



# NETWORK CONNECTIONS

Quarter 4 | 2024

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**PROVIDING A BETTER**

*Connection.*



A letter from our  
**General Manager/CEO  
Kent Schimke**

As we enter the final quarter of the year, I'm excited to highlight several key events and milestones that make this season special for our cooperative. October marks Cooperative Month, a time to recognize the many benefits of being part of a cooperative, and I am thrilled to invite you to our 74th Annual Meeting on October 17th.

**74th Annual Meeting October 17th** — This year's Annual Meeting will be a celebration of 74 years of service to our members. It's an opportunity for you to learn about the progress we've made in delivering advanced broadband solutions and to engage with us on our future plans. As always, this is a time to reflect on how far we've come as a cooperative and the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. I hope to see you there!

**October is Cooperative Month**—As we celebrate Cooperative Month, it's important to remember that being a member of a cooperative means you are more than just a customer, you are an owner. Here are just a few of the benefits of being part of our cooperative:

- **Member-Ownership:** Our members have a say in how the cooperative is run, and our focus is always on delivering the best services for you.
- **Local Impact:** Unlike large corporations, our margins are not only allocated to the members but are reinvested into the network and the communities, helping to improve services and support local initiatives.
- **Customer Focused:** We're driven by the needs of our members, not by shareholders. This means we prioritize service quality, reliability, and affordability.

Your involvement and commitment continue to shape the direction of our cooperative, and for that, I thank you.

**Season's Greetings**—As the year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to wish everyone a Happy Halloween, a warm and wonderful Thanksgiving, and a very Merry Christmas. This is a season of reflection and gratitude, and I am truly grateful for each of you and for the support you've shown over the years. Together, we've accomplished so much, and I look forward to all we will achieve in the years to come.

**Thank you for being a valued member of our cooperative. I look forward to seeing you on October 17th!**

Warm regards,





# JOIN US FOR OUR 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Ellendale School Gym  
Thursday, October 17

4:45 pm Meal | 6 pm Meeting

### DOOR PRIZES

Win up to  
**\$500 in CASH!**

\*must be in attendance to win.



PROVIDING A BETTER

*Connection.*



## Meet the Candidates

The names listed below were nominated by the Nominating Committee on Aug. 28, 2024.

- District 3 (Fort Ransom, Kathryn & Verona exchanges)—Arden Falk, Fort Ransom
- District 4 (Fredonia & Jud exchanges) —Sid Meidinger, Fredonia
- District 10 (Ashley, Edgeley, Ellendale, Kulm & LaMoure exchanges) —Dan Girard, Ellendale



Sid Meidinger

Dan Girard

Nominations by petition:

- District 3 - Dallas Hagen, Fort Ransom

### MEMBERS FROM REGION 1 WILL VOTE BY BALLOT.



#### District 3 Candidates



Arden Falk



Dallas Hagen

Districts eligible to vote:

- District 2 - Dickey, Litchville, & Marion exchanges
- District 3 - Fort Ransom, Kathryn & Verona exchanges

**\*Must be present to vote.**

## NEW LISTINGS

### Ashley 288

Ethel Puhlmann..... 288-3817

Virginia Schnabel..... 288-3812

### LaMoure 883

Black Diamond Ranch LLC.. 883-5482

### Lisbon 683

Kyle Bleecker ..... 683-5367

Nancy Ann Johnson ..... 683-2193

Stanley Duff..... 683-4714

### Milnor 427

Hall Precision Machine Inc...427-5760

### Oakes 742

David M Jury ..... 742-3011

Vesta Olderness..... 742-2278

## ADD A JOINT NAME TO YOUR ACCOUNT

If you've never given authorization to add a joint name to your account, DRN cannot allow him/her, whether it be a spouse or roommate, to vote at the annual meeting or make changes to your account. By adding a joint name, the primary person is allowing the joint name to add services, inquire about billing, charges, etc. Call 344-5000 now to add a joint name to your account, or download and print the "Joint Name & Voting Rep. Form" at [drn.coop/annual-meeting24](http://drn.coop/annual-meeting24). E-mail completed form to: [customerservice@drtel.com](mailto:customerservice@drtel.com) or mail to: DRN, P.O. Box 69, Ellendale, ND 58436.



