



**Cover Photo:** GBT General Manager Beau Rebel and GBT Board of Director Member Brian Hammeke present the exciting news of receiving the CPF Grant to Pawnee County Commissioners Mike Burdett, Bob Rein, Philip Hammeke and Larned Area Chamber of Commerce's Executive Director Alex Filbert.

## THE Connection

### RALLYING TOGETHER FOR RURAL.

#### **GBT awarded \$6,782,694 grant to provide Fiber Internet to rural Pawnee and Stafford counties**

Governor Kelly recently announced that GBT was awarded a \$6,782,694 grant from the State of Kansas through the Kansas Capital Project Funds Broadband Infrastructure Program. This grant will be used by GBT to provide Fiber Internet, Voice, & TV services to approximately 530 homes, businesses, and other public institutions. The project, which consists of the entire eastern half of Rural Pawnee County and a western portion of Rural Stafford County, will provide fiber-fed, high-speed broadband for the first time to residents who live in these under-served areas.

GBT, headquartered in Rush Center, Kansas and celebrating its 70th year of operation, has been deploying Fiber to the Premise for 15 years in the communities and rural areas of western Kansas. With the awarding of this grant, GBT will be able to offer this area the latest in broadband technologies, including Internet speeds up to 1 Gig.

“We are excited to provide state-of-the-art fiber-optic services that will have such a positive impact on our friends and neighbors that live and work in these communities.” said Beau Rebel, General Manager of GBT. “We want to recognize the vast support we have received from the Pawnee and Stafford County Commissioners, communities, and patrons as we worked through the extensive and very competitive grant application

process for the two project applications. We know having reliable and fast Internet is a necessity to each residence and business and look forward to helping drive economic growth through this endeavor. This project highlights why GBT is unique; it shows our commitment to the communities that we work and live in.” Rebel added.

Pawnee County Commissioner Bob Rein commented, “Pawnee County is excited to join GBT in announcing that our application for the Capital Project Fund grant has been awarded by the State of Kansas to serve the eastern half of Pawnee County with buried Fiber-to-Premise Internet access. This project will equip 503 homes and businesses with stable, fiber broadband Internet access.

The Board of Commissioners has endeavored for several years to find a solution to the lack of stable broadband access in several rural parts of the county.

*“GBT has been an incredible partner in attempting to solve this problem, so when this grant opportunity arose, we were happy to support them in their effort to secure funding for this project. We pledged a large portion of our ARPA funds to make this a reality and are extremely excited for our citizens. We feel this will finally allow people in our rural homes and businesses to thrive in the modern era of technology.”*

We are thankful for the efforts of GBT in working tirelessly to offer real technology solutions for the citizens of Pawnee County and look forward to them announcing the details of the project.”

GBT anticipates this to be a 24-month project, with completion by the end of 2024. To learn more and stay informed throughout the project, you can visit [www.gbta.net/cpfgrant](http://www.gbta.net/cpfgrant). Specific questions can also be directed to [marketing@gbtlive.com](mailto:marketing@gbtlive.com).



## GET TO KNOW YOUR GBT NEIGHBOR

Aaron, Lead Dispatch

### Tell us about yourself...

I grew up in McCracken and graduated High School in Bazine. My wife Lesley, daughter Lillian, and son Jack, and I currently live in La Crosse.

### How did you get to GBT?

I worked at GBT for one summer before attending NWKTC in Goodland. After graduating college, I came back to work for GBT for 6 months before going to work for a telephone company in Colby for 1.5 years. I will never forget Gerald Washburn calling me to offer me a full-time job at GBT back in 2004!

### What do you do?

You can just call me GBT's air traffic controller... I facilitate and ensure our technicians are able to take care of our customers on a minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day basis. I ensure all of our service installs and projects are completed in a timely manner with excellent results.

### Favorite part about your job?

My day-to-day is full of unknown scenarios that arise. My number one responsibility and favorite part about my job is being innovative to come up with solid solutions.

### What are you most excited about for the upcoming year?

We have multiple large-scale projects in the works for 2023 that all result in getting more customers cut over to Fiber, and that is what I am looking forward to most.

## Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a new federal program that helps low income families afford the cost of Internet services. **Eligible households receive up to a \$30 discount on their Internet. Call us today - a GBT customer service representative will be happy provide more information about the program.**

### Who Is Eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program?

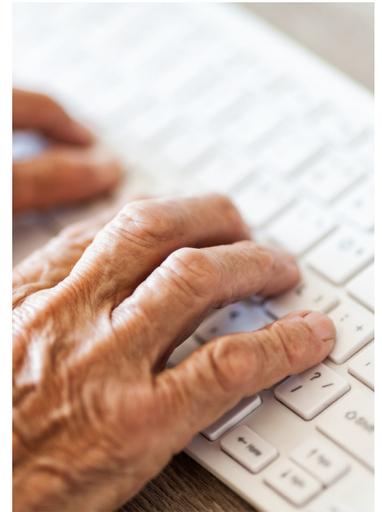
There are several ways that a household can qualify for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP):

- ① If an adult or dependent participates in certain federal assistance programs
- ② Based on their household income
- ③ If someone in the household already receives a Lifeline benefit

**Households are eligible for the ACP if someone in their household participates in one of these programs:**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps Medicaid, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit, Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, including at, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Community Eligibility Provision schools, Received a Federal Pell Grant in the current award year.

Applicants may need to show a card, letter, or official document as proof that they participate in one of these programs when they apply for the ACP.



## WATCH TV EVERYWHERE

Did you know GBT offers a watchTVeverywhere (WTVE) solution for FREE when you subscribe to GBT's StreamIT-TV service? WTVE gives you the ability to watch your favorite shows and programs when you are not at home! At times it can even allow you to watch shows when broadcasters are having a problem with their local feeds to GBT. Many of our customers love the WTVE option when they are traveling or visiting family outside of the GBT area, because all you need is an Internet connection to watch your shows on almost any device. So, what are you waiting for? Sign up today for the WTVE app and start watching your favorite shows everywhere! To get started, just follow the directions to the right!

# The stories we share...

Each individual story of our employee's and customer's experiences with GBT matters. These stories, woven together, make the overall story of GBT and who we are today.

**Bill and Lois Price** have been GBT Cooperative Members since 1982. Bill also served on the GBT Board of Directors from 1991-2001.

**Bill:** "My neighbor Charles Arnold (*the first Board member from Farmers Telephone in Rozel who served from 1953-1991*) was on GBT board for years, and when he retired I got put on the Board. While serving on the Board, I was able to witness GBT make major accomplishments for both the innovation and implementation of Internet and cell phones.

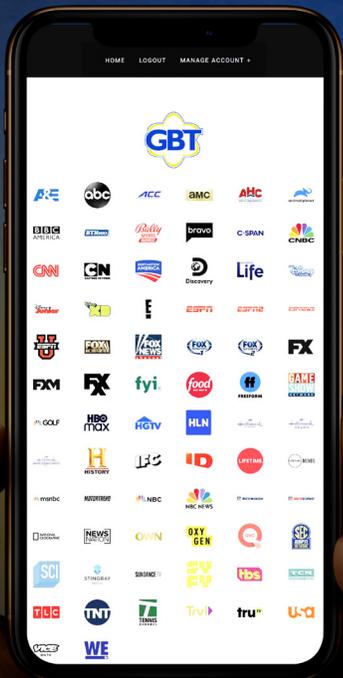
What I appreciate about GBT is that they always kept their telephone lines open and always had good service. If we were ever out of service, I easily made a call and they did an excellent job of having service tech in our area right away. I don't ever remember being out of service any length of time at all."



**Lois:** "When Bill joined board when Charles Arnold retired, he was honored to be chosen a director as he was so proud of the company. He is also proud of handing over the board reigns to Brian Hammeke—he's a good man and forward-thinking.

When Bill was on the Board, he came home from a meeting in Salina about cellphones. They were just starting bag phones at that time, and talking about making it smaller to make it mobile. I said "Bill, it might work on the east or west coast but it'll never work in Kansas." How wrong was I? Good thing I wasn't on the board!

GBT helps us old people when we don't understand technology—the techs come with a smile and do what they need to do to fix it. We had fast Internet before our son-in-law living in Topeka did! We held our heads high on that one. It's always a friendly voice on the end of the line when you call Golden Belt!"



