when choosing an Internet speed and the Mystery Photo was a portion of the Battery Backup box for Fiber to the Home.

Congratulations to Mike Tyler and Lisa Sanchez who were randomly drawn to receive a \$25 credit on their next Triangle bill.

Try your luck with this issue's quiz and mystery photo shown on the right.



Two Chances to Win!

#1. How many miles of fiber does Triangle have in the ground?

#2. Mystery Photo (right):

My name is: _____

My Triangle phone number is _____

Yes! I want to receive e-mail notifications about special events or deals in my area. My e-mail address is: _____

Entries must be received by April 1st, 2021 to be eligible for the drawing. Please return this slip with your payment or mail to: Newsletter, Triangle Communications, PO Box 1220, Havre MT 59501. You can also submit your answers at www.itstriangle.com/telco-quiz.



SWAP AND SHOP

Welcome to our Swap and Shop!
Feel free to post and find classifieds from other members!

Wanting to Buy

1955-1958 Chevy car or pickup for project. Call 406.326.2287.

Toro Titan MX Mower

Model 6080 zero turn mower with rollover protection with 26 HP engine. Ready to go, call 406.378.3212.

Harlowton Home For Sale

Three bedroom home, one bath home for sale in Harlowton. Two-story with basement for storage, new gas furnace on a nice corner lot. \$88,000 firm contact owner for more details and possible owner contract with a down payment, 406.632.5725.

Rentals in Harlowton

Multiple houses and apartments for rent in Harlowton. Prices vary, no pets, no smoking. Call 406.632.5725.

Delta Platinum Edition Unisaw

10-inch unisaw with 50-inch commercial Biesemeyer fence with mobile base. In good condition, includes extra accessories. Asking \$1,500 or best offer, call 813.453.1787.

2007 RAM Pickup

Has 2500 5.9L HO engine, ranchhand bumper and gooseneck. Excellent condition, call 406.632.4447.

Misc Items

1985 Versatile 35.5-foot blade; pressure washer; portable contractor air compressor; receiving hitch; like new heavy-duty toolbox for size pickup and weight bench plus weights. Call 406.378.3212 for prices and more details.

Mayrath Grain Auger

27-foot, 6-inch Mayrath grain auger with 5HP electric motor. Call 406.378.3212

Cadillac Deville

1995 Cadillac Deville V-8, 4-door. Asking \$1,575, call 406.326.2287.

Property For Sale in Loma

Opportunity for small-town living with wildlife and fishing access. For sale at a bargain price, 4 lots and 4 buildings originally housing a second hand and antique shop. Call 406.739.4361.

7000 Watt Honda Generator

Nice to have on hand for power outages. Electric start and 114 hours. Asking \$4,000, call 406.654.2756.

House For Sale

Two-story, 24'x36' house with 4 bedrooms and one bath to be moved. Call 406.654.2756 for price and pictures.

Wanting to Buy

Looking for a 1972 Chevy Cheyenne, 3/4-ton automatic 4x4 truck. The more original parts the better but will consider projects. Call 406.459.2074.

2002 GMC 2500 HD Duramax Diesel

Crew cab 4x4, rebuilt engine, and drive train with receipts. Includes heated leather seats and mirrors, onboard air compressor with horns, 2-speed on-demand high idle, grill guard, trailer brake controller, and more. Also, have 4 studded snow tires, P235-50R-18 mounted on GM wheels. Call 406.390.0629 or 406.265.4026.

Gooseneck Trailer

Donahue 18-foot Gooseneck stock trailer. New paint and tires. Call 406.326.2287.

1962 Avion Trailer

Twenty-seven foot, 1962 Avion project trailer. Asking \$500, call 406.399.3620. 10_19

Stainless Steel Drop Visor

Two-inch stainless steel drop visor comes with brackets. Fits a 2009 Kenworth or newer. Asking \$150, call 406.357.4282.

1974 Versatile Tractor

1974 850 Versatile tractor serial# 850-050194 and 9N tractor with loader, non-running. Call 406.355.4298.

Indian Spirit Roadmaster

2003 Indian Spirit Roadmaster with 1500 S&S engine, Baker 5 speed transmission, and only 3,900 miles. Very well maintained, asking \$10,000 price is firm. Contact Larry at 406.239.3797.

