



## TOUCHSTONE ENERGY CAMP

NineStar Connect will sponsor two students at the annual Touchstone Energy Camp this year.

PAGE 7

## NINESTAR AND HOMESERVE TEAM UP

We will be expanding service to support the home repair needs of residents in the Ninestar service territory.

PAGE 5

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
GREENFIELD, IN  
PERMIT NO. 220

SEE PAGE 4

# NINESTAR'S ANNUAL MEETING

March 23, 2018



DIRECTOR  
CANDIDATES  
BIOS AND  
STATEMENTS  
PAGES 10-11

NEW VICE  
PRESIDENT'S  
NAMED  
PAGE 5





On page 7, read about Touchstone Energy Camp and how your student can apply

**POWER OUT?  
NO INTERNET OR TV?  
CHECK NINESTAR'S FACEBOOK  
OR TWITTER PAGE!!**

**S**ocial Media is exploding and if you aren't checking your laptop, tablet or smart phone for the latest and greatest fads, trends and updates... you are not living in the 21st century! We have found that posting news about NineStar Connect on Facebook and Twitter has been a successful line of communication for all of our social media followers. Once you "like" our page, you will automatically be notified of any post we share whether it's information about an outage, an event we are planning, local Channel 9 broadcasting or energy information to save you money.

Additionally, if you have a question for us, send us a message. We will research and respond to your question as quickly as possible. We don't want to "leave you in the dark" about any issues or inquiries you might have for us. Our Customer Service has always been a significant piece of what we do and giving you the answers you need is imperative to keeping you knowledgeable and satisfied with our service. To add, when there is that unfortunate outage, your communication to us is just as helpful in determining where the problem is and who it is affecting so we encourage you to share your thoughts.

So if you haven't already, grab your tablet or smart phone and "Like" or "Follow" our Facebook and/or Twitter page. We will do our best to keep you informed and post all the latest details about NineStar Connect news. But don't forget, we still like to hear your voice! When you need answers fast and need to talk to someone, a phone call to our 24/7/365 Support Center is always just a dial away - 317-326-HELP.



**OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR CODY VEERKAMP.**

"CODY CALLED ME YESTERDAY AND WALKED ME THROUGH SEVERAL THINGS. HE WAS VERY HELPFUL - THANK YOU!"

- CUSTOMER ROLLO



Customer service is at the tips of your fingers. NineStar Connect's tech support call center is open around the clock. **317-326-help** [ninestarconnect.com](http://ninestarconnect.com)

**STORY IDEA?**

Contact **David Spencer** at [dspencer@ninestarconnect.com](mailto:dspencer@ninestarconnect.com)

**COVER STORY** **PAGE 4**  
The NineStar Annual Meeting is March 23, 2018

**BE WARM AND SAVE!** **PAGE 6**  
Learn how to maximize energy efficiency to help you save during the last bitterly cold days this winter season.

**BEWARE OF SCAMS** **PAGE 7**  
Don't fall victim to utility scams this winter! We can help you spot the difference.

**INDIANA YOUTH TOUR D.C. TRIP** **PAGE 9**  
NineStar Connect is accepting applications to sponsor students for this year's Indiana Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C.

**EARLY VOTING BEING OFFERED**

Your Cooperative has made it even easier to select members of the Board of Directors by offering Early voting.

**PAGE 11**



The *NineStar Connection* is a publication of NineStar Connect servicing retail and residential customers. Nearly 15,000 families and businesses receive this newspaper as part of their membership. *NineStar Connection* provides news, information and features about people, places and issues related to readers.

**NineStar Connection, USPS**  
Volume 6 No. 3

Published Bi-monthly.  
Postage Paid at  
Greenfield, IN.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to:  
2243 E. Main St.  
Greenfield, IN 46140

Annual subscription price is \$3; available to members of NineStar Connect co-operative.

**ADDRESS:**  
NineStar North Campus  
2331 E. CR 600N  
Greenfield, IN 46140

NineStar South Campus  
2243 E. Main St.  
Greenfield, IN 46140

**PHONE:**  
317-326-3131  
765-533-4303

**EMAIL:**  
[dspencer@ninestarconnect.com](mailto:dspencer@ninestarconnect.com)  
[www.ninestarconnect.com](http://www.ninestarconnect.com)

**NineStar Connection**

**EDITOR**  
David Spencer

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Director District 1  
Chris Jeter

