

Annual Meeting Review

After a two-year hiatus from in-person attendance, the annual meeting of Huxley Communications was held the evening of Thursday, March 24th. Around 75 people were present including members, employees, and board members. Special mention was given to retiring board members Doug Schonhorst and Sharyn Erickson. We appreciate their many years of service to the board. Three new board members were elected to each serve a four-year term. Jean Saveraid and John Murphy in District B and Kate-Brileigh Sears for District C.

Levi Bappe, General Manager of Huxley Communications, gave the financial report, which showed continued growth in the cooperative. This growth is primarily a result of our robust fiber network and the substantial addition of new internet subscribers over the last several years. Bappe also delivered the manager's report, which focused greatly on new funding mechanisms that will



Pictured are former General Managers Gary Clark and Bill Hotchkiss with current General Manager Levi Bappe.

allow for substantial network expansion over the next five years. In addition, Bappe officially announced the new Huxley Communications headquarters. The new facility, which will be located at the corner of Main Ave. and Campus Dr. in Huxley, will be completed in fall 2022. Bappe presented several images depicting the completed facility. The new headquarters is needed to allow for substantial growth and to improve operational efficiencies.

Current board president Brett Krogman gave the officer's report, which highlighted the challenges the cooperative has faced over the last two years. He emphasized the limited effects the pandemic and the localized derecho weather event had on our network, citing that Huxley Communications experienced zero downtime related to either one of those significant events. He also highlighted the areas the cooperative has expanded to over the last couple years including the communities of Shipley/Sand Hill Trail, Madrid and northern Ankeny.

Krogman also announced that due to the very strong financial position of the cooperative, the board was able to distribute over \$500,000 back to the members in allocation checks for the year 2021. Those checks were available to members immediately following the adjournment of the meeting. All remaining checks were mailed out the last week of March.

Huxley Communications Cooperative credits the work of our board of directors, management, and employees for the incredibly successful past year. We appreciate the ability to continue to provide the best in telecommunications services to our existing members and customers, and look forward to serving more members in the years ahead as we continue to grow and expand.

HUXLEY HAPPENINGS



Monday, May 30
Memorial Day – Office Closed

Monday, July 4
Independence Day – Office Closed

CONTACT INFORMATION

Huxley Communications
P.O. Box 36 • Huxley, IA 50124
515-597-2281 or 800-231-4922
www.huxcomm.net
huxtel@huxcomm.net

Free Internet Tech Support
515-597-HELP (4357) • Available 24/7

Report an Outage
515-597-2281

Call Before You Dig
Iowa One Call • 800-292-8989

Levi Bappe
General Manager

Connie Patrick
Business Office Manager

Terry Ferguson
Director of Operations

Brant Strumpfer
Plant Manager

SPRING 2022

Take a Look at the Future of Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is one of the most widely adopted technologies around the world, and the future of Wi-Fi is a bright one. Our connected lifestyles plus the growth of smart cities and the Internet of Things (IoT) will make Wi-Fi increasingly important in the years ahead.

According to NCTA - The Internet & Television Association, more than half of U.S. internet traffic transits a Wi-Fi network, and Wi-Fi contributes \$500 billion annually to the economy. Given the amount of economic and social activity taking place over W-Fi, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) took steps to make sure this technology can keep up with demand.

The FCC voted in April 2020 to allow the entire 1,200 Megahertz of the 6-GHz band to be shared with unlicensed Wi-Fi, to free up more spectrum to support all the activities people rely on Wi-Fi to deliver — from streaming, gaming, and browsing to video calls and telemedicine. Before that decision, it had been well over a decade since new unlicensed spectrum suitable for Wi-Fi had been made available.

In November 2020, the FCC further improved the spectrum outlook for Wi-Fi when it opened up the lower portion of the underutilized 5.9 GHz band for indoor unlicensed use. This small slice of spectrum, when joined with an adjacent Wi-Fi band, creates a wide-bandwidth, next-generation Wi-Fi channel (160 MHz) to deliver better Wi-Fi to American consumers in their homes, workplaces, and schools.

You can expect to see future spectrum policy decisions to be forward-looking, considering not just what Wi-Fi might look like in five years, but what it will take for service providers to continue to deliver outstanding Wi-Fi and the next unlicensed innovations 10-15 years from now.



How's your home Wi-Fi working for you today? Would you like help managing your network? Call 515-597-2281 and ask about our Expert Wi-Fi.



Devices Multiplying Like Rabbits?

Happy Easter from Huxley Communications and welcome to the spring season! If you have more internet-connected devices around your house than you did last year at this time, you may need to upgrade your connection to keep up with demand. So, hop to it and call us at 515-597-2281. We'll make sure you get the speed you need.