Buildings For Sale By Owner

Located in Harlowton, MT on the corner of Central Ave and Hwy 12. Property is made up of six lots (24,150 sq. ft.) with two buildings. Buildings #1 is a storefront, shop and warehouse totaling 4,248 sq ft. Building #2 is 1,246 sq. ft. Asking \$350,000 for all, not willing to split up. Will consider all reasonable offers. Call Larry at 406.239.3797 or message for more information and/or pictures.

Property For Sale In Harlowton

Within walking distance of Harlowton business district and schools. Seven improved lots, one with a concrete pad for trailer house. Nice lawn, shade, fruit trees plus a large garden area, and 653 sq. foot garage/shop. Asking \$75,000, call Larry at 406.632.5847 or 406.239.3797.

Snow Dogg Snow Plow

Plow has a 7 1/2 foot straight blade, like-new condition. Equipped for a Ford 3/4-ton pickup but could be fitted to something else. Cost \$4,175 ten years ago, will take \$2,000. Call 406.378.3233.

1967 Ford Thunderbird

This classic car runs great, has a clean interior, and is in good condition with some minor bodywork required. Asking \$8,000, call 406.357.4282.

COMMUNITY CROSSWORD

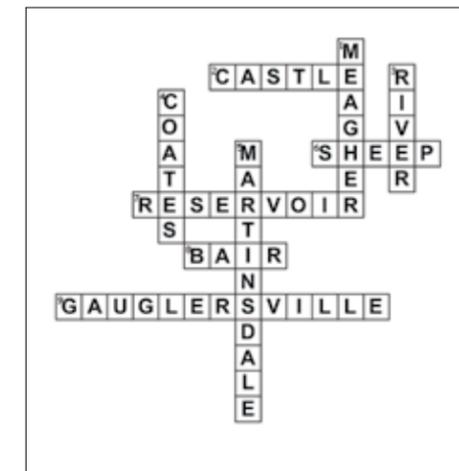
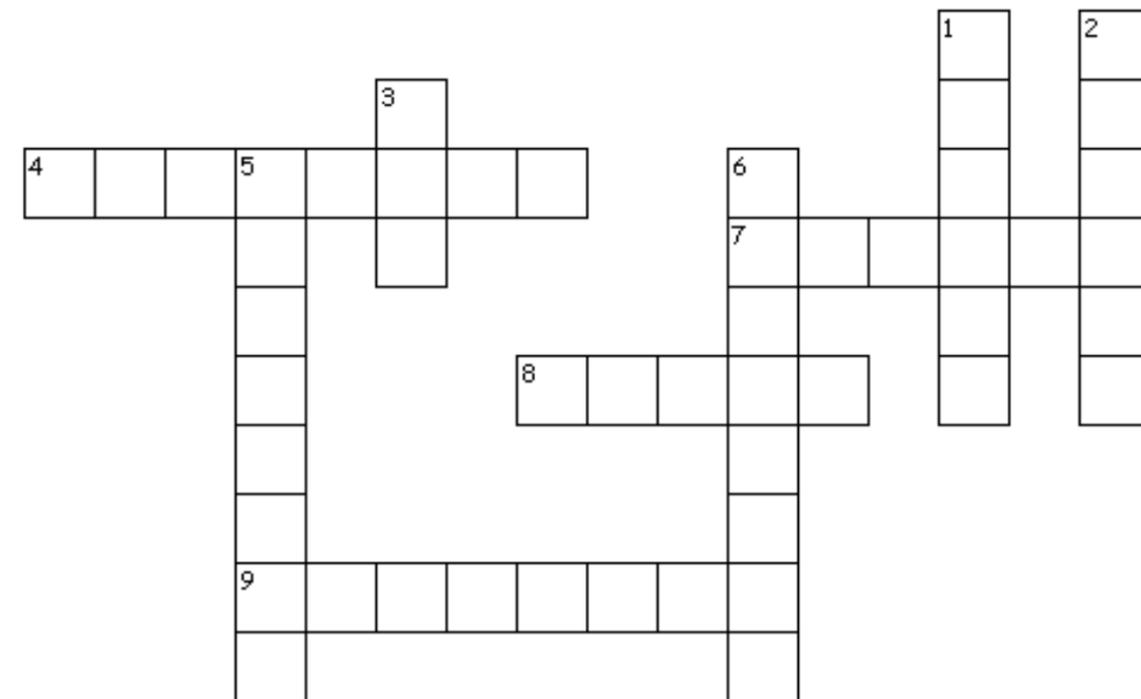
Featuring Malta, MT

Across

- Malta is located in ____ County.
- Malta's first ____ office was established in 1890
- Established in 1887, ____, was name by Great Northern Railway officials for a Mediterranean island.
- The Great Plains ____ Museum and Field Station is one of two stops in Malta that are on The Montana Dinosaur Trail.