Director District 2  
Mark Evans

Director District 3  
Don Shaw

Director District 4  
Darrell Thomas

Director District 5  
Steve Vail

Director District 6  
Joseph Paxton

Director District 7  
Beverly Gard

Director District 8  
David Heller

Director District 9  
Raymond Kerkhof

Director District 10  
Shelly Kleiman

**AT LARGE**

James Cherry  
Kim Cronk  
Philip Hayes  
Ronnie Mohr

# NINESTAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1



CHRIS JETER

DISTRICT 2



MARK EVANS

DISTRICT 3



DON SHAW

DISTRICT 4



DARRELL H. THOMAS

DISTRICT 5



STEPHEN VAIL

DISTRICT 6



JOSEPH PAXTON

DISTRICT 7



BEVERLY GARD

DISTRICT 8



DAVID G. HELLER

DISTRICT 9



RAYMOND KERKHOF

DISTRICT 10



SHELLY KLEIMAN

AT LARGE



KIM CRONK



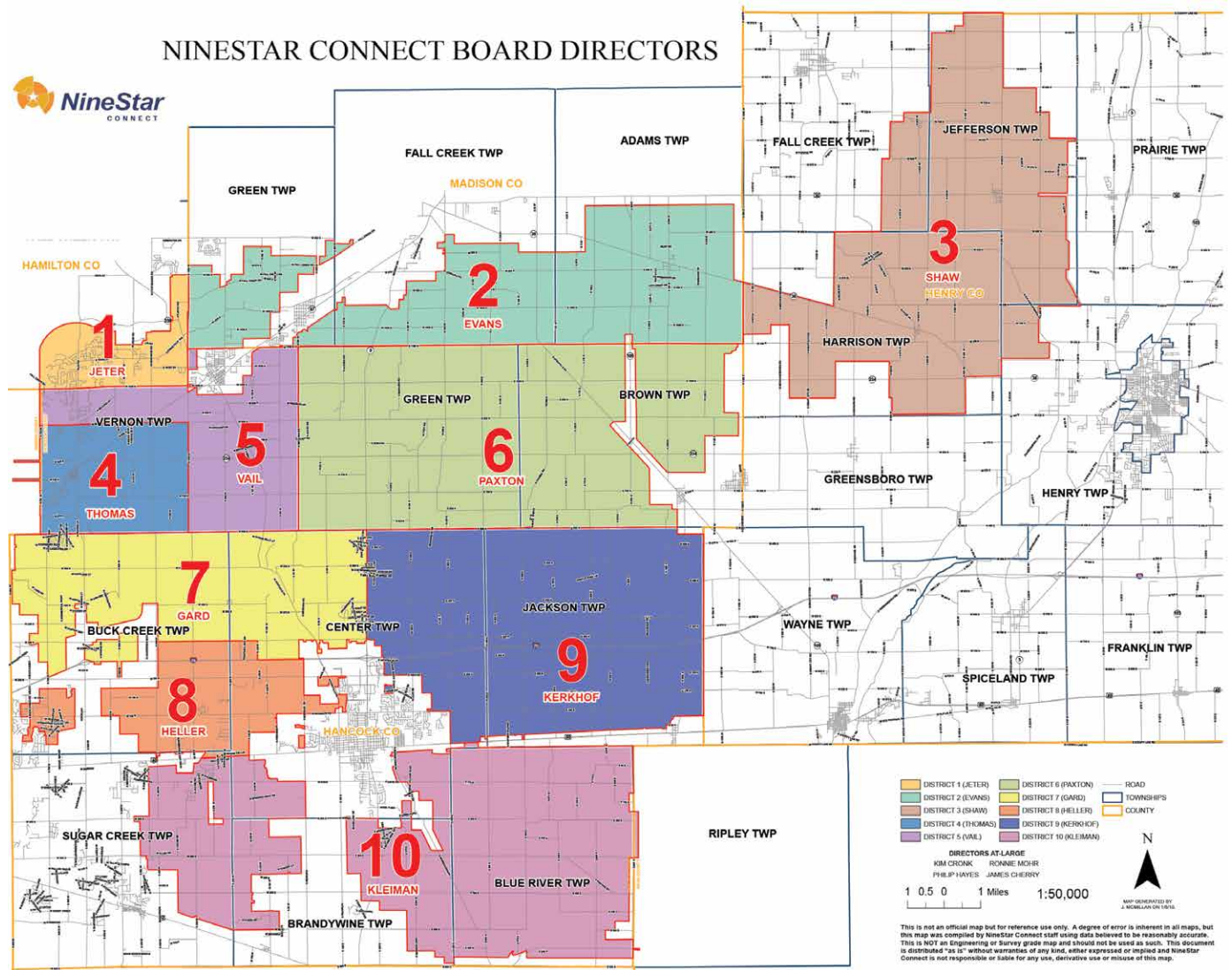
JAMES E. CHERRY



PHILIP M. HAYES



RONNIE MOHR



# NINESTAR'S ANNUAL MEETING



**N**ineStar Connect's Annual Meeting is not only a great opportunity to enjoy

a fun – and completely free

– night out, but it offers the co-op the chance to mix with their membership and members to help determine the direction the co-op takes now and in the years to come.

“We don't look at our members as merely customers, but our member owners. We subscribe to the Seven Cooperative Principles and among those principles are democratic member control and thus a commitment to hold an annual meeting during which the membership elects our directors for the following year. This democratic process determines how we set policy, which in turn, directs the future of the company,” says David Spencer, NineStar's director of marketing and public relations.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, March 23 at the Greenfield Central High School Fieldhouse. Doors open at 5 p.m. for registration with dinner being served from 5-6:30 p.m. Once again, Jonathon Byrd's Catering is providing the meal, which will include fried chicken,

mashed potatoes, green beans, corn, cole slaw and an assortment of desserts. There will also be a fish entrée option for those observing Lent. The business meeting will follow dinner at 6:30 p.m. in which the directors will be elected, and scholarship winners will be announced. This year, NineStar is proud to offer fifteen \$1,000 scholarships to area students and the unveiling of those exceptional young people is always a highlight of the event.

