



LIFELINE

providing discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain phone and broadband service

You may be eligible for assistance in paying your telephone bill if you receive benefits from certain low-income assistance programs. For more information or an application form, please contact us at 888-586-3100. They will do the verification process with you over the phone and can provide you with an application.

Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) offers a monthly credit of \$7.00 on your landline telephone service plan. You may receive the TAP credit on one landline per household.

The federal Lifeline Program offers a monthly discount of \$5.25 on some landline telephone service plans. Lifeline also offers discounts on some wireless telephone service plans. In addition, the program offers a \$9.25 discount on some broadband internet service plans. You may receive the Lifeline discount on one telephone service per household.

The federal Lifeline Program incorporates the broadband discount (not applicable to TAP).

If you live on Tribal lands, you may qualify for additional discounts. Tribal Lands Link Up offers a one-time credit of up to \$100 on installation or activation charges. Tribal Lands Lifeline offers a monthly credit up to \$34.25 on your landline, broadband service, or wireless telephone plan.

The telephone or broadband service must be in your name. You must show proof that you or a member of your household participates in at least one of the following programs or is income eligible:

- Federal Public Housing Assistance
- Food Support/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid/Medical Assistance
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension Benefit
- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance and living on Tribal lands
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) and living on Tribal lands
- Tribally Administered Head Start (for those meeting income-qualifying standards) and living on Tribal lands
- Tribally Administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TTANF) and living on Tribal lands

If you do not participate in any of the programs listed, you may qualify if your income is at or below 135% of the 2020 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines: (The federal poverty guidelines are typically updated at the end of January.)

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	INCOME
1	\$17,226
2	\$23,274
3	\$29,322
4	\$35,370
5	\$41,418
6	\$47,466
7	\$53,514
8	\$59,562
For each add'l person add	\$6,048

For more information or to request an application form:

PHONE
888-586-3100

ONLINE
<https://NationalVerifier.ServiceNowServices.com/lifeline>

TELE U WHAT
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online: paulbunyan.net



BEMIDJI

1831 Anne St. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601
Phone (218) 444.1234
Toll Free (888) 586.3100
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 5:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Apple Certified Repair
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

GRAND RAPIDS
510 SE 21st St.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Phone (218) 999.1234
Toll Free (888) 586.3100
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 5:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Inger-Wirt, Squaw Lake, Deer River, Dora Lake, Kelliher, Northome, Blackduck, Ash River, Big Falls

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Paul Bunyan
COMMUNICATIONS

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Bemidji, MN 56601

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Paul Bunyan
COMMUNICATIONS

COOPERATIVE NEWS AND INFORMATION • DECEMBER 2020

TELE U WHAT



Register for the Paul Bunyan Communications Pick-it Pro Football Challenge, a **FREE** online contest for participants to pick the winners of the pro football postseason for a chance to win a up to a \$500 credit on a Paul Bunyan Communications account!

1ST \$500 CREDIT **2ND \$250 CREDIT**
3RD \$100 CREDIT **4TH - 10TH \$50 CREDIT**

\$100 CREDIT WILL ALSO GO TO WHOMEVER FINISHES IN 100TH PLACE

Participants can register for the contest at

www.paulbunyan.pickitchallenge.com

Register anytime but remember to come back to make your picks before the first playoff game on Saturday, January 16.



Sending the warmest holiday wishes to our members, friends, and families during this beautiful season.

Wishing you all that is merry and bright for the New Year ahead!



OCTOBER

Paul Bunyan Communications Board of Directors conducted its monthly meeting via conference call on October 12, 2020. Also attending were CEO and General Manager Gary Johnson, CFO Dave Schultz and Administrative Assistant Kalsie Vanasse.

