

# CONNECTIONS

PUBLISHED BY POLAR COMMUNICATIONS AND ITS SUBSIDIARIES

Fall 2022

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**POLAR**

# POLAR WEBSITE

## *new look*

You may have noticed some changes to the polar website when visiting recently. All the same features and information are there, we've just refreshed the look!

### QUICK LINK AND SERVICES

We've added quick links to the top for the most visited pages - webmail, watchTVeverywhere, online bill pay, e-directory, scholarships and careers. For access to a specific service, click on the image boxes below the rotating banner.

### NOTIFICATIONS

Watch for a scrolling message bar across the top to alert you of important information such as outages or scheduled service maintenance.

### CONTACT US

We make it easy for you to connect with us. Click the contact us button at the top for phone numbers, office hours, and address. Click the Chat with us! button in the lower left and a service representative will assist you online.

[www.polarcomm.com](http://www.polarcomm.com)



# ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Every person in America should have access to quality, affordable telecommunications service. This principle of "Universal Service" has been the goal of the telecommunications industry for decades. To achieve the Universal Service goal, carriers have access to a fund that is generated by contributions from the telecommunications providers in the United States. Telecommunications companies draw from the fund to provide programs that support telecommunications services nationwide. Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic monthly telephone and/or broadband service up to \$9.25 per month.

Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) offers a monthly \$10.00 credit on your landline telephone service for customers in Minnesota. This program is administered and supervised by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission of the Department of Commerce.

## ELIGIBILITY

There are income guidelines for both programs. Your income must be at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. You qualify if you are in one of these qualifying programs; Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SNAP or food stamps, SSI, Veterans Pension or Survivors Pension Benefit. Telephone service must be in your name to qualify for the credit.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO APPLY

<https://www.polarcomm.com/resources/phone-assistance/>



# 2022-23 DIRECTORY

You will soon be receiving your new Polar directory in the mail. Extra copies can be obtained at our office. Please contact us if you receive more directories than you need and we will update your account. You may recycle old directories by dropping them off at our Park River office.

[View the Polar directory online via the link on our website or at \[www.polarphonebook.com\]\(http://www.polarphonebook.com\)](#)

# TRUST YOUR SECURITY TO THE EXPERTS

## Polar Security & Surveillance Systems

When it comes to protecting your farm or business, you can never be too careful. Trust Polar's professional technicians to take care of installing your camera system—so you can rest assured that everything is running smoothly. Sure, you could get a cheap camera system on Amazon, but when you purchase a customized security system from Polar, you get a state-of-the-art system that meets your budget AND your specific needs.



Whether you're looking for a professional multi-camera system, a hidden camera, a digital video recorder or a turnkey security setup, you'll find the perfect solution here. We offer an incredible variety of gear – all tested and curated by our security experts. Get everything you need to protect and monitor your home and business. Video surveillance lets you keep watch, because you always feel better when you can see for yourself that things are okay.

VISIT [POLARCOMM.COM/SECURITY](http://POLARCOMM.COM/SECURITY) FOR MORE INFORMATION

*Act now!*

**Receive \$100 off your installation when  
you sign up between October 1-31**



# SCAM ROBOTEXTS ARE RISING THREAT

## Text Message Scammers Seek Money, Information, and Engagement

The FCC's Robocall Response Team is alerting consumers to the rising threat of robotexts. Substantial increases in consumer complaints to the FCC, reports by non-government robocall and robotext blocking services, and anecdotal and news reporting make it clear that text messages are increasingly being used by scammers to target American consumers.

### WHAT ARE ROBOTEXT SCAMS:

Scam text message senders want you to engage with them. Like robocallers, a robotexter may use fear and anxiety to get you to interact. Texts may include false-but-believable claims about unpaid bills, package delivery snafus, bank account problems, or law enforcement actions against you. They may provide confusing information – as if they were texting someone else –, incomplete information, or utilize other techniques to spur your curiosity and engagement.

Some scammers may be after your money, but others may simply be trying to collect personal information or confirm that a number is active for use in future scams. Do not respond or click on any links in the message. If you think a text might be legitimate, you should independently look up contact information and reach out directly to the company, government agency, or law enforcement.

