



West River Cooperative Telephone Company

Calling on You

ANNUAL MEETING

June 18, 2026

CAPITAL CREDIT RETURN

WRCTC's Annual Meeting will be held on June 18, 2026, rather than in October. This date change will affect the timing of your 12179 Mackey Rd, Buffalo; capital credit return. You will now receive your return in June.

If your return is under \$150, it will appear as a credit on your June billing statement. Returns over \$150 will be issued as a check and sent to members via US Postal Service.

Get ready for an evening full of great food, cash prizes, and cooperative fun! West River Cooperative Telephone Company will hold its Annual Meeting on **Thursday, June 18, 2026**, at the WRCTC Warehouse in Bison, South Dakota.

You're invited! Please join us for:

Pancake - Sausage Supper & Registration: 5:00-6:00 PM
Business Meeting: 6:00 PM

Members who register for Annual Meeting:

- Receive a \$20 bill credit (member must be present to register)
- Have the chance to play BINGO for \$500 in cash prizes
- Be entered into door prize drawings

Member Dependents: (Parent/Guardian must be present and registered for Annual Meeting)

- Ages 0-18 years can win an electric scooter
- 2027 High School Seniors can register for the \$500 Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarship

Speaking of kids — we've got them covered! Childcare will be available in the social room during the business meeting. They can:

- Play Bingo for Cash Prizes
- Build and decorate box forts

Members attending the meeting can join the fun too by playing Bingo for a chance to win one of FIVE \$100 cash prizes.

During the business meeting, members will hear a quick update on operations and finances, elect three directors, vote 710 3rd Ave E, Lemmon; on bylaw amendments, and hear important information on Cybersecurity.

This is YOUR Annual Meeting — your voice, your vote, your Cooperative.

Mark your calendar, bring your appetite, and come be part of the action!

We look forward to seeing you on June 18, 2026!

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Judy Gano Retires from WRCTC Board of Directors

Please join us from 3:30-4:30 PM as we celebrate Judy Gano and her 30 years of dedicated service on the West PO Box 168, Nisland; River Cooperative Telephone Company Board of Directors.

Help us thank Judy and wish her well as we honor this incredible milestone. Cake and ice cream will be served in the West River Cooperative Telephone Company Warehouse!

2026 Peacock Memorial Scholarship Winner

Following the unexpected passing of Grand Electric employee Jason Peacock in December 2024, the Boards of Directors of WRCTC and Grand Electric created the Peacock Memorial Scholarship in his honor and in memory of his father, Russ Peacock, a former WRCTC employee who passed in 2021. The scholarship recognizes their years of dedication and service to the cooperatives.

Applicants were evaluated on GPA, ACT scores, two essays, a scoring rubric, and two letters of recommendation, with priority given to students pursuing a certificate or associate degree in Powerline Construction and Maintenance, Electrical, or Telecommunications at a technical school.

On May 12, the \$2,000 Peacock Memorial Scholarship was presented at Lemmon High School to senior **ELI PETERSON**, son of Rhett Peterson and Mary Jo Heier of Lemmon. In attendance were Russ's wife and Jason's mother, Becky Peacock and Jason's wife, Wendy. Brooke Schecher spoke about Jason and Russ and the lasting impact they made during their time at the cooperatives and presented Eli with his certificate.

Eli, plans to attend Bismarck State College in the fall of 2026 to become a Lineman.

On behalf of the Peacock family, WRCTC, and Grand Electric Cooperative, we extend our congratulations to Eli and wish him the very best in his future endeavors.



BECKY PEACOCK, ELI PETERSON, AND WENDY PEACOCK POSE FOR A PHOTO.

2026 FRS Scholarship Winner

In May, we received an email from Mrs. Pam Becker, CEO of the Foundation for Rural Services (FRS), stating that a student from WRCTC's service territory had been chosen to receive a \$2,500 scholarship. Over 2,000 applicants applied, and only 60 scholarships were awarded nationwide.

Building on this exciting news, we are thrilled to announce that **KATELYN GEBHART**, daughter of Travis and Renae 604 1st Ave W, Lemmon; Gebhart of Meadow, has been selected to receive this scholarship. This is the first time a student has ever received this scholarship in our service territory.

Reflecting on the competitive process, Mrs. Becker said, "Being selected to receive an FRS scholarship was not an easy accomplishment... Katelyn's application was stellar and showcased not only her academic dedication but also the pride she has in her rural community."

Looking to the future, Katelyn plans to earn her Registered Nurse and Licensed Practical Nurse degrees from South Dakota State University and continue her education to become a Nurse Practitioner. After graduation, Katelyn would like to return to the area and continue being a part of her family's cattle ranch.

Congratulations, Katelyn. Best wishes as you pursue your goals.



2026 WRCTC/Grand Electric Cooperative Scholarship Winners

WRCTC and Grand Electric Cooperative joined forces for the 25th consecutive year to award \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors from local school districts. This program reflects the Cooperatives' ongoing commitment to investing in the future of our rural communities, honoring and encouraging the academic accomplishments of students within the area served. Scholarship recipients received their certificates during the Academic Awards ceremonies at their respective schools.

