



The Communicator

Your Complete Communication Services Provider
Telephone, Long Distance, Wireless, Cable Television, Paging, Internet, Web Hosting

July 2008

19th St. & Cyclone Ave., Harlan, IA 51537 • (712) 744-3131 • fmctc@fmctc.com • www.fmctc.com

It's a busy summer at FMCTC

Construction season is here. Crews are busy engineering, constructing, and upgrading the FMCTC plant and installing new services to homes and businesses. Crews will add almost 14 miles of fiber optics throughout the FMCTC territory, and bury more than fifty new drops to replace old copper and coaxial cable and hook up new customers.

This summer's major projects include:

- **Irwin Town:** FMCTC's Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) project is moving full steam ahead this summer. This advanced fiber-optic network is the first fiber optic network in Shelby County which will provide fiber all the way to customers' homes and offices. Crews have already buried main fiber routes throughout the town and installed individual drops to each home or business. FMCTC technicians are now opening customer pedestals and splicing the fiber in preparation for the new racks and distribution equipment which will soon be installed in the Irwin Central Office. (766-3246)
- **Manilla Town:** Crews are burying interduct and cable throughout Manilla including the new housing addition on the east side of town. Crews are also replacing some main cable tv lines and customer pedestals.
- **Manilla Rural:** Crews are burying fiber from the Manilla Central Office to rural areas surrounding Manilla. This will allow us to provide new services to customers living in that area. (235-5533)
- **Highway 44 east of Harlan:** Crews are burying fiber optic cables beginning at Southwest Avenue in Town Harlan, following east underneath the

Nishnabotna River and extending out to Oak Road. Additional fibers are continuing east out to Quince Road for future expansion of FMCTC's Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) project.

- **FMCTC Service Territory:** Crews are burying telephone and cable drops to new customers. Crews are replacing drops that were temporarily laid on the top of the ground until the weather and ground warmed up. Any customer that has a drop laying on the ground, please call us at 744-3131 to confirm when we will be in your area to permanently bury that cable.
- **Harlan Town:** Crews are preparing for the new Dye Street housing development in north Harlan.
- **Digital Television:** Technicians are preparing FMCTC's cable tv system for the analog to digital conversion which will occur in February, 2009. Techs are also assisting FMCTC cable tv customers as they install their new high definition TVs as some customers are realizing their home's wiring is not adequate for a high definition signal.
- **New DSL & wireless Internet customers:** Techs are busy installing these new services to homes of FMCTC customers.

The entire process of plant construction and installation is a very lengthy process. First, crews do the location and marking of utility and private user lines already in place. In the next phase, crews bury the main cable routes throughout each Exchange. The crews then plow down for installation of the cable from these main routes to various locations in town and in the country.



Boring orange colored interduct and cable in a Manilla alley.



WWII Veteran Kenneth Martin (center) of Hancock, Iowa, talks about his military experiences with Lee Nelson. Nelson, along with Harlanite Russell Adams, have documented the wartime experiences of almost 100 veterans. Also pictured is Kenneth's wife, Margaret.

Veterans share experiences

A growing list of veterans, especially from World War II, are sharing their wartime experiences and documenting them for posterity thanks to the passion of two local men. Russell Adams and Lee Nelson, both of rural Harlan, began this project about eight years ago and have compiled the taped stories of almost 100 veterans. Their project offers up example after shining example of normal Americans who answered the call of their country.

The veterans' stories are a valuable record for their family and will preserve for future generations experiences that are unique and are a part of history. "It's good stuff," says Nelson, "and I know the veteran's family will appreciate it and be interested in it."

The interviews are full of regular GIs who did their part for the war effort. They include first-hand accounts

of those who fought war on both the home front and the battle front. Stories are from U.S. Navy Pilots, a U.S. Navy Heavy Equipment Operator, a U.S. Army Medic, a U.S. Air Force Turret Gunner on B-17 bombers, a U.S. Navy Radar Specialist, a U.S. Army Infantry Sharpshooter and so many others. Some landed on Omaha Beach at Normandy, some flew and sailed and slogged through various theatres of war, and some suffered the degradations of capture. Some never saw combat.

"Regardless of how they were involved in the WWII, these veterans were called and they served," says Nelson. "That matters. We want to record as many stories for posterity as possible." Any veteran who lives in Shelby County or a bordering county is encouraged to be a part of this very important project. Interviews are being scheduled first with World War II Veterans. As the project advances, interviews with veterans of the Korean, Vietnam, Iraq & Afghanistan wars will be scheduled.