Down

- The Great ____ Dinosaur museum is a great place to discover the prehistoric history of Northeastern Montana.
- The Phillips County ____ and H.G. Robinson House & Gardens are a great place to discover the long history of the area.
- ____ Curry and his gang robbed a train near Malta on July 3, 1901.
- ____, one of the best-preserved dinosaurs ever discovered, was unearthed north of Malta in 2000.
- Malta evolved from siding number 54 along the Great ____ Railway route across the "Hi-Line" of Montana.



ANSWERS

For the Jan/Feb Community Crossword, Martinsdale, MT

COOKS CONNECTION

Dishing Up Montana's Best Recipes

Thank you to everyone who has shared their recipes, keep them coming!

If you have a favorite recipe of any kind that you would like to share, we would love to have it.



Your recipe could appear here and earn a FREE GIFT!

Photocopy, print or type your favorite recipe and send it in one of the following ways:

Mail to Newsletter,
PO Box 1220, Havre MT 59501
or
E-mail: newsletter@itsTriangle.net

RECIPE

Waffle Iron Cookies

Triangle/HCE Relay for Life Cookbook

INGREDIENTS

½ cup brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
½ cup margarine or butter
½ cup cream or milk
2 eggs
¾ cup cake flour
¾ cup plus 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
1 ½ squares unsweetened chocolate, melted

DIRECTIONS

Mix ingredients in order shown. Bake approximately 1 minute in waffle iron, preheated on medium. Top with chocolate icing.

RECIPE

Easy Beef Casserole

Submitted by Cherly Sinz of Molt, MT

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs cooked and browned hamburger
4 garlic cloves, minced or 4 tsp. garlic powder
3 tsp. Italian seasoning
Dash of black pepper
12 oz. pkg egg noodles, cooked and drained
1 jar mild or medium salsa
1 lb. grated medium cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS

Add minced garlic, Italian seasoning and black pepper to cooked and browned hamburger. Mix with cooked and drained egg noodles. Stir in salsa and grated cheddar cheese.

RECIPE

Swedish Meatballs

Triangle/HCE Cooking for a Cure Cookbook

INGREDIENTS

1 ½ lbs. hamburger
½ lb. ground pork
¼ cup evaporated milk
2 Tbsp beef base mixed with ⅛ cup of water
1 ½ cups soft breadcrumbs or oatmeal
2 Tbsp dehydrated onions
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper

SAUCE

2 (10 ¾ oz.) cans cream of mushroom soup
1 (10 ¾ oz.) can cream of chicken soup
1 can beef broth

