



THE Connection

Connected FOR Christmas

It has been a busy year at GBT and hard to believe we are in the last month of 2022. GBT continues to focus on investing in fiber optics and upgrading our infrastructure to meet the demands of our customers. We continue to maintain and provide a reliable voice network, but much of the upgrades GBT continues to focus on directly impact our ability to provide faster and faster Internet speeds to our customers, not just now but well into the future. Many might not understand what Internet speeds mean or even what Internet speed they subscribe to; they just understand whether it works or whether they have problems. With December here and many people viewing their entertainment through streaming services, including GBT's StreamIT TV or perhaps adding gaming consoles connected to the Internet, it is important to understand what Internet speeds are needed to make these work well.

There are always several factors that impact your experience when using the Internet, but one thing is for sure: if you don't have the right speeds, you're sure to have a less than desirable time when using the Internet. When streaming video, it is recommended a minimum of a 50Mbps connection. When online gaming, a minimum of 100Mbps connection is

recommended. If you add other devices to the home and have multiple people connecting, you might need an even faster connection to make all the devices and applications work well.

With GBT's current Internet infrastructure, we are happy to say we can provide 100Mbps or more to over 95% of GBT's territory, and we are working every day to make that 100%! This is what makes GBT employees smile every day knowing we are working to connect our part of Rural Kansas to adequate and robust Internet.

*So the question isn't whether we can or can't provide someone with Internet, but more matter of fact, **how fast would you like your Internet connection to be?***

If you have questions or would like to look at upgrading your Internet connection for Christmas, give us a call and we will discuss what options are available for you!



GET TO KNOW YOUR GBT NEIGHBOR

Addie, Marketing Specialist

Tell us about yourself.

I have lived in Ness City all my life. My dad's side of the family is originally from here and my mom's side is only an hour away, so this area in WKS holds so many special memories. I went to school at NCES/NCHS and after graduation went to Kansas State University. In 2019 I graduated from KSU with a Degree in Agricultural Communications and Journalism and also married my best friend, Morgan.

Tell us about your job.

When people ask me what I do, it's hard to give them a straight answer. I don't even think my family completely understands what my job entails, (and some days even I don't, but that's what makes it so fun, haha!) I say I do "Marketing," but that's a pretty broad term, especially because our 3-person Marketing team at GBT covers a lot! From content creation, graphic design, website development, PR, promotional campaigns, event planning... basically anything you see around GBT, the Marketing team has touched in some way!

Favorite part about working for GBT?

Short answer: I love what I do and I love the people I work with. Long answer: I'm convinced I have the best job in the world and am PROUD to work for GBT. Personally, I have very strong morals and if GBT's values didn't align with mine, it wouldn't be a good fit. The company is customer and community-focused down to its core. We take your experience with us personally. Also, I work with the best people, hands-down. If you know them, which I'm sure you might, that statement needs no explanation!

How do you spend your free time?

Morgan and I like to stay busy - if there's free time we're probably dreaming up a project to work on. This year we took on a rather big project and bought the Historic 1875 J.K Bared Opera House and are in the process of restoring it to all its glory and plan on someday putting a business in it. I love the design work and Morgan enjoys the construction, so we make a good team. We're also both passionate about the community and are involved in several organizations. Lastly, I love to travel (trying new restaurants is my favorite!), spending time with my dogs and horses, and of course, am grateful for all the quality time we get with both of our families living so close.

In the News:

Employee Spotlight



NCK TECH Announces Appointment of GBT's Shane Broyles to Advisory Committee

GBT is excited to announce Shane Broyles, GBT Director of Operations, has been selected to join North

Central Kansas Technical College's Advisory Board for their Telecommunications and Network Technology Fields. Based at the Hays campus, these programs provide the technical knowledge and skills needed for a career in the Communications and Network Technology industry. Shane says,

"I'm excited to join the committee and share some of my insight and knowledge with my 32 years of industry experience. With the billions of dollars going into broadband and the goal to connect all Americans to reliable Internet, our industry needs skilled technicians, and that's exactly what we think we will get from this incredible program that NCK Tech offers."

If anyone in the area is interested in this program, Shane encourages you to check out NCK Tech's program as well as to look out for future announcements from GBT regarding potential sponsorship and tuition assistance.

Fiber Build-Out Update

GBT Completes Fiber Build-Out to Rural Garfield, raising Internet speed capabilities to 60x faster!