### HOW BIG A PROBLEM IS THIS:

The FCC tracks consumer complaints – rather than call or text volume – and complaints about unwanted text messages have risen steadily in recent years from approximately 5,700 in 2019, 14,000 in 2020, 15,300 in 2021, to 8,500 through June 30, 2022. In addition, some independent reports estimate billions of robotexts each month – for example, RoboKiller estimates consumers received over 12 billion robotexts in June.

### WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR:

Scam text message – also known as “smishing” – sometimes utilize:

- Unknown numbers
- Misleading information
- Misspellings to avoid blocking/filtering tools
- 10-digit or longer phone numbers
- Mysterious links
- Sales pitches
- Incomplete information

### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- Do not respond to suspicious texts, even if the message requests that you “text STOP” to end messages.
- Do not click on any links.
- Do not provide any information via text or website.
- File a complaint.
- Forward unwanted texts to SPAM (7726).
- Delete all suspicious texts.

- 
- Update your smart device OS and security apps.
  - Consider installing anti-malware software.
  - Review companies' policies regarding opting out of text alerts and selling/sharing your information.
  - Review text blocking tools in your mobile phone settings, available third-party apps, and your mobile phone carrier's offerings.

### WHAT THE FCC IS DOING:

- Updating Robotext Rules: FCC Chairwoman Rosenworcel proposed a new proceeding that would look to require mobile phone companies to block likely illegal robotexts and would consider how caller ID authentication-like technology might be applied to text messaging. The proposal is supported by the Chairwoman but remains pending before the full Commission.
- FCC Rules: The FCC prohibits autodialed text messages from being sent to your mobile phone unless you previously gave consent to receive the message or the message is sent for emergency purposes. The FCC has repeatedly made clear that phone companies can block suspicious text messaging as a default policy based on reasonable analytics.
- Enforcement: The FCC reviews consumer complaints and other available information for possible violations of anti-robocalling and spoofing laws. For purposes of these laws, the FCC considers text messaging to be a type of call. The FCC's Enforcement Bureau issued an enforcement advisory on this topic.
- Partnerships: The FCC is partnering with state Attorneys General around the country to pool robocall investigation resources and combat robocalls and robotexts. The state leaders, like the FCC, have seen an increasing volume of scam robotexts.

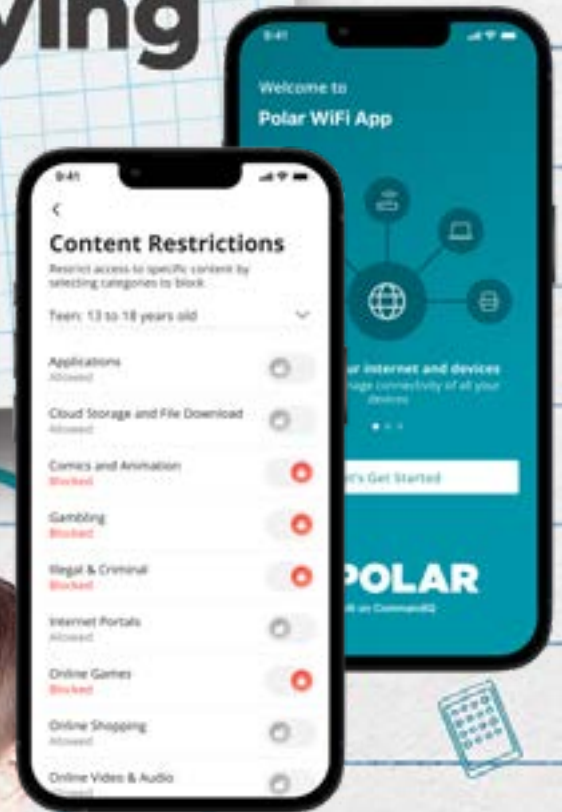
**Bottom line:** Stop before you engage and avoid the urge to respond. According to the FBI, Americans lost more than \$1.4 billion to cybercrime in 2017, and a significant portion of that is attributed to personal data breaches, identity theft, confidence fraud and credit card fraud totaling hundreds of millions of dollars.

You can file complaints about consumer fraud with the Federal Trade Commission at <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov>.