## Thank you for celebrating with us this summer!

Thank you to all our members who joined us this summer while we were out and about in the community! DRN employees took part in the Dickey County Fair, Ellendale; the Ransom County Fair, Lisbon; and the Sargent County Fair, Forman. We also joined several summer parades throughout the cooperative area.

In August, we had a fun time serving nearly 250 people in Gwinner and Fullerton at the Annual DRN Customer Appreciation Picnics. DRN also sponsored free Wi-Fi Internet to visitors at this year's Annual Sheyenne Valley Arts & Crafts Association (SVACA) Marketplace held in Fort Ransom.

Thank you to all our customers who attended these special events! Watch for DRN ReadITech at fun, family events near you next year as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary!

## THANK YOU MEMBERS

We can't wait to continue the fun next year!

# WATCH YOUR FAVORITE SPORTS ON BEK TV



For a full schedule visit [www.bek.tv](http://www.bek.tv)

Catch local sports action on BEK TV East - channel 104, BEK Sports 2 - channel 196, and BEK Sports 3 - channel 195

Date	Description	Time	Channel
Tue. Oct. 8	High School Volleyball <b>LaMoure-LM</b> vs <b>Edgeley-KM</b>	7:30 PM	195/196
Tue. Oct. 8	High School Volleyball Minot High vs Bismarck Century	7:30 PM	104
Thu. Oct. 10	High School Volleyball Dickinson High vs St. Mary's Central	7:00 PM	104
Fri. Oct. 11	High School Football <b>LaMoure-LM</b> vs <b>Sargent County</b>	7:00 PM	195/196
Fri. Oct. 11	High School Football Jamestown vs St. Mary's Central	7:00 PM	104
Sat. Oct. 12	College Football University of Jamestown vs Valley City State U.	1:00 PM	104
Tue. Oct. 15	High School Volleyball Carrington vs <b>Oakes</b>	7:30 PM	195/196
Tue. Oct. 15	High School Volleyball Minot High vs Minot North	7:00 PM	104
Thu. Oct. 17	High School Football Minot High vs Bismarck Legacy	6:30 PM	104
Mon. Oct 21	High School Volleyball Linton-HMB vs Shiloh Christian	7:00 PM	104
Tue. Oct 22	High School Volleyball Grant County vs Wilton-Wing	7:30 PM	195/196
Thu. Oct 24	High School Volleyball <b>Oakes</b> vs Linton-HMB	7:30 PM	195/196
Thu. Oct 24	High School Volleyball Fargo South vs Fargo Davies	7:30 PM	104
Fri. Oct 25	High School Football Fargo Shanley vs Fargo Davies	6:30 PM	104
Mon. Oct 28	High School Volleyball <b>Ellendale</b> vs <b>South Border</b>	7:30 PM	195/196
Tue. Oct 29	High School Volleyball Fargo North vs Fargo Davies	7:00 PM	104
Thu. Oct 31	High School Volleyball Bismarck Century vs Bismarck High	7:00 PM	104
Tue. Nov 5	High School Volleyball Jamestown vs Bismarck Century	7:00 PM	104
Thu. Nov 7	High School Volleyball Grand Forks Central vs Fargo South	7:00 PM	104

On the go? Stream games online at [bek.tv/watch-now](http://bek.tv/watch-now)



# IT PAYS \$

## TO BE A COOPERATIVE MEMBER!

**B**y subscribing to DRN services, you instantly become a member of our cooperative.

DRN not only provides you with superior service, but you are a member of the cooperative!

As a cooperative, DRN operates on a non-profit basis and return profits to members through the allocation of capital credits based on usage, reinforcing our commitment to your community's success.