Eschewing the traditional workshops, which have always been part of the Annual Meeting, NineStar is partnering with Hancock Health to offer a health fair designed to provide information and resources on a number of health issues as well as limited health screenings including blood pressure, balance, grip strength and more.

WRITTEN BY

**JULIE YOUNG**

Linda Garrity, RN, CCE, CPST coordinator of community education for Hancock Regional Hospital said the purpose of this event is to encourage self-awareness and participation in one's healthcare.

“We will have laptops to assist people with setting up their accounts to access their medical records via our Patient Portal. We also are planning to demo and assist with obtaining low cost lab tests through our direct access website,” she said.

The health fair will be held from 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. in the wrestling room adjacent to the field house and there is no need for members to sign up for the event beforehand. Everyone is welcome on a first come, first served basis. More comprehensive appointments, which will be held at the hospital at a later date, can also be made on the night of the meeting as well.

“We have a great partnership with the hospital and this gives us a chance to promote some of the services that they offer while offering something different to our members,” Spencer said.

Parents looking to turn the meeting into “date night” will be happy to learn that NineStar will once again offer free child care during the event. Kids ages 1-10 are welcome to enjoy a fun pizza party that will include



a magician, face painting, virtual reality games and other activities that will keep them busy while their moms and dads are “adulting.”

“It is very important to us that we get our younger members involved with the co-op,” Spencer said. “Not only do we want young parents to come out and take part in the meeting, but we want our future member owners to know we have their best interests at heart as well. Last year we had about 40 kids attend the pizza party and we expect at least that many this year. It's a great time for the kids who attend and it always gets rave reviews.”

Another way NineStar hopes to encourage members to get involved with the co-op is by offering early voting for members who cannot make it to the March 23rd meeting. This is the first time that the cooperative has offered this opportunity and Spencer hopes everyone in the outlying areas or those with scheduling conflicts will take advantage of it.

“We are not sure how much early voting will impact the

election, but we are striving to make it more convenient for the membership who may not be able to come to the main event,” he said. “We usually have at least 1,000 people attend each year which is great, but we want everyone's voice to be heard.”

Early voting is available from March 1-17 at any of NineStar's locations in Greenfield, Knightstown, Maxwell and McCordsville during regular business hours. In addition, early voting will take place between the hours of 8 a.m.-noon on March 10 and 17 at the Markleville Town Hall and the Sulphur Springs/Jeffersonville Fire Department. Candidates include: James Cherry (at large), Charles Kennedy (at large), Don Shaw (District 3), Darrell Thomas (District 4), Stephen Vail and Edward Wallpe (both of District 5.)

“The Annual Meeting is a great event for the co-op as well as its membership and I encourage everyone to come out and take part. We look forward to seeing you there!” Spencer said.



## NEW VICE PRESIDENTS RECENTLY NAMED

**R**ecently President & CEO Michael Burrow named two longtime employees to new positions within the organization. Starting January 1st of this year Jeff Conley was named the VP of Operations and Regina Bever was named the VP of Administration.



### JEFF CONLEY

Jeff Conley was recently promoted to a new position within the organization. In his new position, Jeff oversees engineering, linemen, distribution of electricity, telecom, water & waste water operations. Jeff strives every day to provide the highest possible degree of continuity with all NineStar services to its members.

A Longtime resident of Hancock County, Jeff and his wife Janice have been married 34 years and have one son named Jordan. He is a 1982 graduate of Eastern Hancock High School and later graduated from a four-year apprenticeship through Indiana Statewide's Training and Safety Program. In all, Jeff has worked at the company for thirty-three years and as a journeyman lineman for twenty-one of those years.

In his free time, Jeff enjoys spending time with his family. Recently he became a proud first time grandfather to Benjamin. He also finds time for hunting and the occasional round of golf. In addition, Jeff also enjoys reading.



### REGINA BEVER

Regina Bever began her career at then Central Indiana Power in 1998 as an Administrative Coordinator to then president and CEO, Tom Seng. Today she oversees one of the largest divisions at NineStar that houses; regulatory compliance, billing, customer service, marketing and public relations, process improvement and human resources.

A longtime Greenfield resident, Regina and her husband David have been married since 1989 and have two kids Brandi and Blaine. Her daughter Brandi was recently married to Blake Crull last summer. She is a 1984 Graduate of Greenfield-Central and a graduate of Ball State University.

In her free time, Regina enjoys spending time with friends and family. When she finds time, she also enjoys reading and occasionally traveling.

## NINESTAR CONNECT TEAMS UP WITH HOMESERVE TO EXPAND SERVICE OFFERS

**N**ineStar Connect (NineStar), a smart utility cooperative serving members in central Indiana and HomeServe USA (HomeServe), a leading provider of home repair solutions, will soon be announcing expanded service offers to support the home repair needs of residents in the NineStar service territory. Through the program, NineStar will expand its portfolio of service offerings and make HomeServe's optional repair service plans available to NineStar member customers.

Through the program, HomeServe will offer a suite of service plans that cover repairs to the exterior electrical components that connect to the NineStar system, interior electric wiring, water heaters, heating and cooling systems. All of these repair service plans are designed to shield homeowners from the inconvenience and unexpected expenses associated with repairs to these systems.