DIRECTIONS

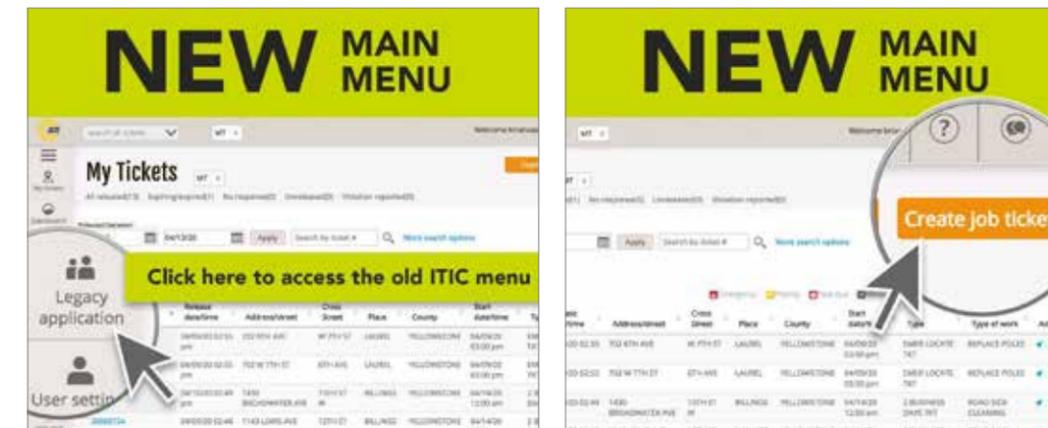
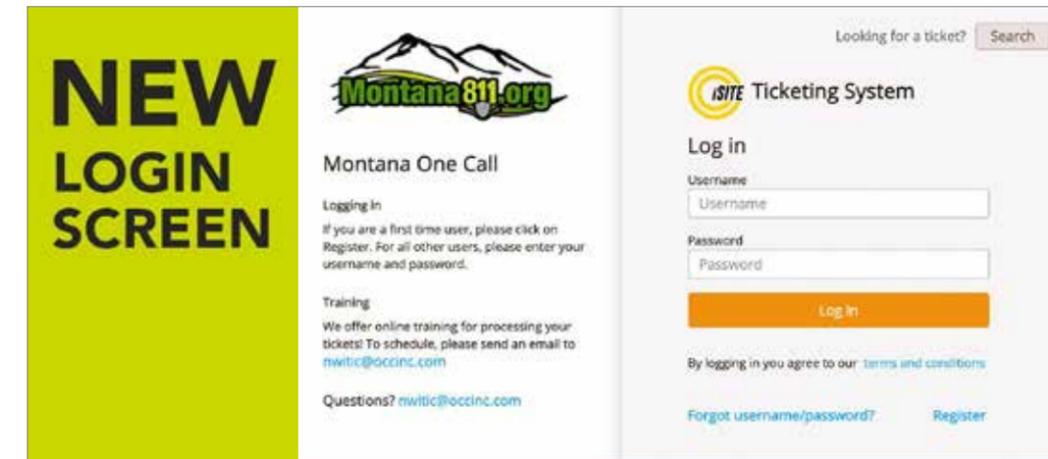
Combine evaporated milk, onion and beef base with water. Stir in breadcrumbs or oatmeal, salt and pepper. Crumble beef and pork (mixed together) over mixture and mix well. Shape into 1 ¼ inch balls. Place on a lightly greased 15x10 inch baking pan. Bake uncovered for 15-20 minutes or until meat is no longer pink. Combine sauce ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat, mixing well. Pour sauce over the meatballs. Return to oven and cook until heated through, stirring occasionally. Cover and let them cook slowly in the oven or combine sauce and meatballs and simmer in a crockpot.

MONTANA 811 WEBSITE UPDATED

In January, Montana 811 release and new and improved online locate request system. This new system makes locate requests even easier. All Montana 811 users will log into ITIC, the new system, on the login screen.

Every digging project requires a call or online locate request to 811. Please plan ahead and go online to create your ticket 3 business days before you start digging. Digging without a utility locate can result in serious personal injuries, disruption to service in an entire neighborhood and may result in fines and repair costs.

Check out the FAQ section on the website for more helpful information.



MONTANA-SIZED BEEF!



A Chance to win a Free quarter 4-H beef!

Open to non-profit organizations in our service area.

Apply online at
itstriangle.com/beefgrant by April 1st!

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FEATURED COMMUNITY- MARTINSDALE

Martinsdale is a beautiful town that sits near the base of the Crazy Mountains and Little Belt Mountains. The area is known by outdoor enthusiasts for fishing on Martinsdale Reservoir and elk and deer hunting in the nearby mountains and grasslands.

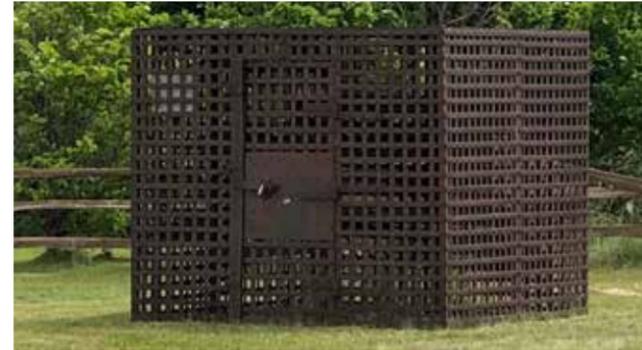
As you are planning your summer adventures, the Bair Family Museum is a must stop when you are in the area. Be sure to check the website or call in advance to confirm hours and days for a tour. The museum features 26 rooms over the 11,000 square foot home. The Bair ranch was one of the largest sheep ranches in the world with over 300,000 head of sheep at one time.