- Financial reports, delinquent accounts, member lists, and other service reports were reviewed and approved.
- Customer Service Manager Christie Turn provided an update on COVID-19 operations.
- The CEO discussed the impact on employee benefits and upcoming company events. He also discussed PBC's recent receipt of the FCC's Digital Opportunity Equity Recognition (DOER) at a virtual national recognition event hosted by FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks.
- The CEO reviewed quarterly service statistics and trends. He provided an update regarding our various lines of business.
- Network Operations Manager Rob St. Clair provided a construction update.
- IT & Development Manager Steve Howard, Networks Operation Manager Rob St. Clair, CFO Dave Schultz and the CEO discussed the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.
- Dave Hengel, Executive Director of Greater Bemidji provided an update on the economic development organization and their numerous community initiatives.
- Network Operations Manager Rob St. Clair reviewed the management team's fiber inventory purchase recommendation. A motion was made, seconded and carried approving the recommended 4-year fiber inventory purchase from low bidder.
- IT & Development Manager Steve Howard reviewed the Minnesota Border to Border grant application status. A motion was made, seconded and carried approving the authorizing resolution as presented.
- The CEO gave his monthly report. He reviewed virtual meetings he attended and upcoming meetings. He shared several programs and projects that have recently highlighted Paul Bunyan Communications including recognition from Congressman Collin Peterson, a new documentary film project, and Kraus-Anderson's Build Me Up podcast.

NOVEMBER

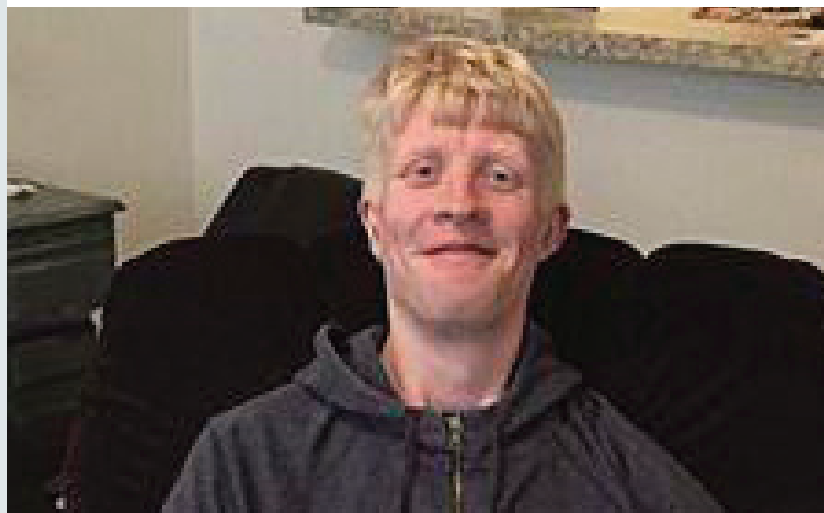
Paul Bunyan Communications Board of Directors conducted its monthly meeting via conference call on November 6, 2020. Also attending were CEO and General Manager Gary Johnson, CFO Dave Schultz and Customer Service Manager Christie Turn.

- Financial reports, delinquent accounts, member lists, and other service reports were reviewed and approved.
- The CEO provided an update on the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction.
- The 2019 Excise Tax Refund claim completed by Olsen Thielen was reviewed. A motion was made, seconded and carried approving Board Resolution and refund claim.
- CFO Dave Schultz reviewed Olsen Thielen's Agreement for Services for conducting the 2020 audit and related services.
- CFO Dave Schultz provide a summary of the 2021 NTCA health insurance rate increases and related PBC Insurance Committee actions.
- The CEO discussed the 2021 Cooperative Member Meetings. A committee including two Directors and key staff has been formed to develop plans for the 2021 member meetings and election process. Cooperative District 3 and 8 will have elections this cycle. Tentative dates have been set.
- Network Operations Manager Rob St. Clair reviewed the construction contract bid results for 2021 projects. A motion was made, seconded and carried approving the low bid.
- The CEO gave his monthly report. He reviewed virtual meetings he attended and upcoming meetings. He discussed Itasca County CARES Funding for broadband. He discussed the Greater Bemidji tele-work initiative. He also discussed future anticipated road construction projects near the Bemidji Technology Park.