BROOKS FOSS, son of Christy and Kevin Foss, will graduate from Lemmon High School in May 2026. He is one of three Class Valedictorians and holds a 4.000 GPA. Brooks will attend North Dakota State University in the fall, where he plans to major in Architecture.

Throughout high school, Brooks has been active in Cross Country, Track and Field, Student Council, National Honor Society, 4-H, FFA, Travel Club, Close Up, and Academic Olympics. He currently serves as Student Council Secretary and Vice President of National Honor Society, and has held multiple leadership roles in FFA. Brooks has earned Junior Highest Honors, Platinum NCRC, first place in Algebra II at District Academic Olympics, first place in Junior Quiz Bowl, and several top placements in soil judging at the state, regional, and national levels.

Brooks plans to continue his education through a Master of Architecture, with the goal of designing communities that support strong infrastructure and improve quality of life.



BRYNLIE PRICE, daughter of Jenny and Chad Price, will graduate from Faith High School in May 2026. She ranks 5th of 17 in her class and holds a 4.028 GPA. Brynlie will attend Laramie County Community College in the fall, where she plans to major in Radiography.

Throughout high school, Brynlie has been active in volleyball, basketball, high school rodeo, FFA, and Student Council. She has earned A Honor Roll, State FFA qualifier, Chapter 14328 Date Rd, Prairie City; FFA Degree, multiple varsity letters, LMC Volleyball All-Conference Honorable Mention, and served as team captain in both volleyball and basketball. She is also Vice President of the Rodeo Team.

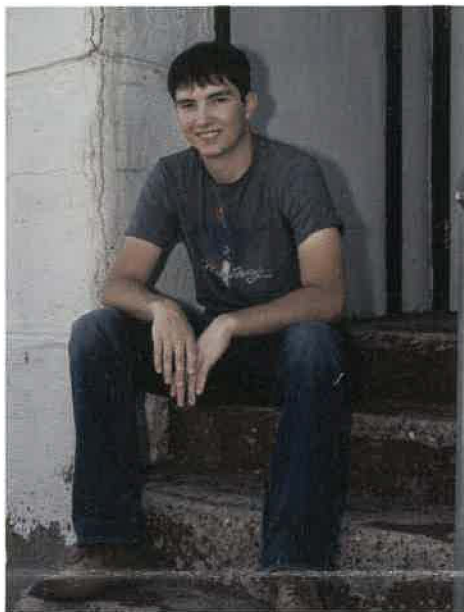
Brynlie plans to become a radiologic technologist, inspired by the role radiology played in her brother's recovery after a horse accident, and hopes to pursue advanced certifications such as MRI.

Congratulations, Class of 2026!

CHEYENNE HENDRICKSON, daughter of Londa and Brad Hendrickson, will graduate from Bison High School in May 2026. She ranks 3rd of 8 in her class and holds a 3.939 GPA. Cheyenne will live at 11160 Finn Pl, Camp Crook; attend South Dakota State University in the fall, where she plans to major in Agricultural Science with a minor in Agricultural Business.

Cheyenne has been active in FFA, National Honor Society, Student Council, FCCLA, volleyball, and basketball. She currently serves as FFA Chapter President and has held multiple officer roles, including District Student Advisor. She has competed in numerous leadership development and career development events, placing 1st at Regions and 8th at State in Employment Skills, and qualifying for state in Ag Broadcasting, Livestock Evaluation, and Ag Mechanics. Cheyenne also runs her own cookie business, Cheyenne's Confections, spends time babysitting, and helping on the family farm and ranch.

Cheyenne plans to pursue a career in the agricultural industry and hopes to return to a small community where she can give back.



COHEN SMITH, son of Stephanie and Ryan Smith, will graduate from Harding County High School in May 2026. He ranks 8th of 13 in his class and holds a 3.671 GPA. Cohen will attend Southeast Technical College in the fall, where he plans to major in IT Network and System Security.

Cohen has participated in football, basketball, and track, including playing summer basketball. He is a member of the National Society of High School PO Box 92, Bison; Scholars, has earned Academic All-State, and has received multiple sports awards. Cohen also works part-time for the City of Buffalo, gaining experience in maintenance, grounds keeping, and community service.

Cohen plans to pursue a career in networking and cybersecurity, with the goal of contributing to secure and responsible technology practices.

SARAH ERK, daughter of Anna and John Erk, will graduate from Newell High School in May 2026. She ranks 1st of 8 in her class and holds a 4.106 GPA. Sarah will attend Dakota State University in the fall, where she plans to major in Integrated Biology with a minor in Chemistry.

Sarah has participated in volleyball, basketball, track and field, National Honor Society, Student Council, 4-H, and church youth group. She has earned awards in Advanced High Honor Roll, MVP Track & Field 2025, Most Improved Volleyball 2024, Honorable Mention LMC Volleyball, and placed at State Track in high jump. Her teachers describe her as hardworking, dependable, and a strong leader.