As a member, you're not just a customer; you're also a part owner. This distinctive status gives you exclusive benefits that other communications providers can't offer their customers.



### SHARE OF PROFITS

Any net profit is allocated back to members in the form of Capital Credits. Generally, these checks or bill credits are paid out yearly, usually during the month of December, when the Board of Directors authorizes a credit for that year.

The word 'Patronage' on your statement represents the dollar amount you spent on local telephone and/or Internet service with DRN for a particular year. The line "Credits" represents the amount of profits DRN has allocated to your account based on what your patronage was.

If you are no longer a DRN member, your capital credits remain in your name until they are retired. It is important that you ensure DRN has your current address so that a check can be mailed to you. If a member is deceased, capital credits can be paid out in a lump sum payment at a discounted rate or can be transferred into the name of another individual.

### Words to Know

**Cooperative:** A cooperative is a business owned by those who use its services.

**Patronage:** Patronage is the money you give the cooperative for the services they provide you.

**Capital Credits:** After expenses are deducted from revenues, margins are allocated back to our member-owners in the form of capital credits.

**Allocation:** Allocation is the amount of capital credits that you've earned based on the total amount of services you purchased in relation to the total amount purchased by all members.

**Retirement:** At the discretion of the Board of Directors, capital credits are refunded (or paid out) to members. This is called retirement.



# VACATION RATES FOR SNOWBIRDS

Going south for the winter and wondering what to do with your telecommunications services while you're gone? DRN offers vacation rates for customers who leave their residence for less than six months.

You can lower your monthly bill by putting your services on vacation rate. To place your service on vacation rate, simply call DRN at 344-5000 to sign up or request online at [drn.coop](http://drn.coop). A one-time service fee of \$25 applies. There is no charge to reconnect within six months of placing service on vacation rate.

## 2025 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

### Attention parents of high school seniors (or students)!

DRN is passionate about supporting area youth and is proud to announce it will continue its Scholarship Program in 2025 and will again participate in the Foundation for Rural Services (FRS) Scholarship. Students will need to complete both online applications separately.

**Watch for a new scholarship application at [drn.coop](http://drn.coop). DRN will begin accepting applications December 15, 2024 for the 2025 scholarship program.**

High school seniors are eligible if they attend a high school in one of the Cooperative exchanges and/or their parents or guardians are DRN subscribers. DRN awards a \$500 scholarship to two graduating seniors from each of the high schools in our territory. Applicants also must plan to attend an accredited college, university or vocational school and indicate an interest in returning to a rural community following graduation to further their career. Students meeting these criteria are encouraged to apply. DRN will also award a scholarship to a student attending the Southeast Regional Career & Technology Center and to a student majoring in business administration at Trinity Bible College (TBC).

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 28, 2025.**

**For more details and to apply online visit:  
[drn.coop/scholarship](http://drn.coop/scholarship)**

Scan with your  
smartphone to  
complete the  
applications.





# KEEP IT COOPERATIVE

## Money. Food. Housing. Electricity. Broadband.

Big corporations may dominate the headlines when it comes to providing services, but a locally grown business model is steadily helping people connect with each of these basic needs: cooperatives. Such businesses, including DRN are highlighted each October as part of Cooperative Month.

The National Cooperative Business Association supports 65,000 co-ops across the United States. Some are owned by workers or farmers. Some, like DRN, are owned by people who use the services. Others are owned by businesses who pool resources. All co-ops share a simple mission: making life better in the communities they serve. From local credit unions fighting payday loan schemes to brand giants like Land O'Lakes helping farmers reach markets, co-ops are proof that when people work together, everyone wins.

"We're proud of our co-op identity," says Kent Schimke, DRN CEO/GM "Our members support us, and, in

turn, we support them with local jobs, scholarships, community donations and economic opportunities. Co-Ops connect our community, and by working together, we're all stronger."