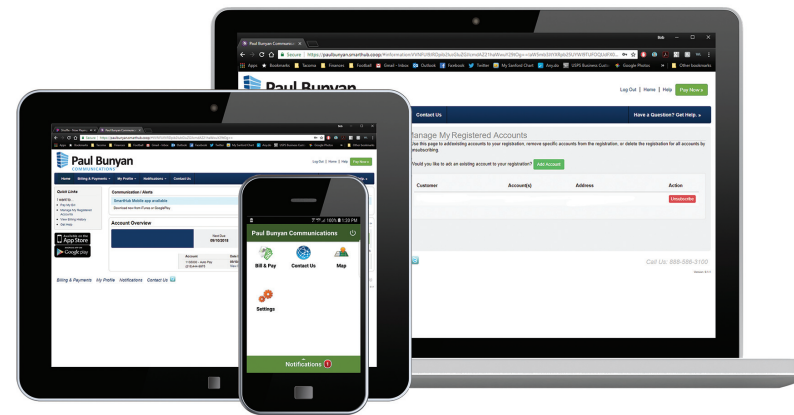
Remembering STACEY NELSON

Our friend and co-worker Stacey Nelson passed away on June 15 after a courageous fight with cancer. Stacey taught art classes for the Bemidji School District before joining our cooperative team in 2001 as a customer service representative in our Bemidji office. Stacey loved to help others and her goal every day was to leave everyone around her smiling. We miss her dearly.



And BEN CARTER

Benjamin James Carter, age 31, passed away September, 16. Ben worked for our subsidiary Cooperative Development washing cars and doing various odd jobs for our Grand Rapids location. Ben loved to downhill ski with his family every year, enjoyed hanging out on Deer Lake boating and his biggest hobby was playing video games. His quick wit and sense of humor will be greatly missed.



Life is fast, and it can be hectic, but it doesn't all have to be complicated. Paying your Paul Bunyan Communications bill shouldn't be a complex task, and with our SmartHub web and mobile app, it won't be.

SmartHub has several features that make managing your account as easy as possible. You'll be able to pay your bill, contact customer service, and get the latest news.

As soon as you log in, you'll be able to view your billing history and make a payment with just a couple of clicks... or taps, if you're using the app. You'll be able to see your current bill, along with bills from the previous month or even the previous summer.

PAUL BUNYAN COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Paul Bunyan Communications recently received recognition from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as an honoree of the Digital Opportunity Equity Recognition (DOER) Program.

The DOER Program, created by FCC Commissioner Starks, calls attention to organizations, institutions, companies and individuals who, through their actions, have made meaningful and measurable progress in eliminating internet inequality by helping to make quality affordable broadband service available to unserved or underserved communities.

Paul Bunyan Communications was one of just a dozen service providers nationwide to be selected for this honor which highlights the construction of one of the largest rural all-fiber optic gigabit networks in the country (the GigaZone) and our team's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March which included working with area school districts to quickly develop creative solutions for broadband access for students and their families.

Manage your Paul Bunyan Communications account simply, quickly, and easily with SmartHub

Making payments through SmartHub is fast and easy. The first time you make a payment either through the web or through your mobile device, you'll be able to securely store your payment information for future transactions. The next time you need to pay your bill, it will only take a couple of clicks.

You'll also be able to see important Paul Bunyan Communications notices with SmartHub. You'll be able to select how you want to be notified about your bill, including email and text messaging.

Access SmartHub by visiting: <https://paulbunyan.smarthub.coop/login.html> or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iOS devices) or Google Play Marketplace (Android devices).