# Keep them studying not gaming...

Oversee what your kids are doing with

## Polar Ultimate WiFi



Internet access doesn't need to be one size fits all. With Polar Ultimate WiFi, you can customize online access based on user profiles you create for your family members. Create profiles for users to filter inappropriate content, block websites and categories, and set screen time limits with parental controls.

- ✓ Set screen time limits and bedtimes.
- ✓ Block entire categories, apps and websites.
- ✓ Remove inappropriate and/or explicit content for users

Establish a healthy technology balance in your home with intentional content decisions and enforced time limits.

## Make Your WiFi Work For You!

Scan the code to learn more and  
download the app, or visit  
[polarcomm.com/broadband-wifi](https://polarcomm.com/broadband-wifi)

# HIGHER SPEEDS, LOWER PRICES!

We are happy to announce we are now offering faster broadband Internet speeds at lower prices! Polar is committed to being an innovative industry leader, delivering the fastest speeds that meet the evolving needs of our customers. The number of devices connecting in your household has a direct effect on your experience. These include laptops, tablets, smartphones, TVs, video games, and home appliances. More devices operating at the same time requires more bandwidth.

## 100Mbps

Fast speeds for streaming, e-mail, web surfing, and everyday Internet use.

### Residential

**\$47.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$57.95**

### Business

**\$62.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$72.95**

## 500Mbps

Fast speeds for streaming, gaming, working, and learning from home on multiple devices.

### Residential

**\$67.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$77.95**

### Business

**\$82.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$92.95**

## 1Gig

Incredibly fast speed for everything you could dream of doing on the Internet. You name it, this speed can handle it!

### Residential

**\$97.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$107.95**

### Business

**\$112.95**

*broadband only  
no landline*

**\$122.95**

Bring your WiFi connection outdoors, to your yard, deck or garage with mesh extenders. Mesh extenders work seamlessly with your Polar WiFi to enlarge your network. Only \$4.95/month.

# WiFi

With Polar WiFi and the Polar WiFi app, you're able to take control of your home network and manage your connected devices. Attractive and intuitive, the Polar WiFi app makes it easier to create a tailored WiFi experience that gives you complete control over every aspect of your connected home. Download on the App Store or Google Play by searching Polar Wi-Fi.

*Best value  
and experience!*

### ULTIMATE WiFi - \$12.95/mo.

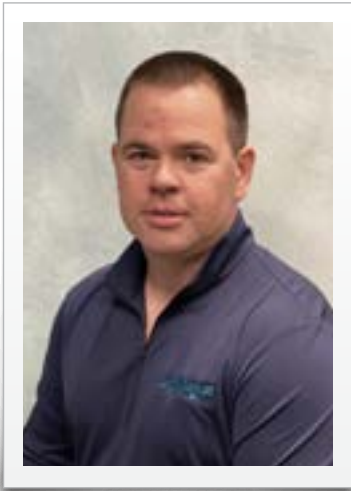
- » WiFi 6 GigaSpire Blast Router
- » Optimized equipment placement
- » Polar WiFi App: network control
- » ProtectIQ: network threat protection
- » ExperienceIQ: manage content, devices, applications, screen time, usage, and more
- » Worry-free remote technical support

### PREMIUM WiFi - \$9.95/mo.

- » WiFi 6 GigaSpire Blast Router
- » Optimized equipment placement
- » Polar WiFi App: network control
- » ProtectIQ: network threat protection
- » Worry-free remote technical support



# EMPLOYEE *news*



## **MATTHEW ALMEN PROMOTED TO IT SUPERVISOR**

We are pleased to announce that Matthew Almen has been promoted to Information Technology Supervisor at Polar.

Matthew began his career at Polar in June 2007 as a Central Office Technician. He most recently held the position of Network Technician III. As Information Technology Supervisor, Matthew will oversee the IT department in maintaining the current computer network and related equipment for Polar's information service's needs. He will also provide consultation of network and security IT services to Polar business customers.

Matthew is a Park River native and has an associate degree in Microcomputer and Network Technology from Northwest Technical College in Moorhead. He resides in rural Grafton with his wife and four children.