Rural Garfield fiber construction is complete. Most Rural Garfield customers have been switched to fiber or are scheduled to be switched over within the next couple of weeks. If you live in Rural Garfield and have not scheduled a date to switch to fiber, give us a call today.

Rural Bison fiber construction is underway and approximately 50% completed. As soon as construction is complete and ready, GBT will be reaching out to customers in this area to switch service over.

Rural Burdett fiber construction has not started but staking and engineering is complete. Once Bison fiber construction is complete, construction will begin in the Rural Burdett Area.



Featured Story:



GBT receives the 2022 Larned Area Chamber of Commerce's Large Business of the Year Award

In 2018, GBT brought fiber Internet to the business district of Larned after requests from businesses needing robust and reliable, high-speed Internet. Residential requests began pouring in, and GBT's Board of Directors made the decision to bring the same needed service to Larned's residents. This year GBT broke ground in the City of Larned to be the first Internet provider to lay robust Fiber Internet throughout the town. With construction planned for the next several years, GBT is excited to invest in the community!

GBT's nomination by a member of the Larned Community stated, "GBT outdid themselves this year. They're investing in our community by bringing fiber to our community of Larned; which HUGELY BENEFITS everyone in our community!" With GBT's award selection, General Manager Beau Rebel stated, "What an honor it was to be alongside businesses, organizations, and people who put their hearts into the Larned Community."

Photo L-R: Tim Lewis, GBT Technician; Alex Filbert, Larned Chamber Director; Kevin Holt, GBT Larned Store Customer Service

Capital Credit Allocations - Keeping Money Local

GBT was established in 1953 as a cooperative to provide quality telecommunications in rural Kansas, eventually building 18 telephone exchanges to serve our Member-Owners (Customers). Capital credits are allocated each year based on each traditional telephone customer's usage, and when the cooperative has a profitable year after all expenses and future infrastructure needs are addressed, a percentage of the capital credits are paid back to the member-owners with Board approval.

GBT's Board of Directors has paid back over \$1.2 million in Capital Credits to our members in 2022, with checks mailed the week of Thanksgiving. In fact, over \$6.4 million has been paid back to members over the past 5 years! GBT's General Manager Beau Rebel stated, "Our Board and Staff operate GBT to address members' present and future needs, and we are pleased to pay capital credits back for the 34th year. Members' patronage keeps dollars local and supports our rural economy, keeping our area strong!"

Contact customer service@gbtlive.com with any questions.



Over the last five years, GBTA has retired over \$6,400,000 in Capital Credits. Year to date Capital Credit allocations for 2022 total over \$1,200,000.

Did you know...

The website www.virustotal.com can help you determine if a website or file is legitimate and analyze files, domains, IP's and URL's to detect malware and other breaches. With fake web pages being created to trick consumers and attachments and files being embedded with malware, you can utilize this free tool to help with your browsing and clicking habits, making your online experience a little safer.



Employee Spotlight

KDA Appoints Marketing Advisory Board Members, including GBT's Addie Flax

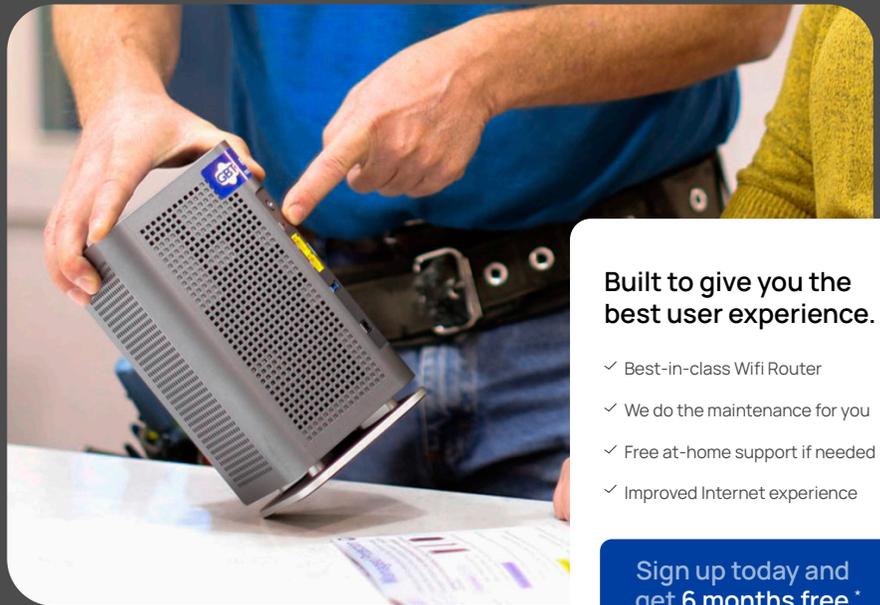
Four Kansans, including GBT's Addie Flax, have been appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam to serve on the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Marketing Advisory Board. The Board, consisting of 14 members, provides constituent observation and comment for a variety of industry sector strategies supporting agriculture. Each member appointed to the board is recognized for knowledge and leadership in at least one of Ag Marketing's growth strategy sectors. Addie represents the *Agriculture Technology* sector,

