



## OPERATION ROUND UP®

Each quarter a group of Trustees meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received.

Read more on page 6

## OUT & ABOUT!

A showcase of places we've been in the community.

Read more on page 9.

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## NineStar's

# POWERED UP

## NINESTAR INSTALLS NEW EV SUPER CHARGER IN MCCORDSVILLE



SEE PAGE 4

## NEW GENERATOR PROGRAM PAGE 11

## CAMP KILOWATT & YOUTH TOUR PAGE 12





NineStar President shares an update on electric rates. Read more on page 8.



OUR EMPLOYEES MAKE THE DIFFERENCE. HERE'S A CUSTOMER REVIEW FOR VERONICA RUSSELL.

"I JUST WANT TO THANK VERONICA. SHE WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND TO HELP WITH A WATER ISSUE I WAS HAVING."  
CUSTOMER PARSONS

**COVER STORY PAGE 4**

Powered Up: NineStar installs new EV super charger in McCordsville

**OPERATION ROUND UP PAGE 6**

Each quarter a group of trustees meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received.

**LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE TAKES YOUR VOICE TO D.C. PAGE 7**

**OUT & ABOUT! PAGE 9**

A showcase of places we've been in the community.

**GENERAC GENERATORS NOW OFFERED PAGE 11**

**CAMP KILOWATT AND WASHINGTON D.C. YOUTH TOUR 2024 PAGE 12**

*the* COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

**VOLUNTARY & OPEN MEMBERSHIP** ①

**DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL** ②

**MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION** ③

**AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE** ④

**EDUCATION, TRAINING, & INFORMATION** ⑤

**COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES** ⑥

**CONCERN for COMMUNITY** ⑦



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)



The *NineStar Connection* is a publication of NineStar Connect servicing retail and residential customers. Nearly 16,000 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.

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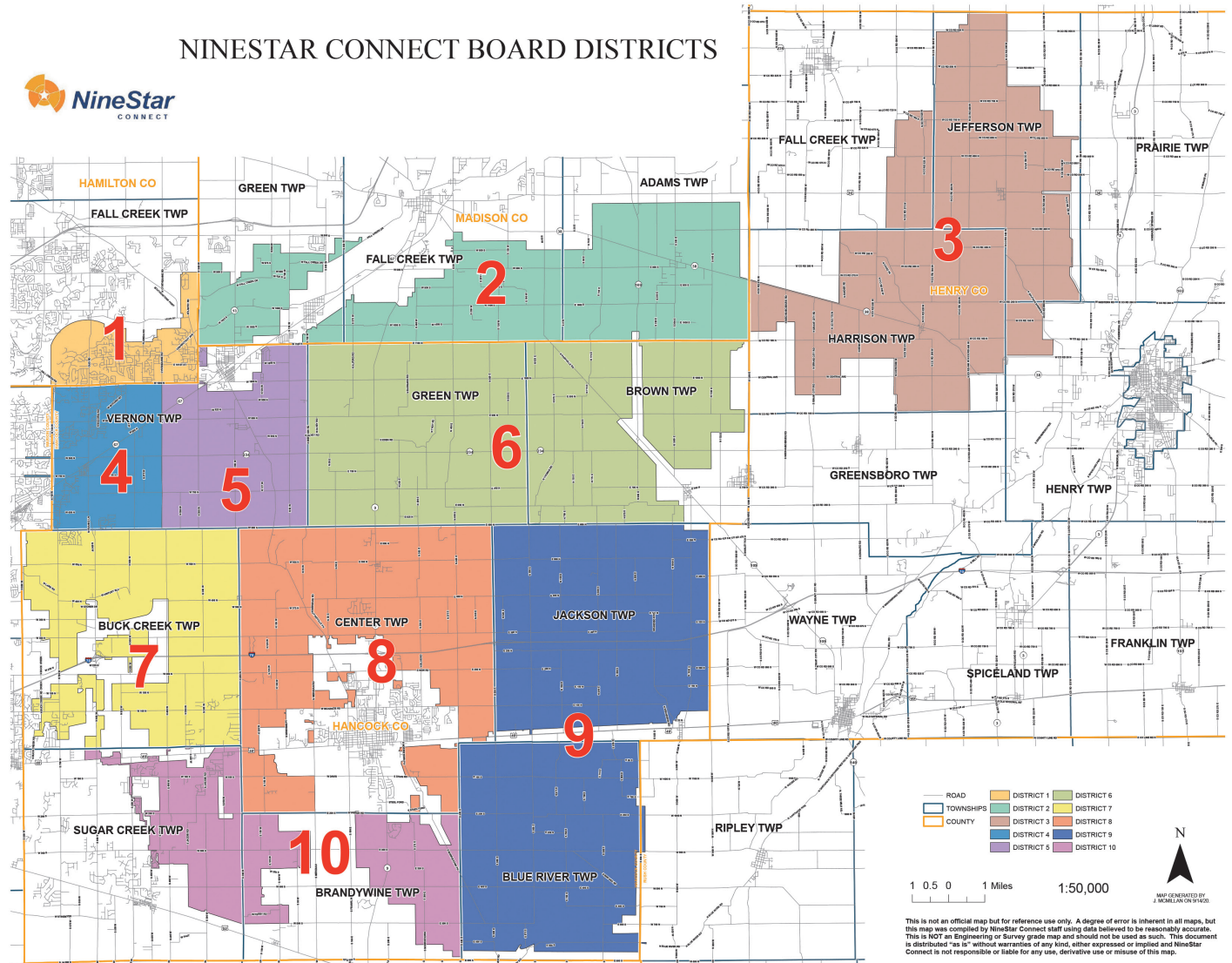
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**NineStar's**