"NineStar prides itself as being a full service provider for our customers, so we are pleased to work with HomeServe to provide our members with additional valuable services to help them around the home," said Michael R. Burrow, President and CEO of NineStar Connect. "HomeServe service plans provide homeowners with an optional peace of mind solution so they can be better prepared in the event of an unexpected repair to one of these important systems."

HomeServe's Exterior Electric Line service Plan, for example, offers homeowners protection against the expense and inconvenience of repairs to their home's exterior electrical components that connect to the NineStar electric system. This can include repairs to the weatherhead, riser pipe, insulators, meter base and service entrance cable. These repairs can be costly and are not typically covered by basic homeowners insurance. All the HomeServe plans provide customers

with access to a Repair Hotline that is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and local, licensed, and insured technicians that will come to their home for repairs. Plans start at \$5.49 a month.

"Our cost-effective service plans provide a better way for customers to pay for and obtain repairs through our reliable network of qualified local contractors," said Tom Rusin, CEO of HomeServe USA. "HomeServe shares the same level of commitment to customer service as NineStar Connect. It's important for NineStar member customers to know that if they have an electrical or other repair emergency, they have an available service to turn to."

Over the next few weeks, NineStar members will receive details about the new program in the mail. For more information, contact HomeServe toll-free at 1-833-334-1874 or NineStar at 317-326-3131



# BITTER COLD CAN RESULT IN HIGH ELECTRIC BILLS



The extended duration of extreme cold temperatures this winter has resulted in higher than usual electric usage for many of our members. As you compare your usage from 2017, keep in mind the average temperature on January 1st, 2017 was 32 degrees and on January 1st, 2018 average temperature was -3.

In addition, comparing daily average temperatures in the NineStar territory from December 24th, 2017 to January 16th, 2018, (and the temperatures to the same time frame from the prior year) has had a considerable impact on all home energy bills. The results are that the current heating season is about 18 degrees colder than last year's heating season in this time frame causing higher than expected electric bills.

Remember, the greater the difference between inside and outside temperature the harder your heating system must work to maintain a comfortable inside temperature. Here are some tips that may help you stay warm by not cranking up the heat inside:

add an extra blanket or layer of clothing instead of turning up the thermostat, dropping even 1 degree on your thermostat will make a drastic difference in your electric bill.

If you have a Heat Pump or Geothermal system, you'll want to be careful about turning down that thermostat. That's because too much of a temperature drop inside your home can trigger the emergency heat resulting in a higher bill.

If you have a crawlspace, make sure the foundation vents are closed allowing no air to pass into or out of the crawlspace.

Extreme cold conditions, just as we have been experiencing, can have a considerable impact on your homes comfort and energy usage thus resulting in higher electric bills. If you have questions about your energy usage or would like tips on how you can potentially save energy, please call our Energy Advisor Matt Strahl at 317-326-3131.

# BE WARM AND SAVE!

While you may be looking forward to the spring warmth, you likely still will encounter bitterly cold days this winter season. Even in frigid temperatures, there are ways to maximize energy efficiency to help save! Here are a few tips:

**#1** Let In The Sun - South-facing windows can be a great way to warm your home while using less electricity. If your home is a bit chilly during the day, open the blinds and curtains on these windows to let in some sun. If you have pets, you can bet they'll make the most of those extra sunbeams. Be sure to close your curtains when the sun goes down.

**#2** Replace Air Filters - When was the last time you replaced the air filters in your HVAC system? It's easy to forget, but to get the most efficiency out of your system you should be checking your filter at least every three months. The changing seasons can be a perfect reminder that you're overdue.

**#3** Use Energy Star LED lightbulbs - Less sunlight outside means more lights on indoors. If you're not using Energy Star LED's then you're using more energy than necessary. LED's have a longer service life than traditional bulbs and use less energy. It's a win-win!

**#4** Adjust Your Thermostat - If you find yourself nudging up the thermostat, make sure you turn it back down in the morning. Leaving your thermostat at a high setting during the day, when nobody's home, is a big source of energy waste in cold weather. A programmable thermostat is a solution that will pay for itself over time.

**#4A** ...Unless You Have A Heat Pump - If you have a heat pump, be careful about turning down the thermostat. Too much of a temperature drop inside your home can trigger the emergency heat. The end result? An electric bill that's higher than it needs to be.

If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact NineStar's Energy Advisor Matt Strahl. He can help identify what programs are available to help you save. NineStar offers free energy audits, which will

provide a checklist of ways you can save energy. And, don't forget about the energy-efficiency rebates through the PowerMoves program that will save your more money!



# ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TO SPONSOR STUDENTS AT TOUCHSTONE ENERGY CAMP

NineStar Connect will sponsor two students at the annual Touchstone Energy Camp. The camp will be held June 6-9, 2018, at Camp Tecumseh in Brookston, Indiana.

Students entering seventh grade in 2018 are eligible to attend and are selected by their local cooperative to participate in the three-day program. The students' agenda combines traditional outdoor camp activities with environmental education,

electrical safety practices and cooperative business education.

"This is a great way for students to learn about the role of the electric cooperative in their community. On top of that, they get to experience all the fun of camp," said David Spencer, Director of Marketing and PR at NineStar.