How to Declutter Your Cords and Cables



Do your desk and TV center each have a rat's nest of cords and cables around them? Not only can this look unsightly, but it can also make it difficult to figure out which one goes where. Now's the time to finally get everything under control.

Fortunately, it's not difficult to do. There are several key steps to the decluttering process:

- **Hide the power strips and plugs.** While power strips are functional, they're not particularly attractive. To hide your power strips and organize the cords plugged into them, you can buy cable organizer boxes off the shelf or make your own following the instructions available on YouTube.
- **Collect and tie cords together.** Before you do this, go through the tangled mess of cords one by one to make sure each cord is still in use. You'd be surprised how many times people find cords that aren't plugged in and just collecting dust. Now you're ready to gather cords together for better management. An inexpensive solution is to use zip ties at multiple points, so the cords stay neat from the power strip up to the device. Another option is to get zippered or hook-and-loop cable sleeves that conceal your cords.
- **Identify the cords and cables.** To stay organized and better manage all your cords and cables, you'll want to clearly identify each one. You can do this for free by using something that's probably in your kitchen right now — bread bag clips. Simply write a brief description on a bread bag clip and loop it around the cord or cable. Alternatively, you can wrap colored duct tape around with an inch or two jutting out. On that space, use a marker to write the description.

Don't forget about the unused cords and cables that are now stuffed in your junk drawer or closet, waiting for the day you'll need them again. They'll fit nicely into the pouches of a hanging shoe organizer, along with other small tech items such as computer mice. To keep cords and cables tidy and prevent tangling, try sliding them inside the cardboard roll from toilet paper or paper towels before storage.

It's Time to Spring into Action

Warmer weather means it's time to do the spring maintenance tasks your home needs. Here are some ideas to include on your to-do list:

- **Check the roof and exterior walls.** Cracked or missing shingles should be replaced. Whether you have wood siding, stucco, or brick, look for damaged areas, especially under eaves and near gutter downspouts.
- **Prep the AC.** Change the filter, check hose connections for leaks, and make sure the drain pans are draining freely.
- **Repair damaged window screens.** Even the smallest tear in a screen can let dozens of mosquitoes and flies into your home.
- **Inspect outdoor cushion covers.** Indoor/outdoor cushions and pillows take a beating. If they're still in good condition, wash them. If not, get new ones.
- **Re-caulk windows and doors.** Maintaining a properly sealed house helps keep the cool air in, which means lower energy bills.

This can also be a good time of year to spring forward with updated technology for your home. Visit www.huxcomm.net to see the selection of internet, phone, and TV plans we offer.



Lifeline Lowers Communications Costs for Qualifying Households

Lifeline is a federal program to help low-income subscribers stay connected by providing a monthly discount of at least \$9.25 on their wireline phone, wireless phone, or broadband internet service. You can only receive this discount for one service per household — either phone or internet, but not both. A household is defined as a group of people who live together and share income and expenses.

Lifeline is available to eligible low-income subscribers in every U.S. state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands.

This program launched in 1985 to provide discounts on phone services. In 2016, internet services were added in recognition of our digitally connected economy. Lifeline discounts on internet service can be crucial to unlocking the internet's economic benefits for disadvantaged households, since research consistently finds low incomes stand alongside less education and older age as the strongest indicators of lower subscription rates.

There are two ways to qualify for Lifeline:

1. Your household's income is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. You'll find a chart with this information for households of different sizes here: www.lifelinesupport.org/do-i-qualify/
2. You, your dependent, or a member of your household participate in at least one of these assistance programs:
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - Medicaid
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
 - Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension
 - Other Programs for Tribal Lands — Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance, Tribally-Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Tribal Head Start, and Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Visit www.lifelinesupport.org/get-started/ to learn about the different ways to apply for Lifeline — online, by mail, or through a phone or internet company such as Huxley Communications.



What to Know Before You Burn, Dig or Mow

Telephone pedestals and fiber markers indicate the location of internet, digital TV, and phone cables and equipment. Please watch for them on your property if you are burning ditches or mowing and be careful to avoid them. Damage can disrupt service for you and/or your neighbors.

Fiber connections are very expensive to repair — often several thousand dollars or more. Repair costs may be billed to the operator who caused the damage, so pay attention in order to avoid having to pay up.

Also be sure to call 811 before you dig anywhere. All sorts of utility lines, pipes, and cables could be buried on your property. That's why every digging job — from planting a tree to installing a fence — requires a call to 811 to locate and mark underground facilities before digging begins. There's no cost to you.

Huxley Communications thanks you for your cooperation in helping protect our valuable communications infrastructure.

Do Not Call Registry Doesn't Apply to All

Even though your phone number is on the National Do Not Call Registry, you can still legally be contacted by political groups, charitable organizations, people conducting surveys, and companies with whom you've done business. For details, visit www.donotcall.gov.