



# 2019 Annual Meeting

## 69th Annual Meeting to be held on Thurs, Sept 26th

Calling all members - it's time for WCTA's 69th Annual Meeting! This is an opportunity for you to find out what your Cooperative has been doing this past year. It's also a chance for you to learn more about the telecommunications industry and what the future holds.

The meeting is being held on Thursday, September 26th at the Lake Mills High School gym beginning at 6:30pm. President Mark R. Johnson and CEO Mark Thoma will bring you up to date on local and national telecommunications topics.

Drawings will be held for the Mail Ballot Prize and

three Grand Attendance Prizes. Each winner will receive a 49" flat screen television. Cookies and refreshments will be served following the meeting. The ballot, prize card and attendance card will be sent in a separate envelope.

**Please sign your attendance card and bring it to the meeting.**

WCTA is YOUR Cooperative. Come to the meeting and find out what your Cooperative has been doing this past year and vote for your directors. Please mark your calendar for September 26th. We hope to see you there!

### *This year's entertainment*

Doug Koempel & Larry Crandall of West Union, Iowa, formed the Memory Brothers duo in the late 1960s. Their trademark was upright piano, acoustic guitar and close harmony vocals, similar in style to the Everly Brothers.

Since their early beginnings, The Memory Brothers have consisted of various Midwestern artists and continue to entertain audiences. They were inducted into the Midwest All Music Hall of Fame in 2019 and the Iowa Rock 'n Roll Music Association (IRRMA) Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2013.

Don't miss this entertaining group at the 2019 WCTA Annual Meeting. Learn more at [www.memorybrothers.com](http://www.memorybrothers.com).



*Be Sure to VOTE!*

Watch for the ballots and prize cards which will be mailed to you next week

Winnebago Cooperative Telecom Association

704 East Main Street Lake Mills, Iowa

[www.wctatel.net](http://www.wctatel.net) 800-592-6105 [wcta@wctatel.net](mailto:wcta@wctatel.net)

# Directors' Report



**L to R:** President Mark R. Johnson, Larry Foley, Vice-President Stephen Thorland, Jerry Ouverson, Secretary/Treasurer Mike Stensrud, Curt Helland and Dale Meinders.

Thank you to all WCTA Members and staff for another successful year. Serving our members is the reason we exist, and our employees make it happen. Our role as the board is to set policy and govern the cooperative, after being elected by the membership. Our mission is to provide our members innovative products, exceptional value and first-class customer service through positive and dedicated employees, while investing back into the communities where our members live to allow all to thrive.

**Dividend Payment:** Earlier this year the board approved a \$500,000 dividend payout. The amount represents payment of deferred dividends for members who had WCTA service during the

years of 1997-2000. After the 8,000 dividend checks were issued to members in June, a total of 38% of the allocated dividends for the years stated above have been paid back to members.

**Industry Regulatory Update:** As you have heard from us in the past, the financial support system for rural telecommunications providers, called the Universal Service Fund, is changing. The purpose of this funding is to make sure our entire country has communications service that is similar to urban areas, despite the significantly higher costs to serve rural areas like ours. The system has been slowly changing for years, and now those changes are nearing completion. The new system for WCTA is called the Alternative Connect America Cost Model, or A-CAM for short. The old system used to rely on the information we supplied from our regulated cost study. Now, because enough data exists for our company and others like it, A-CAM has been developed. We accepted the new terms for this system in July and will start to receive funding from this support mechanism in 2019, and it will remain through 2029.

**Construction Updates:** In 2019, we completed the fiber project to bury fiber-to-the-home services to 100% of our customers in both rural and urban areas. WCTA members/customers are unique in the fact that they get state-of-the-art fiber services (Internet, TV and phone). About 80% of US homes don't have fiber services like you do now. We most recently completed Rake, Woden, Crystal Lake, and the remaining portion of Northwood. Thank you for your patience while our expert staff and partners completed this important and substantial project.

## WCTA Employees

*WCTA employees are committed to providing the best service possible to you. They live and work in the communities we serve. They volunteer for fire & ambulance departments, city councils, school and civic organizations. Each one of our employees delivers quality customer care and we appreciate their service.*

Arends, Ron	Technician	Lucas, Jason	Business Systems Specialist
Arneson, David	CAD Operator	Miller, Randy	Network Operations Technician
Belica, Kris	Technician	Nitcher, Dylan	Technician
Boysen, Ross	Technician	Obermeyer, Heidi	Account Representative
Buhmann, Heather	Account Representative	Pederson, Jeff	Business Solutions
Caylor, Clay	Technician	Peterson, Katie	Account Representative
Chodur, Deb	Account Representative	Pins, Marty	Controller
Davis, Paul	Network Manager	Piper, Mike	Network Operations Technician
Ducommun, Chad	Operations Assistant	Renneker, Rob	Operations Manager
Eastvold, Tom	Technician	Rentz, Josh	Network Operations Technician
Eaton, Chris	Inventory/Purchasing Coordinator	Ringham, Jayne	Customer Service Manager
Hagen, Sarah	Accountant	Savoy, Steve	Network Administrator
Henderson, Melanie	Account Representative	Sletten, Neal	Engineering Manager
Holtan, Jason "Kirby"	Technician	Tegland, Travis	Technician
Johnson, Aaron	Office Network Administrator	Theisen, Austin	Technician
Johnson, Greg	Technician	Thoma, Mark	Chief Executive Officer
Joynt, Ryan	Operations Assistant	Thompson, Angie	Project Coordinator
Kesler, Ryan	Network Operations Technician	Thompson, Scott	Construction
Klebsch, Bob	Plant Administrator	Thoreson, Eric	Accountant
Kloster, Chad	Field Operations	Walz, Gene	Network Operations Technician
Kroger, John	Regulatory Manager	Wright, Randy	Technician
Lackore, Darcy	Account Representative		

## Fiber Conversions, Premium WiFi & More

If you have not done so already, I encourage you to read the Directors' report; it contains some important topics for members to know. I'll cover some additional current and future related topics here.