Applications for Touchstone Energy Camp are available by contacting

Christa Riggs, at 317-323-2132, [criggs@ninstarconnect.com](mailto:criggs@ninstarconnect.com) or online at [www.ninstarconnect.com](http://www.ninstarconnect.com). Applications are due on February 28th, 2018.

The Touchstone Energy Camp program was developed by a committee of electric cooperative employees from Indiana. The camp is funded in part by Indiana's electric cooperatives, Hoosier Energy, Wabash Valley Power, Indiana

Electric Cooperatives and other industry partners.



Don't fall victim to a utility scam this winter!! Over the past several months, it has come to our attention that many utilities are learning of more and more fraudulent people posing as the utility to scam unsuspecting people out of money. It is important to remember that NineStar Connect will not

be calling or threatening to immediately shut off electricity service unless immediate payment is made. In many cases, phone scammers ask for a pre-paid debit card, a money transfer, or sometimes direct consumers to pay in person at a physical location. Please remember that when our office is closed, we do not conduct

financial transactions in person. It is important to stay vigilant in the face of cunning and sometimes convincing people who are trying to cheat you out of your hard-earned money. If you should have suspicions, you may be a victim of one of these calls. Please report any suspected utility scams to local law enforcement.

# President's Message

I was reading an article last month that the instances of mergers and acquisitions are on the rise again in the United States. Of course, the “M&A’s” referred to in this article were on a massive scale involving large, publicly-traded companies but it did, nonetheless, get me thinking about both similarities and differences in NineStar Connect’s company philosophies.

As to similarities, NineStar itself was created out of the consolidation and merger of the former Central Indiana Power and Hancock Telecom on January 1, 2011. Even the former Hancock Telecom was a creation of many historic consolidations of various community telephone companies that were established over a century ago. And since the creation of NineStar, it has acquired the assets of Sugar Creek Utilities, along with other water and wastewater assets located in Philadelphia and Maxwell in Hancock County.

Today when I look at the larger telecom, cable and electric companies that also serve portions of Hancock and the surrounding counties, I see histories of countless mergers and acquisitions that led to their current iterations. Each time, their dominant motivations were to get larger, to control a greater market share, drive out competition and always to drive larger profits. There is never a particular focus on their customers and how a consolidation or acquisition might impact them.

Admittedly, each time over the last 120+ years that NineStar has consolidated, it has grown larger; nevertheless, that has never been the focus or reason for the consolidation. Indeed, the NineStar board has always been focused on how to best continue to deliver critical utility services in a cost-effective manner and improve

the quality of place and life for our member-customers - all the while remaining local. Unquestionably, staying local has been a key driver in our past consolidations.

I admit that much can be said about continuing to deliver affordable critical utility services and improving the quality of place and life, but perhaps the conversation should instead be focused on the “remaining local” strategy that has been such a cornerstone to everything NineStar does. Your voice as a member and customer of NineStar Connect has so much more greater resonance because NineStar has been and continues to be a local utility cooperative.

Rarely a week goes by that members and customers don’t approach me to talk about the company either because they know I’m President or because they see me wearing an ever-present NineStar sweater. They want to ask a question or share some thought or concern. And I relish the chance to meet them and hear what they have to say. Couple the easy accessibility of any of our NineStar directors or employees with our coop’s efforts to host information-sharing member town halls, our technology-focused Nerd Nights and of course our upcoming Annual Meeting and Celebration, and you can begin to appreciate and understand just how important staying local and being engaged with our members and customers we serve is to NineStar. It is quite simply part and parcel of who we are and how we distinguish ourselves from our much larger utility colleagues out there.



Our Annual Meeting and Celebration takes place on Friday, March 23rd at the Greenfield Central High School Fieldhouse. We also have several upcoming member town halls and Nerd Nights in the works for 2018 as well, with dates and locations to be announced. I hope all of you consider attending one of these upcoming events and become engaged with your truly local utility. We look forward to meeting you and sharing ideas on how NineStar can continue to be relevant to the members, customers and communities we serve.



## MATT HUCK COMPLETES ELECTRIC APPRENTICE LINEMAN PROGRAM

On Saturday, January 27, NineStar’s Matt Huck was honored at a statewide event for completing the Rural Electric Apprentice Program (REAP). Indiana Electric Cooperatives developed the REAP to professionally train electric linemen working for electric cooperatives throughout Indiana. REAP

is a four-year program that requires apprentices to attend 576 hours of classroom instruction combined with at least 8,000 hours of on-the-job training. As a result of all of his hard work and education, he is now a Journeyman Lineman.



# ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TO SPONSOR STUDENTS FOR D.C. TRIP

**NINESTAR CONNECT IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR INDIANA YOUTH TOUR**



NineStar Connect will sponsor two students on the annual Indiana Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The 2018 Indiana Youth Tour is June 7-14.

Students entering their senior year in 2018 are eligible to attend and are selected by their local cooperative to participate in the weeklong trip. Indiana will send a delegation of approximately 85 students from throughout the state. The students travel to Washington and convene with more than 1,800 students from up to 46 states.