"The partnership between the agriculture and technology industries is pioneering economic growth for our small communities," says Addie. "I am grateful for the opportunity to be on this board as a liaison between the two industries."

The Division of Agriculture Marketing advocates for and promotes agriculture across the state and works to provide an environment that enhances and encourages economic growth of the agriculture industry and the Kansas economy. For a full list of all advisory board members, go to agriculture.ks.gov/MarketingAdvisoryBoard.

Seamless access. Strong connection. Superior support.

Pairing GBT's Internet with our **Managed Protection** service gives you superior Internet experience.



Built to give you the best user experience.

- ✓ Best-in-class Wifi Router
- ✓ We do the maintenance for you
- ✓ Free at-home support if needed
- ✓ Improved Internet experience

Sign up today and get 6 months free.*

*Offer valid through 12/31/22. Certain restrictions may apply.

Game of the Month:

Did you know in 2023 GBT turns 70 years old? We will be celebrating all year round, so this month's question for you is **how long have you been a Golden Belt Telephone/GBT Customer? A bonus question/point is what does GBT do best for you?** Email gbthunting@gbta.net to be entered to win a \$10 bill credit! Congratulations to *Pamela Ball* for winning October's game and *Albert Farmers Bank and Trust* for winning November's game!

Recipe of the Month:

Christmas Monster Cookies

Christmas Monster Cookies for your December weekend baking...festive, easy, and sweet. Homemade chocolate chip cookies, made with oats, pretzels pieces, plenty of chocolate chunks, white chocolate, and plenty of holiday M&M's. There's nothing not to love about these sweet chocolate (crunch) cookies. Each bite is slightly crisp on the edges but soft and gooey in the center...with just a little salty pretzel crunch and milk chocolate throughout.

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar, and vanilla until combined. Beat in the eggs and 1 egg yolk, 1 at a time, until combined. Add the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Beat in the oats.
3. Fold in 1 cup of the M&M's, the pretzels, chocolate chips, and white chocolate.
4. Roll the dough into 1/4 cup size balls.

- Place 3 inches apart on the prepared baking sheet.
5. Transfer to the oven and bake for 8 minutes, then rotate the pan and bake another 2 minutes. Pull the pan out and push the remaining M&M's into the cookies. Bake 2-3 minutes. Remove from the oven and let the cookies cool on the baking sheet. They will continue to cook slightly as they sit on the baking sheet.
 6. Eat warm (highly recommended) or let cool and store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.



Ingredients

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| 2 sticks (1 cup) salted butter at room temperature | 2 teaspoons baking powder |
| 1 cup dark brown sugar | 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt |
| 1/2 cup granulated sugar | 2 cups old fashioned oats |
| 2 large eggs, plus 1 egg yolk | 1 1/4 cups holiday M&M's |
| 1 tablespoon vanilla extract | 1 cup mini pretzel sticks, crushed |
| 2 cups all-purpose flour | 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips or chunks |
| 2 teaspoons baking soda | 1/2 cup white chocolate chips |



785-372-4236
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Ellis
101 W 9th | Open: Mon., Wed., Fri.
8 am - 12:30 pm; 1:30 pm - 5 pm

Ness City
114 W. Main | Open: Mon.-Fri.
8 am - 5 pm

St. John
602 N US Hwy 281 | Open: Mon.-Fri.
8 am - 1 pm; 2pm - 5pm

Larned
122 W. 5th | Open: Mon.-Fri.
8 am - 11:30 am; 12:30 pm - 5 pm

Rush Center
103 Lincoln St. | Open: Mon.-Fri.
8 am - 5 pm



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