

# Co-op Connection

Hamilton County Telephone Co-op

January 2018

## The Year Ahead

Hope you all had a Merry Christmas!!!

2017 proved once again to be a challenging year for the co-op. We saw a decrease in federal support that once again places additional burden on the cost of doing business in rural areas. We were able to complete several fiber projects in 2017, but unfortunately, we were forced to slow down as a result of the reduced support. However, we are not discouraged as we continue to apply strategies for the co-op's survival.

So as 2018 comes in to view, we continue to see challenges as we migrate from "Plain Old Telephone Service" to High Speed Internet.

Also, we have some new service offerings coming this year that we will be announcing very soon. I hope that you had a great 2017 and we wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

May God bless you...

Sincerely,  
Kevin Pyle  
GM/EVP



### Capital Credit Update:

As technology continues to change, the need for a landline dial tone decreases. Every year, this decline along with increased federal regulations mandating reduction in both support for rural areas and forcing access revenues to zero, becomes a little more challenging than the year before for your co-op. Our employees and staff have continued to work diligently to transform our co-op so that it may remain viable for future generations. The board of directors, after evaluating the health and status of the co-op, is pleased to again have approved a capital credit payout of approximately \$62,000 eligible to those members who had service with the co-op in 1999. The checks were mailed on December 13th. Checks will not be available for pickup in our office and cannot be applied directly toward your account.

Anyone with an outstanding balance as of this date will not receive their refund check until they have a zero balance on their account.

Thank you to all of our members who continue their support of the co-op.

### Calendar of Events:

Jan 1 - New Years Day - Closed

Jan 15 - MLK Day - Open

### New Directory Listings:

Amy Pepple 728-4559

Gloria Skropka 773-4272

Welcome to Hamilton  
County Telephone Co-op

### FUSC Percentage Changes:

The FCC released a public notice increasing the Federal Universal Service Contribution Factor (FUSC) from 18.9% to 19.5% for the second quarter. We are required to bill customers this new rate beginning January 1, 2018.

This is the charge that we all pay to help keep phone service affordable throughout the nation, especially in rural areas such as ours.

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## **Board of Director Announcement:**

The Annual Meeting will be held on Friday April 13, 2018 at the Hamilton County Senior High School Gym in McLeansboro. This year Belle Prairie 648 and Macedonia 728 exchanges will be up for Director Elections.

According to the HCTC By-laws, the nominating committees for Belle Prairie (648) and Macedonia (728) exchanges have been selected by the Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of the nominating committee to select at least one certified nominee for Director to represent their exchange for a three year term.

The nominating committee consisting of Russell Allen, Dennis Frey and Les Vaughan for the Belle Prairie exchange met on December 14, 2017. During this meeting the committee made the nomination for their exchange for a nominee to serve another three year term on the HCTC Board. The candidate nominated was Alan Monroe. The nominating committee for the 728 exchange will be meeting at the first of the year and their nomination will be announced in the February newsletter. The Co-op thanks the nominating committee for their time and service, making certain that we continue to have representation from these exchanges for the next three years.

Although the nominees as candidates have been selected, the by-laws also allows for any other certified member of these exchanges the same right in running and serving a three year term as Director for their exchange. If you are interested, you can pick up a petition (required to be signed by 10% or 15 certified members, whichever is less, of your exchange) at the co-op from the General Manager, along with the specific details and requirements of serving as a Director.

You will have until March 15 to file your certified petition with the Co-op for your name to be placed on the ballot at the annual meeting. If you are not the nominee selected by the committee and would like your name printed in the annual meeting booklet, you will need to file your petition by February 15th due to the printing lead time requirements.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on Friday, April 13th.

Kevin Pyle  
Executive Vice President &  
General Manager

### ***Board of Directors:***

647 Exchange  
Steven Douglass

648 Exchange  
Alan Monroe, Secretary

728 Exchange  
Chris Sink, President

736 Exchange  
Lemuel Gage, Vice-President

756 Exchange  
Rob Kiefer, Treasurer

757 Exchange  
Justin Woodrow

773 Exchange  
Robert Abbott



## **WIN \$10 OFF YOUR BILL!**

Complete the following questionnaire, cut out this section and mail the completed form by January 10, 2018. Your name will be placed in a drawing for \$10 off your telephone bill with HCTC. There will be two winners in January.

1. What two exchanges are up for Board re-election? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many new directory listings are there in January? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What day will the office be closed in January? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What date were capital credit checks mailed? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations to December's winners: Joshua Hamson, Martin Smith, Gary & Allison Rapp.  
They each received \$15 off their telephone bill.

**Check out our website at [www.hamiltoncom.net](http://www.hamiltoncom.net) for more information about the Co-op.**