



CONNECTIONS

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WINTER | 2015

Holiday Hours

Thursday, December 24th
Closing at 2:00 p.m.

Friday, December 25th
Closed

Friday, January 1st
Closed



POLAR

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www.thinkpolar.com

Hours

Monday-Friday / 7:30AM-5:30PM
Saturday / 8:00AM-4:30PM (assistance by phone)

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Polar Earns 2015 Smart Rural Community Award



Scott Leitzel, Twin Valley Telephone General Manager and Shirley Bloomfield, NTCA CEO, present Smart Rural Community Award to David Dunning, General Manager/CEO of Polar Communications (center).

NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, the premier national association representing nearly 900 independent, community-based telecommunications companies, recognized 12 companies in rural areas of the United States that have earned Smart Rural Community Showcase awards as part of the association's initiative to highlight efforts that make rural communities vibrant places in which to live and do business. Polar Communications was one of the chosen winners.

"It is an honor to be selected for this prestigious award, said David Dunning, General Manager/CEO of Polar Communications. Our goal has always been to bring our customers the best technology to our rural area and we are excited to be in such good company."

The goal of the NTCA Smart Rural Community initiative is to foster the development of smart communities throughout rural America and Canada by encouraging innovative implementation of broadband solutions and access to next-generation applications for distance learning, telehealth services, public safety and security.

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Polar Completes 100% Fiber Network in 2015 – Moves Forward to Approve 2016 Budget



*Polar Communications Board Members and CEO join the construction crew for the last mile of fiber plowed in the service area.
Top Row - L to R: Brian Udby, President Ron Steinke, General Manager/CEO Dave Dunning, Lori Dahl, Jon McMillan, and Chris Nelson.
Bottom Row - L to R: Cindy Hejl, Amber Meyer, and Beverly Jensen.
Not Pictured: Joe Torgerson*

The 2016 capital budget was approved by Polar’s Board of Directors at the November board meeting. From 2005-2015 the focus of this budget has been on building the company’s fiber network. Polar Communications announced recently that its fiber network is now 100% complete. For ten years the company has dedicated each construction season to bringing fiber to every residence and business in its service territory.

“Building this network has taken a lot of planning and coordinating,” said David Dunning, General Manger/CEO of Polar Communications. “There is still a void across the US in data infrastructure, so we are very proud of our fiber network in rural North Dakota.”

Broadband was a luxury in the late 90’s, however it is now a necessity for running a business. Fiber optic connectivity is the fastest and most reliable, which is necessary for the applications available today.

“Since starting this project in 2005, our goal has always been to bring our customers the caliber of service they will need in the future,” said Ron Steinke, Polar Communications Board President. “The team at Polar Communications has put us right where we need to be.”

The last phase of this project will include splicing and cutting over the remaining customers to the fiber network, now that placing the fiber in the ground has been completed. The final work will continue through the spring of 2016. Next year’s budget consists of enhancing the network capacity through Dense Wave Division Multiplexing optical technology.

Smart Rural Community

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Smart Rural Community provides educational programming, matching grant resources and an award program to recognize top-performing communities. NTCA recognized member companies that embody Smart Rural Community principles.

The following broadband providers received national recognition:

- Arvig (Perham, Minn.)
- Big Bend Telephone Co. (Alpine, Texas)
- Citizens Mutual Telephone Cooperative (Bloomfield, Iowa)
- Endeavor Communications (Cloverdale, Ind.)
- Lakeland Communications Group (Milltown, Wis.)
- Madison Telephone Co. (Staunton, Ill.)
- NineStar Connect (Greenfield, Ind.)
- Paul Bunyan Communications (Bemidji, Minn.)
- Polar Communications Mutual Aid Corp. (Park River, N.D.)
- Rainbow Telecommunications Association (Everest, Kan.)
- South Slope Cooperative Communications (North Liberty, Iowa)
- Tri-County Telephone Association (Council Grove, Kan.)



Watch for this sign coming to your area soon.

NTCA Smart Rural Community award recipients were recognized at a gathering of more than 1,500 rural telecom leaders in Boston. In addition to receiving national and local recognition for their extraordinary efforts, the selected Smart Rural Community award recipients will join recipients of prior years awards to formulate best practices and assist other rural communities in the implementation of innovative broadband-enabled solutions to drive economic and community strength in rural areas throughout the nation.

Win great prizes!



JOIN OUR FREE COLLEGE FOOTBALL CONTEST!

Games start December 19th

PLAY THE POLAR BOWL CHALLENGE

Pick the winning teams of this year's bowl games and you could win a great prize from Polar.



Sign up at:
polarbowlchallenge.com

2015 Service Awards

Six employees and two directors were recognized for their years of service at the annual Christmas dinner in December. We would like to congratulate all of them and thank them for their years of loyal and dedicated service in the telecommunications industry.

Employees



JODY TIBERT
5 YEARS



BOBBI BROUILLARD
10 YEARS



BOB HOFFARTH
10 YEARS



CAROL LAHAISE
10 YEARS



JON RUSSELL
10 YEARS



ROGER HAHN
35 YEARS

Directors



RON STEINKE
18 YEARS



BEVERLY JENSEN
18 YEARS

Polar Employees Donate \$2100 to Edinburg Quick Response



Polar Employee Wendy Machart's charity of choice was drawn as this year's donation recipient. Wendy is pictured with Edinburg Quick Response Secretary/Treasurer Chuck Kartes, Vice-President Suzy Kartes and President Pete Thingstad.

Each year Polar employees have the opportunity to take part in the Casual Clothes for Charity program. Every Friday those participating are allowed to wear jeans for \$1. The total money collected this year was \$2,100. All participating employees submitted a charity of their choice for the funds to be given to. One charity was randomly drawn, and this year's recipient is Edinburg Quick Response.