To set up an interview, contact Trent at FMCTC at 744-3131. The interview can be conducted at the veteran's place of residence. The interview is very informal, so veterans may dress casually and comfortably. Veterans can even wear their uniform. The interview will last approximately an hour, or however long it takes. Lee Nelson will be accompanied by a camera person from FMCTC.

Upon completion of the interview, the veteran's story will be broadcast on FMCTV cable. Veterans will receive a complimentary copy of their interview on DVD. Additional copies may be purchased from FMCTC. (627-4168)

All veterans who live in Shelby County or a bordering county who would be willing to share their military experience is encouraged to be a part of this project.

Scheduling will begin with World War II veterans, then will proceed on to Korean, Vietnam, Iraq & Afghanistan war veterans.

To set up an interview contact Trent at FMCTC at 744-3131.

Scheduled to appear on FMCTV Channel 48 over the Independence holiday weekend. 'A Tribute to our Veterans' – Interviews by Lee Nelson & Russell Adams. Watch www.fmctc.com for air times.

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (and answers, of course!) that may be helpful to you.

Q: Is there a way I can receive my office or home phone calls on my Verizon or Community Phone?

A: Yes. Add Sim (Simultaneous) Ring to your office or home phone line and then when this number is dialed it will ring your Verizon or Community Phone simultaneously. To add this calling feature to your business or home phone line, contact us at 744-3131. SimRing is just \$2/month. SimRing is FREE if you have a Community Phone.

Q: What is digital TV and is it the same as HDTV?

A: No. HDTV is one available format in the class of Digital Television. SDTV (Standard Definition), EDTV (Enhanced Digital), and HDTV (High Definition) are types of digital TV. At the top of its class, HDTV provides the highest quality resolution and picture quality of all digital broadcast formats. Thus, HDTV and DTV are NOT the same thing, rather HDTV is one available format in the class of Digital Television. (654-2456)

Q: I started shopping around for digital TVs and I'm confused by the numbers and letters (720p, 1080i) that appear with the tv specifications. What are these numbers?

A: These numbers refer to the resolution of the TV. Resolution is the number of lines per your television display. Usually, the higher the number, the higher the resolution, the better the picture quality.

An analog TV picture can provide resolution of up to 480 horizontal lines. An HDTV picture can provide resolution of up to 1080 lines, providing an improved picture detail.

If the resolution number has an "i" or a "p," it is a digital signal. The "i" refers to an Interlaced Scan, meaning the TV draws line 1 of the image, then line 3, then line 5, and every odd numbered line from there. Then it comes back and draws every even numbered line.

The "p" refers to a Progressive Scan, meaning the TV draws line 1 of the image, then line 2, then line 3, and every line thereafter until it reaches the bottom of the screen.

A Progressive Scan image generally looks sharper and clearer than an Interlaced Scan image.



Unplug your computers, modems, phones during threatening weather

We recommend that you unplug your computers, DSL modems, fax machines, DVD players, phones and other sensitive equipment when the sky looks like it could produce some threatening weather. A lightning strike to the electrical lines and/or phone lines which lead to your computer, DSL modem, or other equipment can cause serious damage.



CPNI: Protecting your privacy

In December, 2007, the FCC put in place new Customer Proprietary Network Information, or CPNI rules that affect how FMCTC interacts with our customers. CPNI includes information such as your billing information and the services and features you subscribe to. You have a right and we have the responsibility to keep that information confidential.

The rules are designed to better protect your privacy. Listed below are the biggest changes these rules have on our relationship with our customers.

- FMCTC can only discuss CPNI with the customer of record or persons designated by the customer of record as authorized to receive information about the account.
- You are required to show a photo ID when you have questions relating to your account. For certain routine customer service issues, we may be permitted to discuss CPNI if you have all pertinent information with you, such as the bill, certain billing information, or call details information you wish to discuss.
- For telephone inquiries relating to CPNI, we are required to authenticate you as the customer of record. We have two options: call you back at the telephone number related to your account, or you must provide us with a unique password for identification.

ation.

- It is strongly recommended you have a unique password. This password should not be anything related to your family history or account information. For example, the password should not be your account number, home address, social security number, last four digits of social security number, date of birth, etc.
- FMCTC is required to notify you by mail with a follow-up letter when any change is made to your account. (741-3225)

Here are a few examples when an Authorized User form must be completed.