# POWERED UP

## NINESTAR INSTALLS NEW EV SUPER CHARGER IN MCCORDSVILLE

BY JULIE YOUNG



**O**n July 8, NineStar Connect plugged into the future with the installation of a new, Level 3 “DC Fast Charger” in one of the fastest growing areas of the state. Located at Leo’s Market and Eatery at 8956 N. 600 W in McCordsville, it is one of the fastest electric vehicle (EV) chargers available for public use and is the fastest in Hancock County.

Dave Spencer, director of marketing for NineStar Connect said as EVs continue to take hold and become popular with consumers, it is important to have the infrastructure in place to support them. After earmarking the funds for the purchase and installation of the charger this year, the utility cooperative began scouting potential locations throughout their service area.

“This is a great location,” Spencer said. “It’s close to Daniel’s Vineyard and Geist and is just a few miles north of the Mt. Comfort exit at I-70 so it’s really convenient.”

So is the charger itself. The ChargePoint Express (CPE) 250 is engineered to charge both current and next generation electric cars, buses, and trucks quickly. Each station is equipped with two power modules that deliver up to 62.5 kW at a maximum of 250 RPH (miles of range per hour.) The station supports both legacy and future battery packs from 200V to 1,000V and features large format LED screens, easy-to-use swing arms, as well as area lighting for safe charging at night.

Customers looking to charge their vehicles can insert their credit card at the station and plug in their car, paying for the electricity the same way they would in their home – by the kilowatt hour. The rate is .45

cents a Kilowatt used. It typically takes about 30 minutes to fully charge a vehicle using the CPE250, time that customers can pass by making a pit stop or enjoying a delicious meal at Leo’s Eatery.

“That’s one of the reasons why we chose to partner with Leo’s,” said Tommy Nance, vice-president of operations at NineStar Connect. “In addition to being a local business, they are not a typical gas station and convenience store. They offer quality fare to their customers and if they can enjoy some food while charging their EV quickly and conveniently, that’s even better.”

The new NineStar super charger is part of the US Department of Energy EV charging station database which allows drivers to identify nearby charging options based on their needs so that they can plan their road trips (and routes) accordingly. It also gives Leo’s some additional foot traffic from those who find themselves with 30 minutes to kill while their car is being charged.

Nance said that NineStar has plans to install additional super chargers in

Hancock County including two at the new McCordsville Square at Broadway and Mt. Comfort Road, however no other locations have been identified. He said that the initial charger has been outfitted with metering equipment to collect and study usage data in order to measure its effectiveness and to find out what kind of impact it is making on the system.

“We don’t have any data yet, because it has only been installed for a few weeks, but we want to be prepared for the future of EVs while keeping costs in mind as well,” Nance said. “As a utility we need to do our due diligence and make sure that we are prepared and staying ahead of the curve.”

**INFO:** NineStar’s new Level 3 EV super charger

Location: Leo’s Market and Eatery 8956 N 600 W, McCordsville, IN

### SPECIFICATIONS:

2 Power Modules that deliver 62.5 kW to vehicles at a maximum rate of 250 RPH. Supports legacy and future battery packs from 200V to 1,000V. High efficiency power conversion (more than 96 percent efficiency) reduces electricity costs and wasted energy.

### FEATURES:

Large format 20” LED displays station status from a distance.  
10” LCD touchscreen for driver interaction.  
Easy-to-operate swing arms  
Area lighting for safe charging at night.  
Universal connection compatibility for any EV with fast charging capability.



# MT. VERNON POWER MOVES CHECK PRESENTATION

Energy Advisor, Matt Strahl presents a rebate check to the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation for \$10,846.70 that NineStar facilitated through the POWER MOVES program in collaboration with Wabash Valley Power Alliance. This initiative helped Mt. Vernon have energy-efficient lighting that is equipped with occupancy sensors to optimize power usage in their transportation center. They received this rebate check for enhanced energy efficiency, lighting power density reduction, lighting controls, exterior LED lights and a motorized supply fan with a variable frequency drive. We are grateful for our partnership as we continue to make progress and significant strides toward our environmentally friendly initiatives.