Other charities submitted for the drawing include the Hoople Rural Fire Department, Walsh County Salvation Army, Walsh Winners 4-H Club, Mountain Fire Department, Crystal Quick Response, Lankin Fire Department, PRAS High School Music Department, Lyric Theater, Pregnancy Help Center, Park River Bible Camp, Park River Baseball Boosters, Walsh County 4-H Program, Adams Fire Department, Walsh County Food Pantry, Walsh County Toys for Tots, Edinburg Fire Department and Park River Hockey Boosters

Polar employees are happy to have this opportunity to give back to the communities in which they live and work!

Scholarship Opportunities Available from Polar

In support of continuing education for rural youth, Polar Communications and its subsidiaries are pleased to offer high school and college students the opportunity to apply for the following scholarships. Applications can be found online at www.thinkpolar.com/scholarships.

Polar's John G. Walters Scholarship:

Five \$1,000 scholarships will be issued to graduating high school seniors from our service area who plan to continue their education at an accredited 2-year or 4-year college/university or vocational-technical school. Parents or guardians must be Polar customers.

Polar's Leadership Scholarship:

Polar Communications, in cooperation with its retired employees, offers the Polar Leadership Scholarship. This \$2,000 scholarship will be awarded to students who are involved in their school, serve their communities, achieve leadership roles in activities, functions or organizations, and strive to reach their highest potential. Other considerations include any work/internship experience outside of school. Applicants must be a senior in high school or freshman or sophomore in college and their parents or guardians must be Polar customers.

Foundation for Rural Services (FRS) Scholarships:

FRS was established in 1994 and, along with the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA), promotes, educates and advocates to the public rural telecommunications issues. Polar is proud to be a member of NTCA and supports FRS in this worthy endeavor. If a graduating high school senior from our service area is selected for one of the FRS national scholarships (\$2,000 each), Polar will contribute an additional \$500, bringing the FRS award to \$2,500.

In addition, the FRS will award four \$5,000 **Staurulakis Family Scholarships** with a preference to those applicants who plan to major in math, science, engineering or medicine; two \$1,500 **TMS Scholarships**; one \$2,500 **Everett Kneece Return to Rural America Scholarship** and the **West Kentucky and Tennessee Telecommunications Cooperative Scholarship** awarding up to \$15,000 to rural students.

Polar has simplified the application process for high school seniors to apply for all seven scholarship programs using one application. **All scholarship applications must be sent to Polar by February 16, 2016.**

2016 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

The Foundation for Rural Service's (FRS) annual Youth Tour is one of the most visible examples of the foundation's involvement with, and commitment to, rural youth. This year's Youth Tour will be held June 4-8, 2016. Each year, in collaboration with NTCA member companies, FRS brings rural students from across the United States to Washington, D.C., for a four-day tour of some of the most historical sites in the nation. While there, students also learn about the telecommunications industry, as well as the regulatory and legislative processes. Educational sessions on these topics are greatly enhanced by site visits to the U.S. Capitol and the FCC to meet with industry leaders and members of Congress. The students are also given ample time to explore the nation's capital and its many attractions.

To qualify, the student's parents must be subscribers of Polar, and the student must be age 16 or 17 years old at the time of the Youth Tour. Along with submitting an application, students are required to write an essay on modern technology. Deadline for entries is March 1, 2016. Applications can be obtained from your high school guidance counselor or online at www.thinkpolar.com.



Please encourage students to participate in these great opportunities. Applications and information can be found on Polar's website at www.thinkpolar.com. For questions on any of the scholarships, please contact Carol LaHaise at 701-284-4361 or email: clahaise@polartel.com.

A new choice in TV
entertainment is here!

YOURTV



Live broadcast TV | Movies | TV Episodes | Music | Games | & More

YourTV allows you to access live, local channels plus hundreds of video, music and gaming options over your Polar broadband Internet connection via streaming. Streaming is a term used to describe how content (a movie or TV episode for example) is delivered to your TV, over the Internet – as opposed to more traditional methods of watching content, like over-the-air antennas or cable TV.

With YourTV you will be able to watch your Polar Cablevision local community access channels, local school channels and all of your local network channels in high-definition. You will also have access to a wide range of free channels, subscribe to popular streaming services—like Netflix and Hulu—rent the latest TV episode, or own a major blockbuster. You'll have a ton of movies and TV episodes to choose from, and innovative features that make it simple to stream.

EQUIPMENT

YourTV works with current generation Roku 3 players and Roku's Streaming Stick.

- Roku Box - \$99.00
- Roku Stick - \$49.00

Equipment prices subject to change.

INSTALLATION

- Self Install - free
- Professional Install - cost varies depending on time and materials used

2000+ CHANNELS!
only \$19.95/month

Includes set up for 1 device. Additional devices will be charged a one-time \$25 activation fee per unit. There is no limit to the number of devices you may have.

INCLUDES THESE POLAR CABLEVISION CHANNELS:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Community Channels (2) | WDAY'Z Xtra! |
| CW | MeTV |
| Local/Regional Weather | WDAZ/ABC HD |
| Titan Vision | KVLY/NBC HD |
| Aggie Vision | KXJB/CBS HD |
| Tornado Vision | KBRR/FOX HD |
| Raider Vision | KGFE/PBS HD |

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Clip this page and keep it with your Polar directory



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POLAR

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PO Box 270 | Park River, ND 58270

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Lori Dahl, Lakota
Cynthia Hejl, Arthur
Brian Udby, Lankin
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David L. Dunning



Holiday Open House

December 14-18, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
110 4th St. E, Park River

*Stop in and enjoy cookies,
cider and coffee!*