- All businesses should complete an Authorized User form.
- If a married couple wants both the husband and the wife to be able to access the account, an Authorized User form must be completed.
- People who have their children or other designee handle their personal affairs must complete an Authorized User form.

Contact the FMCTC Business Office at 744-3131 for more information on adding authorized users to your account. An Authorized Users form was distributed to all members in December.

New rate for Federal Universal Service Charge

Effective July 1st, the USF (Federal Universal Service Fund) assessment is slightly higher on your bill. The USF is now assessed at 11.4% of any Interstate charges, an increase from 11.3%. The USF line charge is assessed on telephone service and DSL Internet service.

The Universal Service Charge is not part of your local service rate; instead, the charge goes to a 'relief fund' that assists with the costs of providing telephone service in low-income communities, and for rural health care providers and schools and libraries. (799-4240)



Countdown to Digital

Come February 17, 2009, over-the-air local broadcast television will complete a transition from analog to digital technology. Digital television, or DTV, will provide a better viewing experience for consumers, will make new services like High Definition TV possible, and will free up airwaves for use by emergency responders.

After February 17, 2009, a television with only an analog broadcast tuner will require a converter box to receive full power over-the-air broadcasts. Analog-only television sets not connected to a cable or satellite service may require additional equipment (such as a digital-to-analog converter box) or may need to be replaced. Analog-only TVs should continue to work to receive low power, Class A or translator television stations and with cable and satellite TV services, game consoles, VCRs, DVD players and similar products.

Only over-the-air local broadcast channels—such as channels from Omaha, Des Moines, Sioux City—are affected by this analog to digital conversion. Satellite channels (such as History channel, FOX News, ESPN, Disney Channel, etc) are not affected by this digital transition.

Information about the DTV transition is available from www.DTV.gov and from www.dtv2009.gov or 1-888-DTV-2009 for information about subsidized coupons for digital-to-analog converter boxes.

The Digital Divide – Not in Iowa

The Iowa Utilities Board recently released the results of its annual Broadband Report. The results are striking and show that Iowans continue to enjoy the finest telecommunications services available.

Of the 1,231 Iowa communities represented in the assessment, 963 of the communities are identified as rural. Rural communities are defined as those with less than 2,500 inhabitants and are not served by an urban exchange.

The IUB report shows the "reverse digital divide" continues to favor rural Iowans:

- **93.9%** (1,156 out of 1,231) of all Iowa communities currently have access to one or more types of high speed Internet technology.
- **96.1%** (925 out of 963) of rural communities currently have high-speed Internet access.
- **86.2%** (231 out of 268) non-rural communities currently have high-speed Internet access.

The IUB study also shows that DSL and wireless/satellite technologies are

available in the greatest number of Iowa communities:

- DSL is available in **87.7%** (1,079 out of 1,231) of Iowa communities.
- Wireless/satellite high-speed Internet service is available in **64.2%** (790 out of 1,231) of Iowa communities.
- Cable-modem service is available in **32.6%** (401 out of 1,231) of Iowa communities.

Text Messaging for the Community Phone

NOW JUST
4¢ per message
And remember...
your first 10 messages are FREE every month!



Internet Corner

Vital Tips To Protect Your Data During Volatile Summer Weather

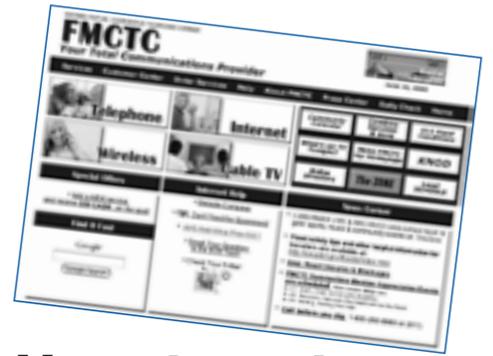
It's summer, which means hot, humid weather, lazy days trying to stay cool and plenty of sunshine. Unfortunately, summer also means thunderstorms with heavy rain and lightning (at least 100,000 strikes/year across the US) that can seriously damage your computer or entire network. As a matter of fact, it is estimated that computer damage and data loss from lightning strikes cost the US nearly \$2 billion/year, according to the National Lightning Safety Institute. This means data loss that can affect emails, pictures, financial statements, invoices and other critical information and documents. To help computer users protect themselves against these weather-related disasters, we offer several tips that can keep your

Computer damage and data loss from lightning strikes cost the US nearly \$2 billion in annual economic loss, according to the National Lightning Safety Institute

data out of harm's way. (744-3244)