In July, the United Nations designated 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives. To help everyone prepare, here are three ways to keep it cooperative.

**"Our members support us, and, in turn, we support them with local jobs, scholarships, community donations and economic opportunities. Co-ops connect our community, and by working together, we're all stronger."**  
**DRN CEO/GM  
Kent Schimke**

### EAT CO-OP FOOD

Cooperation tastes good. Farmer-owned dairy cooperatives account for 85% of the milk that flows through America, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prefer almond milk? Buy Blue Diamond, owned by almond

farmers. Store shelves are packed with co-op food brands, including:

- American Crystal Sugar Co. (sugar)
- Blue Diamond (almonds, crackers, milk)
- Cabot Creamery (cheese, butter)

- Equal Exchange (chocolate, coffee, tea)
- Florida's Natural Growers Inc. (orange juice, lemonade, grapefruit juice)
- Land O'Lakes (butter, eggs, cheese)
- Ocean Spray (cranberry juice, sauce & fruit)
- Organic Valley (milk, cheese, butter, eggs, sour cream)
- Sunkist Growers Inc. (oranges, grapefruit, lemons, orange juice, snacks)
- SunMaid (raisins, apricots, prunes, yogurt-covered raisins, bread)
- Tillamook Creamery (cheese, ice cream, yogurt)
- Welch Foods Inc. (grape juice, spreads, snacks)

Local:

- Rural Electric Cooperatives (Dakota Valley Electric, KEM Electric, MinnDak)
- Ag Cooperatives (Agtegra, CHS, Dakota Plains, Farmers Union)
- Credit Unions (First Community Credit Union, Dakota Plains Credit Union, Hometown Credit Union)

There are many regional co-op brands, too. The best way to find co-op food is at a community-owned food store.



Food co-op members have a say in what community stores stock on their shelves. There are 230 food co-ops serving communities in 39 states, and they are popular. National Co-op Grocers reports combined sales of \$2.5 billion each year.

“Co-ops are essential cornerstones of their communities,” says NCG Chief Executive Officer C.E. Pugh. “Co-ops lead all food retailers nationwide in percentage of sales derived from local, organic and fair-trade foods and products.” According to NCG’s 2023 Food Impact Report, the average food co-op works with 169 local farms and producers. That’s the impact of keeping food cooperative.

## BANK WITH CO-OPS

America’s Credit Unions reports that credit union members are 1.4 times more likely than non-members to receive personalized financial counseling.

“Credit unions support and advocate for innovative programs, including pilot programs for first-time home buyers. Credit unions are community-oriented and have an interest in any programs focused on vulnerable and underserved communities,” says America’s Credit

Unions Regulatory Advocacy Senior Counsel Amanda Smith. Since they are not profit-driven, credit unions often offer lower loan rates and higher return rates than bank rate averages, according to *Datatrak*. Credit unions also pioneered payday alternative loans to help members learn to save money and avoid cycles of debt.

One 1 of every 3 Americans has a credit union account. Since education and training is a shared co-op principle, many credit unions have special accounts and matching programs for children learning how to save money.

Keep money cooperative. Bank with a credit union.

## CHOOSE CO-OP SERVICE

Sometimes you don’t have a choice about who provides services to your home. Only a few states let people pick their electricity provider, for example. But a growing number of cooperatives are offering Internet access to members, competing with big providers known for tricky contracts and poor customer service. “We’re more than a broadband provider,” says Schimke. “We’re your community partner, invested in the success of every member we serve.”

When you have a choice of who provides a service in your neighborhood, keep it cooperative. When you do, you’re not just a customer—you’re a member-owner. This means you have a say in how the co-op is run and where profits are reinvested.

Locally owned service co-ops, including DRN, invest in the future of the areas they serve with scholarships, community grants and economic development efforts. “Our members support us, and we support the communities where they live,” says Kent.

Want to keep life cooperative? Sign up for service from a co-op.

