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The Connection

A Monthly Newsletter for the GBT Communities and Patrons



Rush Center Office

103 Lincoln St. • Rush Center, KS 67575
785.372.4236
Hours: 8:00am - 5:00pm
| Mon-Fri

Ellis Office

101 W. 9th • Ellis, KS 67637
785.726.3200
Hours: 8:00am - 5:00pm | Mon-Wed-Fri
Closed for lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm

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Ness City, KS 67560
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Hours:
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Larned Office

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Hours:
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Noon - 4:30pm
Mon-Fri

St. John Office

PO Box 86 • 602 N US Hwy 281
St. John, KS 67576
620.377.5555
Hours:
11:00am - 5:00pm
Mon-Fri



GBT Begins \$3 Million Fiber Investment Back into Cooperative

If you live in the Rural Brownell or Rural Bazine areas, you can expect to start seeing construction crews over the next couple of months bringing world-class GBT Fiber to your premise! GBT's plan to invest over \$3 million again this year will give our communities and members the unparalleled ability to work and play right at home. 2021's schedule includes the exchanges of Rural Brownell and Rural Bazine receiving new fiber connections. Fiber allows GBT to deliver the best Internet experience available and offer Gigabit Internet speeds. "The Board had the vision to start deploying fiber over a decade ago. That vision allowed our members to work, learn, and receive medical care during the Pandemic while many people across the country did not have a solution. Fiber not only gives our customers a solution today but should meet the needs for many years to come," stated GBT General Manager Beau Rebel. In fact, in a recent survey, only 23% of the country had access to a fiber connection. With the



2021 fiber expansion, over 95% of GBT's cooperative members will have access to a blazing fast fiber connection. For the 5% that are not located within the fiber build area this year, GBT's goal is to have fiber to every GBT cooperative member's premise by the end of 2024. Just one more way GBT is Bringing the Best User Experience to our Customers Through Reliable, State-of-the-Art Communication Services!

Scholarship Winners

GBT is excited to announce Janate Kerr of Ness City, KS and Jaztyn Kisslinger of Ransom, KS as recipients of our FRS Youth Tour \$1250 scholarship. Typically, in early June, GBT sponsors two High School students to go on the Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour in Washington D.C. where they get to learn about rural broadband. Due to Covid, this year's Youth Tour was cancelled and the GBT Board decided to offer two scholarships in lieu of the trip. GBT wants to thank all the amazing students who applied for the scholarship and congratulate Janate & Jaztyn on their selection!



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on Social Media





LET US MANAGE YOUR WIFI WITH

MANAGED PROTECTION



SIGN UP TODAY **GET 3 MONTHS FREE!**

GBT'S TOP-OF-THE-LINE WIFI ROUTER

To get the best Wi-Fi, you need the best router.
We've got you covered.

FREE ON-SITE TECHNICAL SUPPORT

GBT is **here for you** with any questions or issues.

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Our techs install start to finish and optimize
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No lag, buffering or downtime. Our routers
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STRONG, RELIABLE, & SECURE WIFI

Strengthened Wi-Fi to **reach every corner of your home**
and automatic software updates provide **superior security.**

Offer valid 5/1/2021 - 5/31/2021. Certain restrictions may apply.

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WHAT PART OF WORKING AT GBT WILL YOU NEVER FORGET?

All of my fellow co-workers. I'll never forget the retirement parties I have attended for my fellow co-workers and bosses. You're so happy for them, but also sad to see them go. It's all part of the process. It's going to be hard for me to leave, I will miss GBT.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO NEW GBT EMPLOYEES/ NEW EMPLOYEES IN THE WORKFORCE?

Stay current and learn everything you can. Always be subject to change!

HOW DO YOU PLAN ON SPENDING YOUR RETIREMENT?

I plan on spending most of my retirement quilting, gardening, and spending time with my friends, family and especially my three grandchildren.



GBT is both happy and sad to announce the retirement of Ruth from our Plant Department.