1. Visit [www.wtve.net](http://www.wtve.net) to get started. You can do this on your phone or computer.

2. Select your TV provider: GBT Communications

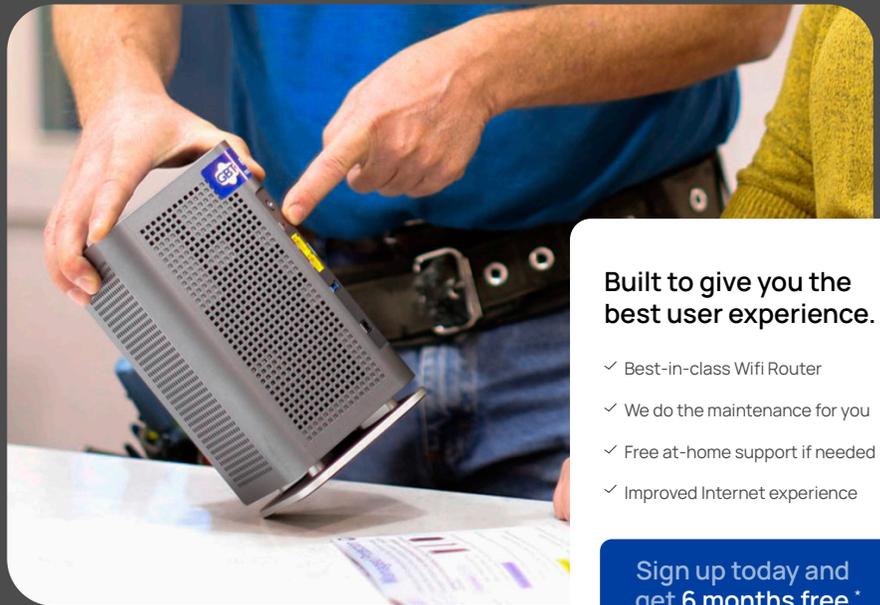
3. Select "Register" and follow the prompts. You will need your 1) GBT Account Number and 2) Last name on your bill statement to register.

4. Create a user name. (Tip: We recommend using the same email and password you use for your StreamIT TV services so it is easier to remember!)

5. Once your information has been submitted, you are all set to begin watching your favorite shows everywhere with WTVE!

# 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 2/28/23. Certain restrictions may apply.

## Game of the Month:

Did you hear? It's our 70th year! **To celebrate we will be doing giveaways all year long!** Giveaways will happen here in the newsletter and on our Facebook account, so make sure to pay attention to both! This month, answer the question "*I would recommend GBT to a friend because...*" Email your answer to [gbthunting@gbta.net](mailto:gbthunting@gbta.net) and you'll be entered to win \$10 to go toward your GBT Internet bill! Congratulations to *Donna Riedel* for winning January's game!

## Recipe of the Month:

### 4 Ingredient Chocolate

*This milk chocolate mousse is a simple, easy, and sweet treat that's delicious any time of year. It's especially perfect if you're looking for a last-minute dessert...or just need a quick chocolate fix. Bonus, you probably have all of the ingredients on hand!*

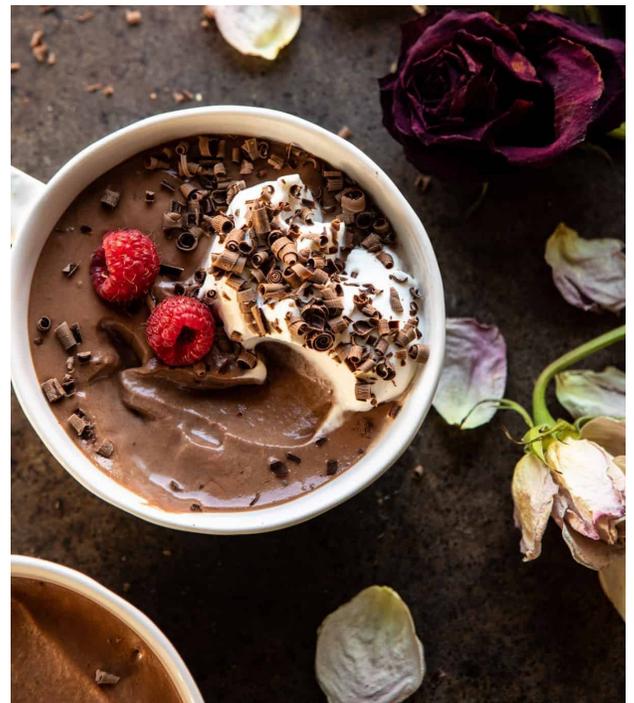
#### Ingredients

2 cups well-chilled heavy cream  
3/4 cup Nutella chocolate hazelnut spread  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 teaspoons espresso powder (optional)  
1 pinch sea salt  
whipped cream, for topping  
chocolate curls/shaving, for topping

#### Directions

1. Microwave the chocolate hazelnut spread for 30 seconds to loosen. Let cool 5 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer, whip the heavy cream on high speed until soft peaks begin to form, 3-5 minutes. Add the chocolate hazelnut spread, vanilla, espresso powder (if using), and a pinch of salt. Whisk (being careful not to overmix) until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Watch closely, if you over whip the chocolate will separate.
3. Divide the mousse among four to six small bowls. Cover with plastic wrap and chill for at least 1 hour, until set, or up to 5 days. Top as desired with whipped cream and chocolate shavings.

**Notes** *Keep this mousse chilled. When left out, the mousse will loosen, so it's important to serve immediately after removing from the fridge.*



785-372-4236  
[www.gbta.net](http://www.gbta.net)

**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



## The Connection

If you have questions or comments about this newsletter or any of our services, please email us at [marketing@gbtlive.com](mailto:marketing@gbtlive.com)  
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