**Fiber Conversion Update:** As you read in the Directors' report, we have completed 100% of the construction of the fiber network, but that is not the final step in the process. The final step is the conversion of customers from the copper network to the fiber-to-the-home network. This allows members/customers to get ultra-fast Internet, outstanding TV and phone services, products 80% of customers in the US wish

they had. We are nearly done with conversions of customers in Conger, Emmons, Scarville, Twin Lakes and parts of Northwood.

Next, staff members will start conversions in Rake,

Woden, Crystal Lake, and the remaining portion of Northwood. By next year, I hope to report that all of these conversions are done, which will mean the fiber project is complete!

**Cyber Security:** I mentioned this last year, and I'm mentioning it again because I see the problem persists. There are many ways in which scammers are trying to target rural customers. Some of them are

from emails that look official but are not. Other threats are from phone calls or letters that come in the mail, also trying to look or sound official. Don't allow them to trick you into doing something that doesn't feel quite right. Never give anyone you don't know any personal information, regardless of how official they might sound.

**Premium WiFi:** The great Internet speed we offer with our Fiber network allows members/customers to connect more devices and do more things with their Internet. Some are connected by Ethernet cables and others are connected by WiFi. Now we offer Premium WiFi with WCTA Internet. The service does many things to help you, but the most important might be making your WiFi experience better by avoiding interference. Needless to say, all WiFi is not created equally - and Premium WiFi gives you the Internet experience you deserve and we want you to have.

To close, I want to say thank you to our WCTA staff who work diligently every day, often on nights and weekends, to make sure we fulfill our commitment to you. I also want to thank the Board of Directors for your commitment to members and your guidance. Finally, thank you to members for trusting us to serve you, and for your encouragement and excitement about the fiber project.



**“Thank you for trusting us to serve you . . . and for your encouragement & excitement about the fiber project.”**



**SATISFACTION  
GUARANTEED**

**Add Premium WiFi to Your WCTA Internet Today . . . Smart Router, Fast, Reliable WiFi, Security & More! Call or ask for details.**

# 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes

The annual meeting of the Winnebago Cooperative Telecom Association was held at the High School Gym in Lake Mills, Iowa, on the 20th day of September, 2018, at 6:30 p.m., pursuant to previous action of the Board of Directors fixing said place and time for holding the annual meeting and pursuant to notice.

The invocation was given by General Manager Mark Thoma, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order by President Mark R. Johnson who presided during the meeting. Mike Stensrud, Secretary/Treasurer, acted as Secretary during the meeting and kept the minutes thereof.

There being a total membership of 8,132 members and said members present in person being more than the 163 in number (a list of which is kept on file at the WCTA business office), the President declared a quorum for the lawful transaction of any business to come before the meeting.

President Johnson asked if there were any attendance ballots to turn in, and those ballots were collected. The ballots of those voting by mail were counted earlier in the day by the Inspectors of Election. All ballots turned in at the meeting were then delivered to the inspectors who proceeded to count them. President Johnson announced the Inspectors of Election committee members: Diane Miller, Ted Thompson, Sandy Skatter, Wayne Van Veldhuizen, Daryl Sherman, and Mardene Lein.

A motion was duly made and seconded to waive the reading of the Notice of Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

A motion was duly made and seconded to waive the reading of the September 21, 2017, annual meeting of members' minutes. Motion carried.

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2017, annual meeting of members as presented. Motion carried.

The financial report of the previous year was then presented and read by the General Manager Mark Thoma.

A motion was duly made and seconded to accept the December 31, 2017, financial report. Motion carried.

President Johnson introduced the Board of Directors and Attorney to meeting attendees.

Tim Casperson, facilitator for the Nominating Committee, then presented and read the Nominating Committee report.

The Cooperative's General Manager, Mark Thoma, presented his annual report to the members.

The President then called on the Inspectors of Election committee for the Director's election results.

The Certificate of Inspectors of Election report was presented and read by Daryl Sherman, a member of the Inspectors of Election, certifying that the following members, having received the highest number of votes cast, have been duly elected directors of the Cooperative to hold office for the term specified or until their successors shall have been elected and qualified.

Three-year term:	Larry Foley
	Mike Stensrud
	Stephen Thorland

There being no further business to come before the meeting, upon motion duly made and seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned.

## Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 26th - 6:30pm  
Lake Mills High School Gym

Call to Order

Roll Call, Mark R. Johnson

Opening of Business Meeting  
& Announcement of Quorum

Financial Report, Mark Thoma

Nominating Committee Report

Election of Directors

CEO's Report, Mark Thoma

Old & New Business

Adjournment

Entertainment

Prize Drawings

## Watch your mailbox . . .

Your **ATTENDANCE CARD** will be mailed soon - Bring it with you to the Annual Meeting!

Members who register before 6:30pm and stay for the entire meeting receive:

One \$20 Meat Certificate

Attendance Gift



## Prize Drawings . . .

We will be giving away Four 49" Televisions!



Members who register before 6:30pm and stay for the entire meeting are eligible for prize drawings. Must be present to win!



Winnebago Cooperative Telecom Association

704 East Main Street Lake Mills, Iowa

www.wctatel.net 800-592-6105 wcta@wctatel.net