“NineStar is pleased to provide this opportunity for our local youth,” David Spencer, Director of Marketing and PR said. “It’s a great trip and a wonderful chance to see the sites, make new friends and learn how everyone, even young people, can make a difference in the political process.”

Applications for the Youth Tour are available by contacting Christa Riggs at 317-323-2132, criggs@ninestarconnect.com or online at [www.ninestarconnect.com](http://www.ninestarconnect.com). Applications are due February 28th, 2018.

Students participating in the trip will visit the Gettysburg Battlefield, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian museums, tour the Jefferson, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorials, take a night cruise on the Potomac River, and much more.

The Indiana Youth Tour students will also participate in a youth rally hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and spend a day on Capitol Hill, where they will have an opportunity to meet with Indiana’s congressional delegation to ask questions and

share their thoughts on a variety of timely issues.

For more information about the 2018 Indiana Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., contact NineStar’s Marketing Coordinator, Christa Riggs at 317-323-2132.



**Enroll in Paperless Billing Today and you could be our NEXT BIG WINNER!**

\*Enroll in Paperless Billing for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon or \$50 Netflix gift card!

\*Drawings Monthly. Winners will be notified via email with gift card voucher.

## PAPERLESS BILLING

Each month we pick a new winner for just choosing to get your billing statement electronically. If you are drawn as a lucky winner, you have the option of choosing a \$50 Netflix Gift Card or a \$50 Amazon Gift Card. Congratulations to our latest monthly winners:

November	Shelli Kindred of Greenfield	Netflix Gift Card
December	Mark Crawford of New Palestine	Netflix Gift Card
January	Eric Carver of Greenfield	Amazon Gift Card

Paperless Billing is the easiest, cheapest way of paying your bill each month. Please feel free to give one of our Residential Service Consultants a call at 317-326-3131 to help you set up if needed. It will be a call you are glad you made!



# DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

## BIOS AND STATEMENTS



### JAMES CHERRY

**BACKGROUND:**

Jim Cherry has been a cooperative member since 1964. He graduated from Hancock Central High School and has attended many Cooperative training classes through Co-Bank and Louisville Bank of Cooperatives. Jim is certified for Electric and Core Curriculum in Broadband and has previous Co-op board experience (of over 40 years) such as: Hancock County Co-op, Countrymark Co-op, Universal Co-op, Land O Lakes Co-op and Central Indiana Power. Jim is a retired farmer and has lived and worked in Hancock County; his family has been in Hancock County for over five generations. He is also a member of Willow Branch United Methodist Church, Greenfield Kiwanis, Eden Masonic Lodge and Greenfield York Rite. Jim and his wife Susan live in Greenfield.

### DIRECTOR AT LARGE

**CANDIDATE STATEMENT:**

Since our Co-op became NineStar, it is recognized as one of the premier Co-op's in Indiana. Because of the diversification in Electric, Telecom and now Water and Sewer plus other services we offer including Broadband, NineStar is recognized as a leader for Co-ops Nationwide. Your board has a good reason to be very proud of NineStar's accomplishments. Your Board and Management team has worked very well together and continues to look to the future. Our vision for NineStar Connect's future is very strong. I have had the privilege to serve as a Director on NineStar's board since it was formed in 2011. I believe there are many more ideas to explore that can even make NineStar even stronger. I feel like I can continue to add value to the Board and would like very much to have your support to be re-elected for another term.



### CHARLES KENNEDY

**BACKGROUND:**

Charles has been a cooperative member since 2016. He has a Bachelor's Degree from Purdue University majoring in Marketing and Finance. He also attended the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin. Since 1996, he has been with Cambridge Capital Management Corporation and serves as their Executive Vice President and Portfolio Manager. Prior to this employment, he worked for 10 years as a Commercial Lender and Officer with two banks in Central Indiana. He has participated as a Director on several entity boards which the companies involved were within a wide range of industries and disciplines. Charles is also involved in a couple of non-profit entities including the Community Investment Fund of Indiana (which he was nominated by the Lt. Governor's Office), Advisory Board member for the Indiana Small Business Development Centers and the Hispanic Business Council of Indianapolis. He has served several small businesses, corporations, non-profits and state agencies as a board member and other capacities. Charles works with groups to achieve organizational goals and development of staff. Charles and his wife Dianna have three grown children and reside in Fishers.

### DIRECTOR AT LARGE

**CANDIDATE STATEMENT:**

Although I have only been a NineStar Connect customer for a couple of years, I lived on the far eastside of Indianapolis for almost all of my life and have witnessed the growth of NineStar (Hancock REMC). I am very interested in supporting our community endeavors and believe that the core of the community is the success and well-being of the family. Life in the 21st century revolves around communication, energy (power) and safety. NineStar Connect plays a significant role in providing our neighbors access to these sources (and water). I also believe that NineStar Connect has the responsibility to deliver these sources at an appropriate and affordable rate, reinvest in new and cleaner energy options (such as the PowerMoves program, Fiber Optics and the Smart Grid Technology) and last but not least be responsible for the growth and well-being of the NineStar staff and members.



