



# THE Connection

**Cover Photo:**  
GBT Fiber construction began in Rural Pawnee County in June 2023. This rural Fiber build will provide Fiber Internet, Voice, and TV services to approximately 530 homes, businesses, and other public institutions!

## THE FIBER ROAD LESS TRAVELED: GBT'S 600-MILE FIBER QUEST IN RURAL KANSAS

If you drove from Kansas City to Denver, it would take you almost 9 hours and a little over 600 miles to get there. Now what does this distance have to do with GBT? That's the approximate amount of fiber optic cabling, 600 miles, that GBT is installing to homes and businesses in our Rural Part of Kansas, just in 2023! Fiber optics is hard to visualize because it's just a small piece of glass the size of a human hair, but if we stay on the roads theme, GBT is essentially laying 600 miles of a 1,000-lane highway to 100s of rural residents so they have the same access to broadband and the world that many of us take

for granted. As one resident who was recently connected to fiber Internet services conveyed to GBT,

*"For the first time since we have lived in the country, we now know what it's like to have Internet that we can do anything we want with. We can watch streaming shows on our TV, my kids can do homework on their tablets, and my husband and I can browse or search the Internet all at the same time. It is amazing!"*



With 600 miles of fiber being buried in the ground, and hundreds of homes that need to be connected, planning, timing, and implementation is key. GBT understands everyone is excited and wants to be first to get fiber, and it is our goal to get fiber deployed as quickly as possible, but not at the expense of quality, safety, or reliability. When deploying fiber, many just see the final part of the process when GBT

technicians install the fiber service inside the home, but few realize that staking, right-of-way permits, ordering and receiving of materials, main-line and drop-to-the-home construction, installation of central office electronics, and splicing and testing of the fiber all must be completed as part of the process.

Along with the rest of the areas GBT already has fiber to, Rural Burdett, Rural Otis, Rural Utica, Rural Beeler, and the entire Eastern half of Rural Pawnee County and a part of Northwest Stafford County are all set to get fiber service. Although all these areas have a similar characteristic, an average of 1 household per square mile, GBT is investing in the future of our area by ensuring broadband and connectivity will not be lacking in these areas. From Smart Ag to families being able to move to our rural areas and create and operate businesses on a global scale, and everything in between, GBT is happy to ensure broadband does not inhibit our area's ability to live, work, and have the same opportunities as one that lives in Kansas City or Denver.

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## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

JULY

04 Lewis Days / Ice Cream Social

14 Stafford Co. Fair / Snowcones

26 Ellis Jr. Free Fair / Root Beer Floats

28 Pawnee Co. Fair / Watermelon Feed  
Ness Co. Fair / Hotdog Feed



AUG.

02 Rush County Fair / Hotdog Feed

04 Larned Moonlight Madness / Snowcones

12 Bazine Picnic / Watermelon Feed  
Timken Picnic / Watermelon Feed



## UPCOMING DEADLINES

**FRS Community Grant Application Due - July 15:** The FRS Community Grant invests funds to support local efforts of non-profit entities to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural America. Being a GBT Customer allows you access to this National Grant Program along with the expertise of a grant writer who will review submitted applications to improve your project's chances for winning! Grants range from \$250 to \$5,000 in the categories of technology, education, economic development. Contact Kara Jecha for more information at 785-372-4236 or visit [gbta.net/economic-development/](http://gbta.net/economic-development/)

**Directory Photo Contest - August 13:** Every year GBT holds a contest to choose the new cover for our Directory. The contest pays \$100 to the winner and is open to all GBT customers and their families. 10 photo limit. Photos need to be taken in the GBT service area. Please include name and where the photo was taken on all submissions. Submit questions and photos to [marketing@gbtlive.com](mailto:marketing@gbtlive.com).



## GET TO KNOW YOUR GBT NEIGHBOR

*Marilyn, Customer Service Representative - Rush Center*

### Tell us about yourself and how you got to GBT?

*I grew up in Rushville, Nebraska, and am the 8th of 10 children. We are a big, loud bunch of crazies! My husband and I bought the Sale Barn in La Crosse 24 years ago and moved here with our 3 kids, Cody, Ethan & Miranda. When we moved, Kara (current GBT Marketing Specialist) told me about the job here at GBT and said I should apply! The rest is history...*

### What do you do?

*I am a Customer Service Representative at our Rush Center Store. I sit at the front desk, so I am typically the one greeting and assisting you if you stop in! I enjoy visiting with customers on a daily basis. I also do tasks like non-pay disconnects, late notices, auto payments, and NSF checks, just to name a few!*

### What is a part of your job that people might not know you do?

*I take care of all our Channel 8/Community Channel ads. Our GBT StreamIT TV line-up includes one local Community Channel in 18 different exchange areas. This channel is offered to keep community members informed about upcoming community events. We run ads for both profit and non-profit entities.*

### Personally what are you most passionate about?

*My grandkids! I FaceTime them all the time, and that is the best part of my day!*



# FRS YOUTH TOUR RECAP

GBT recently sponsored Merit Carter, the winner of the 2023 Foundation for Rural Services (FRS) Youth Tour from Ness City High School, on an unforgettable trip to our nation's capital. During this remarkable journey, FRS brought together students from rural communities nationwide.

The Youth Tour serves as a unique opportunity for students to explore our nation's capital, delve into the world of rural broadband, share their community's narrative with influential legislative, regulatory, and government figures, and forge connections with peers from other rural areas. Let's hear Merit's own reflections on this extraordinary experience:

*"I am incredibly grateful for all the things I got to see, do, and learn on the trip. I had the opportunity to establish new connections, friendships, and memories. My favorite activities were visiting Capitol Hill, conversing with Senators, exploring Arlington Cemetery, witnessing the changing of the guard, and immersing myself in the Smithsonian Museums. There's so much to see and so little time! After listening to the speeches at the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), I am immensely grateful for the time and effort GBT puts into their work."*



**Top:** Merit had the privilege of visiting the office of Senator Jerry Moran.



**Bottom:** Students, sponsored by small internet service providers from various parts of the nation were present at the event.

## Recipe of the Month:

### Lemon Garlic Shrimp Past

**This flavorful and tangy pasta dish is quick to make and perfect for a light and satisfying meal. The combination of lemon, garlic, and shrimp creates a deliciously refreshing flavor. Feel free to adjust the seasoning and garnish according to your preference. Enjoy!**

#### Ingredients

8 ounces of linguine or spaghetti  
1 pound of shrimp, peeled and deveined  
4 cloves of garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons of butter  
2 tablespoons of olive oil  
1 lemon, zest and juice  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

#### Directions

Cook the pasta according to the package instructions until al dente. Drain and set aside.

In a large skillet, heat the butter and olive oil over medium heat.

Add the minced garlic to the skillet and sauté for about 1 minute until fragrant. Add the shrimp to the skillet and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side until they turn pink and opaque. Remove the shrimp from the skillet and set aside.

In the same skillet, add the lemon zest and juice. Stir well to combine.

Add the cooked pasta to the skillet and toss to coat it evenly with the lemon garlic sauce.

Season with salt and pepper to taste. Return the cooked shrimp to the skillet and toss everything together for another minute to heat through.

Remove from heat and garnish with fresh parsley. Serve immediately.



785-372-4236  
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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