## **AMY THOMPSON IS NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

We are happy to announce that Amy Thompson has accepted the role of Administrative Assistant at Polar.

Amy began her career at Polar in March 2021, as a Customer Service Representative. In her new position as Administrative Assistant, she will provide support for the CEO, leadership team, and board of directors. Duties include scheduling meetings, maintaining appointment calendars, coordinating travel, maintaining files, and data management.

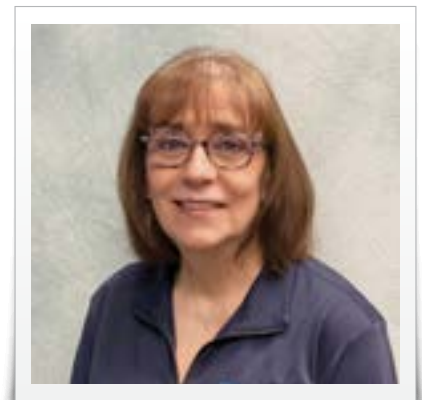
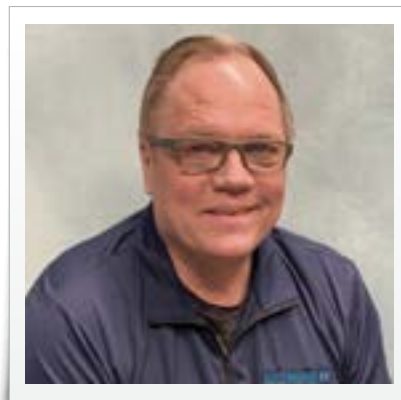
Prior to her career at Polar, Amy worked for Grand Forks Public Schools as an Administrative Assistant and Paraprofessional. After residing in Larimore, North Dakota for several years, Amy and her family recently moved to Gilby, North Dakota where they enjoy peaceful rural living.

## **ROGER SETNESS & CAROL LAHAISE RETIRE**

Roger Setness retired August 2022 after a 36 year career with Polar. His most recent position was as a Field Technician.

Carol LaHaise will retire October 2022 after 17 years with Polar. Carol worked as the Administrative Assistant.

Our employees are our greatest asset. These employees worked hard each day to give our customers the best experience possible. We value and will miss their work ethic, dedication, and talents.





# *in the* **COMMUNITY**



*Polar employees donate backpacks and school supplies to Lakota Elementary.*



*We participated in several parades throughout the summer.*



*We served a tailgate meal to support the Park River Area School boosters*





# TECH TIP

## Take Better Smartphone Photos

These days, snapping a selfie or documenting your dinner is as simple as tapping a button. But if you really want to preserve your memories and impress your Instagram followers, there are a few extra steps you can take to up your photography game.

Today, we are sharing a few tips and tricks to take the best photos with your smartphone. If you are more of a visual learner, watch our latest Tech Tip video to follow along with Tech Expert Katie.

Trick number one is to set your camera to HDR mode, which brings out the details in your picture and creates a better balance of colors. From your phone's camera settings, you can choose to enable Auto HDR. Shooting in HDR does take a few extra milliseconds, so avoid using it on fast-moving subjects or when you can't keep your phone steady.

Next, follow the rule of thirds—a trick as old as photography itself. According to the rule of thirds, an image is split into a grid of nine equal blocks. Try to get the most interesting parts of your image, like a group of faces or a city skyline, near the corners of these segments where the grid lines meet. To make this even easier, enable the built-in grid setting from either your camera screen or your phone's settings.

As a general rule, natural lighting is going to make for the best photos, but that doesn't mean the fun has to end when the sun goes down. Many newer models come with a built-in Night Mode to capture more detail and brighten your shots in low-light situations. But even without this handy tool, you can improve your evening shots by adjusting the exposure. Simply tap the screen and drag the exposure meter up or down to your desired brightness.

Finally, don't be afraid to explore. Most smartphone cameras come with a multitude of tools, modes, and filters to tweak things like color and contrast before you even capture an image. Play around with them to discover a style that works for you.

That's it for this edition of Tech Tips! Check back soon for another tip to make your technology work for you.