- Install a surge protector between the power socket and the computer's power cable – and spend the extra \$20-\$30 to get an actual surge protector, not just a power strip. Some brands offer guaranteed lightning protection, even on their lower-priced models.
- Small businesses with networks should get surge protectors that offer protection from surges through network cables.
- Check protection devices regularly: At least once a year you should inspect your power protection devices to make sure that they are functioning properly. Most good ones will have a signaling light to tell you when they are protecting your equipment properly.
- Use dedicated circuits, if possible: Putting the computer on its own power circuit, so it isn't sharing the power with your air conditioner, space heater, and vacuum cleaner, greatly improves the power quality and insulates the PC from power sags

- when these devices are turned on.
- Turn off and disconnect the power cord during an electrical storm: This is a simple precaution that protects your system from possible problems during a thunderstorm.
- Turn off power during a blackout: If you lose power, when the power comes back on the signal can initially be inconsistent, which can make things more difficult for your power supply.
- High voltages can enter your computer through the phone line connected to the modem. To protect your computer during electrical storms, unplug the telephone line from the modem jack or use a telephone line surge suppressor.
- Businesses with network servers should invest in some form of Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS), which uses batteries to keep servers running during power outages.
- Summer heat can also be a significant problem. Keep your computer in a cool, dry area to prevent overheating.



How to set fmctc.com as your homepage

Follow the instructions below for Internet Explorer:

1. Open Internet Explorer.
2. In the Address bar click on the name of the website that came up, such as <http://www.microsoft.com>. It will be selected. Then push the backspace key on your keyboard. This will erase all the letters on the page you are on.
3. Now type <http://www.fmctc.com> and push enter on your keyboard. This will take you to our homepage.
4. If you want to set this as your Homepage, click on Tools at the top of the page. In the drop down menu click on Internet Options.
5. The Internet Options window will appear and the General tab is brought forward at the top of the page. Under the section called Homepage, click the Use Current button. This sets the page that is opened in your browser to your homepage.
6. Click on OK at the bottom of the screen.

FMCTC High Speed DSL Internet No SHARING allowed

Are you getting all the performance you should from your high speed Internet connection? Did you know cable modem services can slow down significantly if many people in your neighborhood are on the Internet simultaneously? That's because you're sharing a connection with your neighbors.

With FMCTC DSL, you get your OWN DEDICATED connection---you're not sharing bandwidth with your neighbors. You get it FAST . . . and it's dependable. That's the DSL advantage.

What Internet speeds are available to me?

Speed	Price
384 kbps	\$39.95
512 kbps	\$44.95
1.0 Mbps	\$54.95
2.0 Mbps	\$64.95
4.0 Mbps	\$79.95

Some Estimated Download Times

File Type.....	384 kbps.....	512 kbps	1.0 Mbps.....	2.0 Mbps	4.0 Mbps
Word Document					
w/ Graphs	3 min.....	2 min.	1 min.	32 sec.	17 sec.
MP3 Music File					
(4-minute song)	1 min. 32 sec.....	1 min. 2 sec.	31 sec.....	17 sec.	9 sec.
Digital Picture					
(2 mega-pixel).....	45 sec.	31 sec.....	15 sec.....	8 sec.	4 sec.
Video File					
(20-minute sitcom on iTunes)	50 min.....	½ hour.....	15 min. 37 sec.	8 min.	4 min.

Source: Cronin Communications

Procedure for weekend and after-hours telephone troubles

Have you ever been stuck on a weekend with no landline telephone service? Well, don't hesitate to contact us if you ever have trouble after our regular business hours. We are reachable any time, any day. Just report your trouble to our telephone number 744-3131. You may reach our voice mail, but be assured that it is checked often and we will follow up with you.

We have technicians on call 24/7 to help you.

The Communicator

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FUN IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

See you at the Fair • July 6-14

Be sure to look us up at the Shelby County Fair where we will have a booth inside the Commercial Building. Good luck to all of the 4-Hers & fair exhibitors! (782-3266)

If you have rabbit ears, listen up: digital TV signals hop differently

A converter box may not be enough for some analog viewers to get reception after the 2009 conversion. Households that have analog TVs that receive their signals over the air—using a rabbit antenna on top of the TV set—may also have to buy a new antenna.