Commissioner Starks (upper left) and the DOER Advisory Board celebrated the honorees of the inaugural Digital Opportunity Equity Recognition (DOER) Program, which was created to acknowledge the tireless efforts of Americans working to close the digital divide in communities without access to affordable, reliable broadband.

Are you having trouble using the telephone due to a hearing or speech disability?

Minnesota Relay is a free telephone service that uses specially trained communications assistants to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. Calls can be made to anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. All calls are completely confidential. To make a relay call dial 7-1-1. Once connected to the relay service, tell the communications assistant the type of relay call you wish to make. Or, you may dial the specific toll-free number for the type of relay service.

For More Information on Minnesota Relay Services
www.mnrelay.org
 1-800-657-3775

Emergency Assistance
 TTY callers should dial 9-1-1 directly in an emergency. All 9-1-1 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but this may delay the response to your call.

To file a Complaint Regarding Minnesota Relay
 1-800-657-3775
 Email: mn.relay@state.mn.us

You will need to provide the date and time of the relay call, the calling from and to phone numbers, the CA's identification number, and the nature of your complaint.

You may also file a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission www.fcc.gov/complaints
 Voice: 1-888-225-5322
 TTY: 1-888-835-5322
 ASL via VP: 1-844-432-2275

TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION (TED) PROGRAM

The TED Program provides free specialized telecommunications equipment to income eligible Minnesotans who are having trouble using the telephone due to a hearing, speech or physical disability.

mn.gov/deaf-hard-of-hearing
 Voice: 1-800-657-3663
 ASL via VP: 1-866-635-0082

Captioned Telephone Service (CTS)

CTS uses a special telephone with a text display screen so that a person who is hard of hearing can listen to and read captions of everything the other person on the call says. You speak directly to the other person on the call, and a relay communications assistant transcribes everything the other person says into captions, which appear on the display screen of your CTS phone.

Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS)

Internet-based forms of CTS are available for those who would like to use CTS on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Go to: www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/internet-protocol-ip-captioned-telephone-service.

Computer (ASCII): 1-800-627-3529

Computer users can access Minnesota Relay. Set your communications software to the following protocols: speeds ranging from 300 to 2400; 8 Bits; No Parity; 1 Stop Bit; Full Duplex. When calling at a rate of 300 or below, follow the above using Half Duplex.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO): 1-800-627-3529

HCO allows a person who can hear clearly but who has very limited or no speech capability to make phone calls. Using a special text telephone, you type your conversation for the relay communications assistant to read to the other person, and listen directly to the other person's response.

Hearing User: 1-800-627-3529

A hearing person may use a standard telephone or mobile phone to place a relay call and speak with person who is deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled.

Internet Protocol (IP) Relay

IP Relay combines text-based relay service with the ease of the Internet – no need for a TTY. You are able to make your relay call using a computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Go to: www.sprintrelay.com.

Spanish Relay: 1-877-627-5448

Spanish speaking persons with a hearing or speech disability are able to make relay calls. This is not a translation service – both parties must speak Spanish, and at least one party must have a hearing or speech disability.

Speech-to-Speech (STS): 1-877-627-3848

STS allows a person who has difficulty speaking or being understood on the phone to communicate using his or her own voice or voice synthesizer. The communications assistant repeats your words so that the other person on the call can understand them, and the other person speaks directly to you.

Text Telephone (TTY): 1-800-627-3529

This service allows a person who is deaf, deafblind, or speech disabled to use a TTY to communicate with the other person on the call.

Video Relay Service (VRS)

VRS allows a person who uses American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate over the phone. The VRS user connects to the relay communications assistant via an Internet-enabled device with a video camera. The communications assistant relays the conversation back and forth between the parties – in ASL with the VRS user and by voice with the called party. Go to: www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/video-relay-services.

Voice Carry Over (VCO): 1-877-627-3024

VCO allows a person with a hearing disability, but who wants to use his or her own voice, to speak directly to the other party. The communications assistant then types the other party's response, which is displayed on the VCO user's text telephone.