## KEEP IT COOPERATIVE

Why keep life cooperative? The co-op model prioritizes people over profit and community over competition. When we keep life cooperative, we invest in a better future for everyone. From your local electric utility to international fair-trade organizations, cooperatives prove that when we work together, everyone wins.



## Ways to Keep it Cooperative

- Find a nearby food co-op through National Cooperative Grocers: [nccg.coop/find-co-op](http://nccg.coop/find-co-op).
- Open a credit union account. Get a list of credit unions in your community at [mapping.nccu.gov](http://mapping.nccu.gov).
- Attend the next DRN Annual Member Meeting on Thursday, Oct. 17 in Ellendale.

**So, the next time you’re choosing where to bank, buy your groceries or subscribe for Internet access, keep it cooperative. You’re part of a global movement that’s building stronger communities and a better world, one member at a time.**

# DRN READITECH GIVES BACK

Helping our communities connect and thrive has been a goal of DRN's for over 74 years. Over the past several months, DRN has awarded over \$13,000 in donations to area organizations looking for assistance in community sponsored events or community improvements

As a member-owned cooperative, DRN prides itself in supporting community needs throughout its service territory. As an investment in the future of area citizens and Cooperative members, DRN supports programs and projects that encourage youth, builds communities through partnerships and in education.

**"We are proud of our communities and are committed to supporting efforts that keep our area vibrant and healthy for generations," said DRN GM/CEO Kent Schimke.**

The organizations that DRN has assisted in lifting the financial burden are the Litchville's 125th Anniversary Celebration, Sargent County Museum, Milnor's Veterans Hall, Gwinner First Responders, and Fort Ransom Fire Department and First Responders.

**1 Litchville 125<sup>th</sup> Celebration**—The community of Litchville is planning their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. They are planning their celebration for July 18-20, 2025. The committee has a desire to rent bouncy house inflatables for the kids to enjoy Friday and Saturday.

**2 Sargent County Museum**—After a devastating storm struck the Sargent County Museum in Forman, ND they were faced with a challenge. After much consideration they decided to rebuild the building that was damaged. When the building has finished construction, they plan to install educational QR codes, selfie send offs, and reconnect their security cameras.

**3 Milnor Veterans Hall**—The Smith-Thune Post No.148 of the American Legion and the Gibbon-Miller Memorial Veterans Foreign Wars Post #9069 have joined together to build a Veterans Hall on Main Street of Milnor, ND. Once the building is completed it will be available to be used by community members to host their own events.

**4 Gwinner First Responders**—Gwinner First Responders need new turnout gear to keep their selfless volunteers safe from the hazardous environment that they get into while helping those in need. The cost of providing new turnout gear for each volunteer is outside of their budgetary constraints.

**Fort Ransom Fire Department & First Responders**—The Fort Ransom Fire Department and First Responders are in the process of building a new fire department to better serve the community.



# Statement of Non-Discrimination

Dickey Rural Telephone Cooperative (DRN) is a recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability shall be excluded from participation, in admission or access to, denied the benefits of or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating the nondiscrimination compliance efforts of this organization and subsidiaries is Kent Schimke, general manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

*Happy holidays*  
**& thank you for  
being a member!**

**Our offices will be closed the following days for our staff to spend time with loved ones:**

Veteran's Day • Monday, Nov. 11

Thanksgiving • Thursday, Nov. 28  
& Friday, Nov. 29

Christmas Day • Wednesday, Dec. 25

New Year's Day • Wednesday, Jan. 1

This institution is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

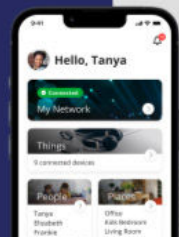


PO Box 69  
Ellendale, ND 58436



Family.  
Turkey.  
**Football.**

Time for the family huddle!



Give thanks for more than just the turkey dinner this year. Stream every touchdown together with the family, completely lag-free with super-fast Wi-Fi from DRN!

**Upgrade your speed  
& get \$100!**