Ruth has been an outstanding addition for more than 23 years and someone that was truly dedicated to her job. She will be greatly missed around GBT!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:
RUTH

Annual Meeting Wrap-Up

GBT conducted its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 21, 2021, at the main GBT office in Rush Center. In consideration of all cooperative members, GBT felt it was best to conduct a drive-thru meeting where members were given an Annual Meeting booklet which contained GBT's records for 2021, as well as a ballot. The Board of Trustees called the meeting in order to elect Board members for District #3 representing Beeler and Ness City and District #7 representing Garfield and Lewis. Clyde Sutton was elected to represent District #3 and Ron Gruber was elected to represent District #7.

In total, 100 members who attended were able to vote, received door prizes, and were served a meal. Drawing Winners from the Annual Meeting are listed below:

- \$250 Capital Credit Retirement – Nyle & Susan Henderson
- \$250 Capital Credit Retirement – Robert Hagelgantz
- 1 Month Free Internet – Stephen Pechanec
- 1 Month Free Internet – Kam Wilson
- 1 Month Free StreamIT & Firestick – Lloyd & Joann Basgall
- 1 Month Free StreamIT & Firestick – Eugene Schuster
- \$50 NTW Cellular Gift Certificate – Don & Jan Reinhardt



Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

You might qualify for assistance on your monthly Internet Bill.

The EBBP (Emergency Broadband Benefit Program) is an FCC program to help households struggling to pay for Internet service during the pandemic. According to acting FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, "We need to use all available tools to get 100% of us connected in the country and this program is an essential part of making that happen."

Although final details of the program have not been released at the time of GBT's May newsletter, households that think they might qualify for this program can get updates and receive additional information on the FCC website [fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit](https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit). The program through the FCC will provide a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households until funding has been exhausted. Below is a list of criteria that determines eligibility for this program which also can be found on the FCC website.

Who Is Eligible for the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program?

A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Qualifies for the Lifeline program;
- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision, or did so in the 2019-2020 school year;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating providers' existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

GBT wants our customers to be aware of this program and know we will be a participating Internet provider. GBT is not responsible for the administering or funding of this program, but will adhere to and follow the guidelines and eligibility of qualifying households set forth by the FCC.

GBT's Website - Your Ultimate Resource!



Have you ever visited GBT's website? Did you know you can sign-up for services, find troubleshooting tips, view supporting documents and watch videos, check email, read this newsletter digitally, and even view and pay your bill all in one place. GBT tries to keep all the latest changes and updates on our website and if you have questions, you can easily email our customer support right from our website via the Contact Us page. The best thing about our website is its available all the time, whether it's 3 a.m. on a Saturday or Tuesday at 10 p.m.!

Easily sign up for new GBT services.

Pay your bills online, view your statements, and more!

Got questions? We've got answers. You can find answers to just about anything on the GBT website.

www.gbta.net

Having service trouble? Find troubleshooting tips or submit a request online!

Channel guides, promotions, new offerings and more...visit the GBT website to find it all!

GBT Hunting

Butterfly Hunting Winner - Janice O'Toole

April's Newsletter had a total of 27 black Butterflies! Janice won a \$10 bill credit from GBT just for playing!



Count this one too!

It's time to count... throughout this issue of the Connection there are many black flowers. Can you count them? When you find them all, e-mail us by the 10th of the month at gbthunting@gbta.net with the total number of black flowers, and you will be entered into a drawing to win a \$10 bill credit on your next GBT bill!

***Notice we have a NEW email address to submit your entries! Make sure to email gbthunting@gbta.net**

Simple Salsa

Ingredients:

4 cans Rotel
1/2 chopped onion
1-3 chopped jalapenos
1/4 tsp. cumin
1/4 Tbsp. salt
1/4 Tbsp. sugar
1/2 Tbsp. lime juice

Directions:

Mix together and BAM, Simple salsa!



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