In 1996, Charles Bair's daughters dream to turn their home into a museum became a reality. The Bair family collection represents a major cultural and historical legacy of Montana and celebrates the unique interests of this visionary family. The eclectic Bair collection blends the cultures of Europe and Montana. The Bair sisters decorated their home with French furniture, English silver, western paintings, Indian artifacts, and Chinese porcelain. A guided tour of the home will take you on a trip through time with personal stories, heartfelt blending of periods and the family memories shared.

The Bair Family Art Museum was built in 2011 and sits adjacent to the Charles M. Bair family home. The museum has five state of the art, climate-controlled galleries that feature the Bair family's Native American collection, western paintings by Charles Russell & Joseph Henry Sharp, Edward S. Curtis photogravures and a diverse collection of modern European & American paintings.

Crazy Mountain Inn is a perfect stop for the hikers, hunters, fisherman and nature seekers to spend the night. The Inn features beautiful turn of the century accommodations. The Inn is also known for their amazing homecooked meals and for having the world's best chicken fried steak.

The Mint Bar opened in 2019 on main street in Martinsdale. The Mint Bar provides a perfect spot to stop in for a drink and amazing food. They serve up wagyu burgers, pizza and hot dogs for travelers and locals.



IMPORTANT CALLING INFORMATION

Triangle Communications with other telecommunication carriers across Montana as well as 30 other states are impacted by a nationwide change. This change affects how our members dial local numbers. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted 988 as a new three-digit number to be used nationwide to reach the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline, starting July 16, 2022. Members must continue to dial 1-800-273-TALK to reach the Lifeline until July 16, 2022.

Before the nationwide 988 will be available, 10-digit local dialing must first be implemented. This change will require members to dial 10-digits when calling a local number. The call will remain a local call; however, members will no longer be able to dial 7-digits to reach a local number effective October 24, 2021. This change affects members calling from their landline or placing a call with the cell phone provider of their choice.

Starting March 23, 2021, members will be able to dial a local number using 7-digit or 10-digit dialing. This phase in period will allow members to become accustomed to using 10-digit dialing when calling locally.

We encourage all our business members to take time during this phase in period to update your website, business cards, on-line profiles, promotional items, any advertising, etc. to list your number as 10-digit. Remember to update your cell phone number as well if it is listed on anything for your business.

We understand the change to dialing 7-digits to call local will be a hard habit to break and we appreciate your understanding as we work through this transition together. We as Montanans are proud to be in the 406-area code and this will not change. Our entire state is still a single area code but beginning later in the year, we will be required to enter 406 when placing local and long-distance calls. Please watch our Facebook page and website for further updates as we work through this change together.



THOUSANDS IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED EACH YEAR!



Triangle \$1,000 Scholarships

Up to 37 high school & 3 college scholarships. Applicant must be a subscriber or a dependent of a subscriber. Due April 1st.

\$2,500 Foundation for Rural Services Scholarship

Our partnership with the Foundation for Rural Service gives students the opportunity to receive a scholarship of up to \$2,500. Apply online by March 6th!

APPLY TODAY at
itstriangle.com/scholarships

1.800.332.1201 | itstriangle.com



CAPITAL CREDITS

Triangle Telephone Cooperative was formed almost 70 years ago to bring telephone service to the rural area around Havre. Like every cooperative, it was formed to fill a need in the community and our farmers and ranchers gathered to bring telephone service to the area. Initially, members had to pay a \$10 membership fee to join the cooperative. With current inflation rates, that investment into the cooperative would be around \$100 if there were still fees to join. Bit by bit, the fees to join the cooperative helped Triangle to continue to grow the service area. Now almost 70 years later, Triangle covers over 23,000 square miles stretching from the Canadian border to the Wyoming border.

As a non-profit cooperative, many folks assume that all our revenue comes from our members by paying their bills. However, 60% to 70% of our revenue comes from Universal Service Funds (USF). USF funds help to cover the past loans from the costs of construction and maintenance. Payments from our members for the services they subscribe to accounts for 30% to 40% of our total revenues.

Triangle has also taken out more than \$180 million in loans over the years to build and maintain services throughout our coverage area as we upgrade to fiber optics.

One of the benefits of being a member of a cooperative is the potential to have capital credits allocated to its membership based on if the cooperative has Positive Net Income. Net Income is determined by adding up all our revenues and subtracting our expenses. When the revenues exceed the expenses, we have Positive Net Income.