### DON SHAW

**BACKGROUND:**

Don Shaw has been a cooperative member since 1960. He has owned and operated an Electric, Heating and Cooling business for many years. Don was a County Commissioner for eight years and was President for several of those years. He was President of the Indiana Association of County Commissioners and President of Three Rivers Solid Waste. Don is a member of the Jefferson Township Volunteer Fire Department and was chief for 25 years. He has had National Homeland Security training twice in Maryland. Don is a member of the Masonic, Scottish Rite, and Murat Shrine lodges. During his tenure on the NineStar board, he has been Vice President of Hancock Telecom (before the merger). He is also a member of the Indiana Statewide Electric Association and has been on the National Marketing Committee. Don and his wife Judy are proud parents, grandparents and great grandparents. They live around Sulphur Springs.

### DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 3

**CANDIDATE STATEMENT:**

My name is Don Shaw. I have lived in Henry County my entire life and been involved in many community activities. I have served the public most of my adult life. In the ever-changing world of telecommunications and electricity, I have attended many conferences and training sessions to keep up with the growth and changing future of NineStar. I like the fact that the co-op is owned by the customers it serves. Of great importance to me is the reliability of the services we provide. We try to solve any problems as soon as they are called in. We also have a 24-hour help desk. It has been a privilege to serve this growing company for several years. I'm still excited about the national standing of our co-op, and the innovations that are coming. With your support, I hope to continue to serve this co-op.



## EARLY VOTING BEING OFFERED

New this year your cooperative has made it even easier for you to select members for Board of Directors by offering early voting. "We know people lead busy lives and realize they might not be able to make the annual meeting. We wanted those members to have the same opportunity to participate and be able to vote for the board of directors." said Mike Burrow, President & CEO of NineStar Connect. "We follow the Seven Cooperative Principles and #2 on that list is Democratic Member Control and offering

early voting allows all members an even greater opportunity to be involved." If you are unable to attend the annual meeting and would like to vote for directors, early voting will be available beginning March 1 – March 17, 2018 at any of NineStar's four locations during regular business hours. Additionally, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., early voting for Directors of the Board will take place on March 10 & 17 at Markleville Town Hall and at the Sulphur Springs/Jefferson Township Fire

Department. Please note, if you vote early, you are still more than welcome to attend the annual meeting, have dinner and be eligible for prizes; however, an RSVP is still required. This is important so we can have the proper number of meals for members at the meeting. Once you RSVP your dinner tickets will be waiting for you at registration.



## DARRELL THOMAS

### BACKGROUND:

Darrell Thomas has been a cooperative member since 1963. He graduated from Mt. Vernon High School in 1959, received his Bachelor's Degree from Ball State University in 1963, his Master's Degree from Ball State University in 1966 and Secondary Administration from Ball State in 1972. For 36 years, Darrell worked for the Mt. Vernon School Corporation as a teacher, coach, high school vice principal and high school principal. He also was the Executive Director of Hancock County Economic Development for 4 years and worked at Ball State University for 10 years supervising student teachers. Darrell has a lot of expertise working with people by virtue of his careers; ability to clearly dissect a problem before reacting; an extensive personal knowledge of the geographic area served by the cooperative; a good listener and years of experience as a board member. He is an emeritus member of the Hancock County Community Foundation; member of Sigma Chi Fraternity; member of the Indiana Retired Teachers/Principals Association and a member of the McCordsville United Methodist Church. Darrell has also served as Chairman of the Board of Hancock Telecom for ten years; vice chairman of TECO (a national PAC for the telecom industry); a committee member on various committees for the national telecommunications association; a member of various standing committees for our local cooperative; and a member of the Central Indiana Power membership committee for a number of years. Darrell is currently retired and lives in McCordsville with his wife Nancy and has three children and eight grandchildren.

## DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 4

### CANDIDATE STATEMENT:

In 1865 my ancestors settled on a 120 acre farm southeast of McCordsville. Presently, we live on that land where a portion of the original farmhouse (a log cabin) has been restored. Sometime after the turn of the century the cabin portion housed the McCordsville Telephone Company exchange. Yes, that was the same exchange which eventually became part of our present day telecom/power/water cooperative, NineStar Connect. As you can see because of this historical/family connection, I am very passionate about the future of NineStar Connect and the area it serves. I would like to continue nurturing this passion as a board member by using my expertise from the past coupled with my knowledge of the industry to see this cooperative become recognized by its peers and members as one of the "best in the business." During my tenure on the board, I have seen many changes in the utilities we serve; now with our water/sewer projects and video changes, the learning curve continues. The future of this cooperative is very bright; however, it will depend upon the leadership of those selected to govern. I would welcome the opportunity to continue representing the members of NineStar Connect.



## EDWARD WALLPE

### BACKGROUND:

Ed Wallpe has been a cooperative member since 2009. Mr. Wallpe received his Bachelor's Degree from Purdue University, School of Agriculture with a major in Animal Sciences and focus in Business and Sales/Marketing. He went on to hold positions as a Global Transparency and Reporting Consultant, Global Strategic Sourcing expert in Procurement, Purchasing Department Head at Eli Lilly and Company; Sales Representative and Marketing Associate for Elanco Animal Health as well as a Senior Account Executive for Farm Journal, Inc. He currently works for Eli Lilly as a Global Financial Systems Consultant and has been with the company for 24 years. Some of his training and skills include: supervision, contract and financial negotiations, business case development and evaluation, project management, spend/category management, operational excellence, data driven process improvement (leveraging Six Sigma) and auditing. Ed is a current member of PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America) and works closely with the U.S. Government (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) to address operational reporting challenges. Ed is an active parent and is involved with Hancock County 4-H; Optimist in assisting with softball and basketball coaching; supporter of Meals on Wheels and is a member of Holy Spirit at Geist. In the past, Ed has also been an active member of Alpha Gamma Rho (social and professional fraternity); Alpha Zeta (agricultural honorary society), 10 year 4-H member, Junior Leaders and FFA. Ed and his wife Glenda have two children; Kalin and Miles and resides in McCordsville.

## DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 5

### CANDIDATE STATEMENT:

I grew up on a 3rd generation family farm in Northwest Indiana. The operation included a Holstein dairy operation and continues to raise corn, soybeans and alfalfa today. Living in a smaller agricultural community, I grew up to learn and appreciate services that many may take for granted in today's environment. As a consumer of NineStar services, I have personally experienced the continued improvements and advancements that have occurred during my tenure as a cooperative member. My experiences have not only been positive but one of continued commitment to serve its customers and giving back to our community. Based on these experiences, I would be honored to serve on the Board of Directors as your representative. I bring my business management experience, operational excellence and leadership skills to NineStar, as the cooperative continues its journey of innovation and delivering increase value to its membership. However, most importantly, I have a strong desire to continue to give back to the community in which I live and am raising my family for years to come.



## STEVE VAIL

### BACKGROUND:

Stephen Vail has been a cooperative member since 1983. With a focus in finance & economics, Steve received a Bachelor's Degree from Purdue University. He also has a Master's Degree from Ball State with a focus in Organizational Development. For 19 years, Steve worked in various administrative positions at Hancock Regional Hospital with responsibilities being primarily financial and operational efficiency. Currently, Steve serves on the Board of Indiana Electric Cooperatives and serves on their Executive Committee. He also chairs the IEC Government Relations Committee. He is a director on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) board. CFC provides over 24 billion in financial loans to rural cooperatives throughout the United States. Steve is also a 28-year member of the Rotary Club of Greenfield, serves as Commissioner appointee on the Hancock County Redevelopment Commission and the past Executive Director of the Hancock Hope House and continues to support their mission. His finance background, training in lean process improvement methodologies and facilitation skills in strategic planning are skillsets that have been beneficial to him and his role as a director of NineStar. Steve is currently self-employed with ETL Group and J & D Vail Farms Inc. Steve and his wife Shelley have three children and live in Greenfield.

## DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 5

### CANDIDATE STATEMENT:

NineStar Connect is a leader at the local, state and national levels in the electric and telecommunications industries. We have become leaders in these industries through a strong and clear vision that has been developed through the hard work and passion of both the Board of Directors and the entire staff of NineStar Connect. We are a community partner that is making a difference in the lives of the people and communities we serve. I have been blessed to be a part of this journey for the past few years and feel that I have the right skillsets and experience to continue to add value to the future efforts of our cooperative. Our recent entry into the wet utilities will have a significant impact in the communities in which we all live and I would love to be a part of shaping this very bright and prosperous future. Our potential is only limited by our imagination and we can arrive successfully at that future through a continued focus on the members we serve and the quality of life that is possible through the service NineStar Connect provides.



# 2018 ANNUAL MEETING OF NINE STAR CONNECT

**March 23, 2018**  
**Greenfield Central High School**  
**810 N. Broadway**

- Dinner & Registration begin at 5:00 p.m. for NineStar Connect & NineStar Communications Customers
- Join us for Free Dinner & Cash Prizes!\*
- Health Fair & Free Limited Screenings provided by Hancock Health
- For information on early voting, please visit our website.

Go to

**[www.ninestarconnect.com/annualmeeting](http://www.ninestarconnect.com/annualmeeting)**

Register online for a chance to win one of three \$50 Cracker Barrel® gift cards

or call 888-201-0049

**RSVP by 4pm on March 16<sup>th</sup>**

**[www.ninestarconnect.com](http://www.ninestarconnect.com)**



\*Must be present to win.



# 2018 Scholarship Program

Providing Fifteen  
\$1,000 Scholarships

- As of February 1, 2018, the student's principle residence must be with said student's parent or legal guardian who is a member or customer in good standing with NineStar.
- The student must be a 2017/2018 graduating High School Student.
- The student must have a seven (7) semester minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale or its equivalent, at the time of application.
- Application forms must be submitted to NineStar's South Campus by 3:00pm on **March 2, 2018**.

Application forms are available at **[ninestarconnect.com](http://ninestarconnect.com)** under **Community** and at all local High School guidance offices or may be picked up at any NineStar business office.

NineStar North Campus  
2331 East 600 North  
Greenfield, IN 46140

NineStar South Campus  
2243 East Main Street  
Greenfield, IN 46140

NineStar McCordsville Office  
6045 West Broadway  
McCordsville, IN 46055

NineStar Knightstown Office  
37 East Main Street  
Knightstown, IN 46148

For more information call  
Kim Gerard at (317) 323-2105 or  
email [administration@ninestarconnect.com](mailto:administration@ninestarconnect.com)