TV viewers are discovering that over-the-air digital signals behave differently than analog signals. Although digital broadcasts provide a superior picture than old analog broadcasts, digital reception is more easily blocked by hills, trees and buildings. Furthermore, analog degrades gradually, with the picture displaying snow or ghosts (image echoes) as the signal becomes weaker. But the digital signal stays uniformly crisp until the signal gets weak; then the picture suddenly drops out, a phenomenon that engineers call the “cliff effect.” (748-3040)

For those locations suffering the cliff effect, a new antenna may be needed to pull the signals in. For TV reception on



UHF and VHF frequencies, an indoor antenna like rabbit ears may work if the signal is very strong. A weaker signal may require a disc shaped outdoor antenna that receives signals for all directions. An even weaker signal may require a V-shaped outdoor antenna, perhaps with a motor to point it directly at each broadcast signal tower.

Before buying an antenna, buy the converter box and attach it to your old antenna and to your TV. You may get all of the stations you want. (The boxes are available at electronics stores. You can get a coupon for a \$40 discount at dtv2009.gov, but don't wait too long; there is a limited supply of them.)

Source: *The New York Times*

For a simple device, the antenna has generated a lot of misinformation. For example, you may hear about digital antennas or HDTV antennas. But you do not need an HDTV antenna to get digital high-definition signals. Digital HD is broadcast on the same UHF and VHF frequencies as analog TV. The antennas need not be different. A special antenna is not required to receive the new extra channels from a station. If your antenna receives the local PBS channel, for example, it will receive all the digital subchannels.



Meet the new employees serving you this summer

Summer is a busy time at FMCTC and summertime employees play an important role in completing many of our projects. FMCTC is lucky to have (above, left to right) Justin Graeve, Corey Gaskill & John Graeve as a part of the FMCTC summer team. They assist with plowing cable and phone drops, taking care of FMCTC buildings and grounds, and internet support.

John will be a sophomore at Iowa State this Fall, majoring in Mechanical Engineering. He is the son of David and Linda Graeve of Defiance.

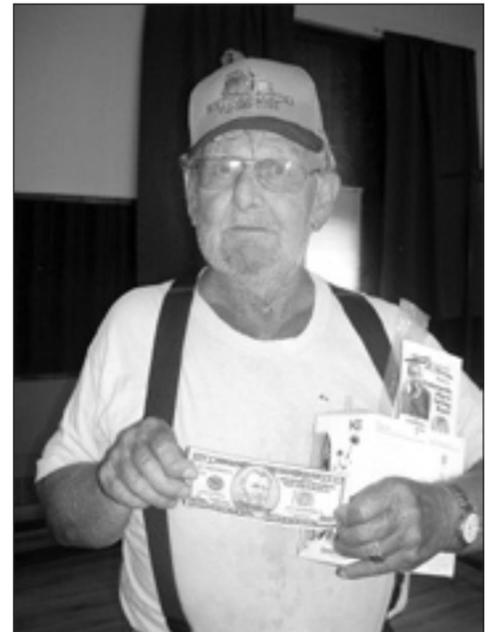
This Fall, Corey will be a freshman at DMACC majoring in Telecommunications. He is the son of Chad & Lynette Gaskill.

Justin is the son of Tim & Ann Graeve and he will be a sophomore at IKM. The Cooperative's Board of Directors and employees would like to welcome John, Cory & Justin to the FMCTC family. (747-3434)

Brandenburg receives \$50 cash at Member Appreciation Event

FMCTC member Eugene C. Brandenburg received \$50 cash at the Member Appreciation Event held in Manilla last month. Eugene was the first member to receive \$50 from our special BBQ promotion. He picked up a Community Phone and a nice crisp fifty dollar bill for adding that new service at the event.

Thanks to everyone who attended one of our summertime Member Appreciation Events. We enjoyed seeing you. See you next year!



SAFETY SAVES LIVES

Construction season is here. We all need to be reminded to slow down and watch out for construction crews during the coming months. The life you save could be your own.

It Pays to Refer A Friend!

Hey, FMCTC Internet Customers! Refer your friends, family, and neighbors to FMCTC High Speed Internet and you can earn award dollars.

Here's how it works:

1. Complete the certificate below
2. Pass it along to your friend/family/neighbor. When your referral orders service and presents this certificate to our FMCTC office, your account will be credited \$39.95 which will be applied to your current high speed Internet account.



COMPLETE & RETURN * COMPLETE & RETURN

It Pays To Refer A Friend! Referral Form

I want to refer _____
for FMCTC HighSpeed Internet Service

My name _____

My phone number _____

*Referral form must be returned to the Harlan Office at time of sign-up.
FMCTC • 801 19th Street • Harlan, Iowa 51537