Triangle works with our auditors every year that we have Positive Net Income to determine how

much patronage (capital credits) will be allocated to our members. Remember that the largest portion of the Positive Net Income actually comes from our USF funding. Patronage (not cash) is then assigned on a percentage basis to members based on the services they subscribed to in the previous year.

The cooperative takes our Net Income and adds in depreciation and subtracts our investments in plant, principal payments on our loans, any patronage retired to members and our subsidiary income to determine how much cash we have on hand at the end of the year to pay for next year's projects.

The board of trustees determines annually if we are able to financially afford to retire (pay out) any capital credits that have been previously allocated to our members. One of the items our trustees look at is the funding needed for future payments towards our loans and what our future construction project needs are.

Next issue we will talk about what retirement of capital credits and how they can be paid out by the trustees to the membership.



Craig Gates, CEO

CEO MESSAGE

As we move further into 2021, I would like to look back on what was learned or reminded us of the crazy year of 2020.

Our employees are willing to do whatever it takes for our members. Whether in the office or out in one of our service areas, our employees did and still do understand the need to keep themselves and our members safe during this pandemic. Not to mention all the employees who have continued to work from home and those at the Havre office. We will re-open our office when it is determined safe for everyone.

We have also been reminded of the importance of our employees staying connected and keeping our members connected across the many miles that Triangle serves. Communicating during this pandemic has been very important whether it be by text, email, social media, video or picking up a landline phone.

I want to thank the members who shared kudos for our Triangle employees who have gone above and beyond in their service to you. I know we have great employees, but it is always nice to hear it from you.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING TRIANGLE MOBILE & VERIZON

I have an announcement about Triangle Mobile. Triangle Mobile's service is provided by Triangle Communications Systems Inc. (TCS) which is a subsidiary of the Triangle Telephone Cooperative. Several years ago, the TCS Board of Directors set out to build a mobile service on the Hi-Line. TCS was successful at bringing cellular service to the Hi-Line and surrounding area. TCS participated in the Verizon Wireless LTE Rural America (LRA) program to help with the build out and now TCS and Verizon Wireless have agreed to terms on the sale of the Triangle Mobile assets to Verizon.

What does this mean to you? For most of you this sale means very little; for those of you that are Triangle Mobile customers, please go to our FAQ page on our Triangle Mobile website at: itstrianglemobile.com/important-message-regarding-verizon-triangle-mobile.

The sale of TCS mobile assets does not affect Triangle Telephone Cooperatives fixed wireless internet assets or for our wireless service around Havre that delivers wireless internet. The cooperative and non-mobile assets will continue to be owned and maintained by Triangle. So, if you have a fixed wireless internet service, that service will not change, and you do not need to do anything.

TRIANGLE AND FIBER TO THE HOME

Triangle began discussing Fiber to the Home in 2005. We knew we needed to find technology to provide faster Internet to our members and fiber seemed to be the solution. The next hurdle was figuring out a plan to upgrade all of our 39 service areas spanning from the Canadian border to the Wyoming border through central Montana. The first couple of years provided a few learning experiences, but we were able to start our fiber upgrades in Big Sandy and Fort Benton in 2008.

Fast forward to 2021, we ended 2020 having completed the fiber buildout to the entire exchanges of Whitewater and Reed Point, as well as parts of Stanford and Big Timber. This brings our total to 30 of the 39 exchanges, which have been upgraded completely to fiber. Our engineers are already planning for next year's projects before the current year projects are even completed.

Our 2021 upgrades will include the entire telephone exchanges of: Denton, Molt, South Malta (area North of Malta), finishing Stanford and completing another portion of Big Timber. Members in our 2021 upgrade areas can expect to be contacted regarding easements to place the fiber. We appreciate your help on these projects, in many instances, we cannot provide service to your neighbors if you do not help us get through your property to the next property.

In the 13 years since we began installing fiber in our service areas, we have learned a lot. Every project has challenges, but we evaluate and learn from each project. Our goal remains the same, bring you technology that will serve you well into the future.

Check out our Fiber to the Home map on our website, www.itstriangle.com/triangle-fiber and if you have any questions about fiber, our deployment schedule or additional speeds and services that fiber allows us to provide to you, please call 1-800-332-1201 or 406-394-7407.