Sarah plans to compete in track and field at DSU and hopes to pursue graduate studies in dentistry or dental hygiene.



Lifeline: Affordable Telephone Service for Income-Eligible Consumers

Lifeline is the FCC's program to help make communication services more affordable for low-income consumers. Lifeline provides subscribers a discount on monthly telephone and/or broadband services purchased from participating providers in the marketplace. The discounts, which can be applied to stand-alone broadband, bundled voice-broadband packages - either fixed or mobile - and stand-alone voice service - will help ensure that low-income consumers can afford 21st-century broadband and the access it provides to jobs, education, and opportunities.

The History of Lifeline

The FCC established the Lifeline program in 1985 to ensure that qualifying low-income consumers could afford phone service and the opportunities and security it provides. Congress supported and strengthened Lifeline in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, requiring that affordable service and advanced communications be available to low-income consumers across the country. In March of 2016, the FCC modernized Lifeline for advanced services by beginning a transition toward support of broadband service.

How Lifeline Works

Lifeline provides an eligible customer with broadband internet at a discount of up to \$9.25 per month. Eligible voice only subscribers will receive a discount of \$5.25 per month. Subscribers may receive a Lifeline discount on either a wireline or a wireless service but may not receive a discount on both services at the same time. Lifeline also supports broadband-voice bundles. FCC rules prohibit more than one Lifeline service per household.

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

To participate in the program, subscribers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in certain assistance programs. You can see if you are eligible with the Lifeline Eligibility Pre-Screening Tool on the Universal Service Administrative website at <https://www.checklifeline.org/lifeline>.

How Do I Qualify?

The following is a list of assistance programs that qualify a participant for Lifeline:

- Medicaid PO Box 16, Lemmon;
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamps or SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Veterans Pension or Survivors Benefit Program

How Tribal Link Up Works:

Tribal Link Up provides eligible low-income consumers living on Tribal lands with a one-time discount of up to \$100 on the initial installation or activation of a wireline or wireless telephone for the primary residence. Tribal Lands Link Up also allows consumers to pay the remaining amount that they owe on a deferred schedule, interest-free. Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Link Up discount at a primary residence. Eligible consumers may be eligible for Link Up again only after moving to a new primary residence. Link Up support is only offered to carriers who are building out infrastructure on Tribal lands so not all carriers may discount their activation fee. Enhanced benefits are provided to low-income consumers who live on a federally recognized Indian Tribe's reservation.

Tribal Lifeline takes up to an extra \$25 off your monthly bill, for a total Lifeline discount of up to \$34.25 per month. You can get Tribal Lifeline if you live on Tribal lands. Tribal lands include any federally recognized Indian tribe's reservation, Pueblo, or colony, including former reservations in Oklahoma, Alaska Native regions, Hawaiian Home Lands, or Indian Allotments. The following is a list of Tribal assistance programs that also qualify a participant for Lifeline:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) General Assistance
- Tribally-Administered 711 3rd Ave E, Lemmon; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- Head Start (if income eligibility criteria are met)

How Do I Sign Up for Lifeline?

If you qualify for any of the above programs, you must complete a Lifeline Assistance Application. You can find the application online at www.wrctc.coop.

Submit applications to: USAC
Lifeline Support Center
P.O. Box 7081
London, KY 40742

Find Your Address

Addresses did not make it in the newsletter last month. Hidden in this issue are ten new addresses. If you find YOUR address, all you have to do is notify our office. The \$20 will then be deducted off your next telephone bill. Changes of address in the New WRCTC Members section do not count. **Deadline is June 25, 2026.**

\$20
bill credit

New WRCTC Members

No New Connects



facebook.com/WRCTC



instagram.com/westrivercoop.telephoneco



Children aren't safe online

90% of children have access to the internet

71% of tweens experienced or witnessed cyberbullying

10% disclose the incident to their parent or guardian



BARK - COMING SOON!

The situations families and teens face today

The more time your child spends online, the more dangerous situations they will encounter.



Self-Harm/Suicide

37% of tweens and 64% of teens were involved in a self-harm/suicidal situation.



Sexual Content

62% of tweens and 80% of teens encountered nudity or content of a sexual nature.



Predators

4% of tweens and 7% of teens encountered predatory behaviors from someone online.



Eating Disorders

15% of tweens and 34% of teens engaged with or encountered content about disordered eating.



Anxiety

23% of tweens and 48% of teens used language or were exposed to language about anxiety.



Violence

68% of tweens and 84% of teens expressed or experienced violent subject matter.



Drugs/Alcohol

61% of tweens and 84% of teens engaged in conversations surrounding drugs/alcohol.



Bullying

70% of tweens and 79% of teens experienced bullying as a bully victim or witness.



Depression

45% of tweens and 51% of teens engaged in conversations about depression.



There is help for you and your children

Bark is a comprehensive tool that helps you protect them by monitoring devices, social media, texts, emails, blocking content and more, sending you alerts in time for you to take action.