*Learn More!*

Is your Internet taking longer than usual to load? Are you wondering how to use the latest video conferencing software? Whatever your tech needs, Tech Tips from Polar is here to help. We provide the knowledge and tools you need to make your technology work for you, all in a series of short, entertaining how-to blogs and videos. Scan the QR code using your cell phone camera app to learn more!

# POLAR E-BILL MOBILE APP

Polar's eBill Mobile App provides a wide range of options for managing your Polar account. Pay your bill safely and securely, view your billing statements, check your usage, look up information from our online directory, and more!


Log in using your existing Polar E-Statement account username and password. If you don't have an account set up, use your most recent invoice to register by going to polarcomm.com and clicking on PAY MY BILL and then Register here.

Please contact us if you have any questions or need help setting up your Polar E-Statement account. We are open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and can be reached at 701-284-7221 or customerservice@polartel.com.



*Download*  
in the App Store  
or Google Play  
by searching Polar eBill.



 Clip this page and keep it with your Polar directory

## DIRECTORY UPDATES

Butters Marty D	1988 23 Ave NE Mekinock.....	701-747-0565	McMillan Farm Shop	5455 Co Rd 12B Fordville.....	701-229-3383
Draxton Misti	2386 1 Ave NE Hatton .....	701-581-3005	Nelson Brian & Pam	farm Crystal.....	701-657-2113
Eidsness Farm Shop Shane	9842 55th St NE Brocket.....	701-655-3654	North Valley Contracting	116 Eugene Ave Park River.....	701-284-7766
Friedman Mitchell	.....	701-284-7185	Park River Hardware	409 Briggs Ave S Park River.....	701-284-7455
Galumbus William	1135 25 St NE Emerado .....	701-594-5797	Petersen James	810 Park St W Park River.....	701-284-6160
Gillespie Vernon	301 County Road 12B Park River.....	701-284-6014	Peterson Zelma	301 County Road 12B Park River.....	701-284-6438
Gray Dale	106 S Adams St Edmore.....	701-644-2220	Skavhaug Kevin L.	212 Park Ave S Park River.....	701-284-7798
Gylten Wallace E	325 35 St NE Northwood .....	701-587-5292	Swallow Kathryn J	301 Hill Ave N Park River .....	701-284-6571
Hamel Louis	102 5 St W Lakota .....	701-247-2329	Trana Elaine	res Park River.....	701-284-6521
Hancock Donn F	845 25 St NE Emerado .....	701-594-2102	Valkyrie Fitness Training, LLC	101 Main St N Lakota .....	701-247-2105
Holen Michael	121 2 Ave E Whitman.....	701-259-2133	Veum Daniel J.	801 Wadge Ave S Park River .....	701-284-6017
Hoople Farmers Grain Company	4051 Elevator Ave Hoople .....	701-894-6113	Vinny's Septic Service	13759 Highway 5 Cavalier.....	701-265-4611
McLean Georgia Ann	.....	701-543-4140	Williams Ruth	410 Wadge Ave S Park River .....	701-284-6293



PO Box 270 | 110 4th St E  
Park River, ND 58270

## CONNECTIONS

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[www.thinkpolar.com](http://www.thinkpolar.com)

### Business Office:

701.284.7221  
800.284.7222  
[customerservice@polartel.com](mailto:customerservice@polartel.com)

### Board of Directors:

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Lori Dahl, Lakota  
Cynthia Hejl, Arthur  
Brian Udby, Lankin  
Chris Nelson, Edinburg  
James Longtin, Neche  
Wes Welch, Park River  
Gordon Johnson, Cavalier  
Dan Johnson, Hoople

### Chief Executive Officer:

Karl Blake



**GIG-CAPABLE  
PROVIDER**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider  
and employer.

# Celebrating 8000

## BROADBAND INTERNET CUSTOMERS

We completed our 100% fiber network in 2015 and since then have been the leading provider of the fastest broadband Internet service in the Red River Valley. Our goal is to keep you in-touch, logged on, entertained, and communicating without complications. As a local telecommunications provider, Polar has been on the cutting edge of technology for over 70 years. We are committed to providing the most advanced products and services as well as the best customer service possible. Thank you to our over 8000 customers, and growing!