# 2024 HANCOCK COUNTY 4-H QUEEN & COURT

Since its inception, NineStar Connect has proudly sponsored the Hancock County Queen Pageant at the 4-H county fair. This year, 11 girls vied for the top title; however, Shailynn Steeno of Fortville was crowned as this year's queen. A big Congratulations to Shailynn and her court:

Queen – Shailynn Steeno

Princess – Kynsey Hasty

Court – Amelia Stone

Court – Aerin Hubbell

Court – Katie Holmes

Miss Congeniality – Alyssa Coffey

The queen and her court stay busy during fair days as they hand out ribbons, greet fairgoers, and other royalty duties throughout the entirety of the fair. With the fair extending the days of the event this year, they had even more added to their “to do” list.

A big “thank you” as all the girls served Hancock County proudly during the fair. We also want to give our best wishes to Shailynn who will be representing Hancock County as she competes for Miss Indiana State Fair in January.





# NineStar Connect OPERATION ROUND UP®

Each quarter a group of Trustees (NineStar customers who volunteer their time to serve on the ORU committee) meet and decide how the extra change that is rounded up from customer's bills are dispersed from the applications that are received. Here are the organizations that benefited from the Operation Round Up fund the second quarter of 2024:

## FCCLA AT GREENFIELD-CENTRAL - \$1,500.00

Funds to help pay for students to attend the national leadership conference in Seattle, WA.

## FUSE - \$2,900.00

Funds to help support their 4 programs - BOSS, CIC, Destiny Color Guard, and Adaptive Swim.

## INDIANA WISH - \$2,500.00

Funding to help kids who are battling life threatening illnesses to fulfill their wish.

## JACKSON-BLUE RIVER TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT - \$6,969.00

Purchase of a thermal drone to help the community with multiple purposes.

## MAXWELL INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS - \$1,500.00

Funding to purchase LEGO robotics kits for their 6th grade STEM class.

## PURDUE EXTENSION HANCOCK COUNTY - \$2,000.00

Funds to help run their Youth Leadership of Hancock County program.

## SHIRLEY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT - \$10,000.00

Funds to help purchase stretcher loading equipment for their ambulances.



The purpose of the Operation Round Up program is to accumulate and distribute funds for charitable purposes to groups/organizations within the NineStar service territory. The source of these funds is the membership of NineStar Connect service customers who voluntarily "round up" their bill to the next highest dollar. The money is accumulated by the co-op and transferred to the NineStar Community Trust.

For ones that want to send in an application for Operation Round-up dollars, the next application deadline is October 4, 2024. Applications can be downloaded from our website at [www.ninestarconnect.com](http://www.ninestarconnect.com) under "About" and then "In the Community".

If you have any questions about the ORU program, please email [OperationRoundUp@NineStarConnect.com](mailto:OperationRoundUp@NineStarConnect.com) or call 317-323-3087

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE 2024 SECOND QUARTER ORU RECIPIENTS!**

# LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE TAKES YOUR VOICE TO D.C.

The annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., serves as an essential platform for sharing with our Congressional Delegation on how decisions made in D.C. impact the communities we serve.

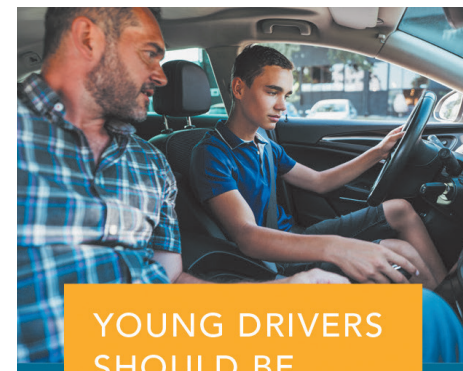
This necessity for political involvement is why cooperative representatives annually travel to Washington, D.C., to engage with legislators. While there, these representatives advocate for you and our rural communities to ensure you have access to reliable and affordable power.

This year, several NineStar board members and key staff attended the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Legislative Conference, where they engaged in meaningful discussions with elected officials and their staff.

Among other issues, a primary concern we brought to their attention is the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent rule for existing coal and new natural gas power generation plants. Not-for-profit electric cooperatives, like NineStar Connect, have a responsibility to represent the best interest of our consumers and are concerned about the impact of this rule. The final rule jeopardizes affordable and reliable electricity by forcing the premature closure of always available power plants while making it harder to permit, site and build critical new power plants. Unfortunately, the final rule comes at a time when reliability concerns are growing and energy demand is increasing across the country. Indiana's electric cooperatives support a responsible energy policy that balances Hoosiers' energy needs with environmental concerns.

Another significant issue we raised is the protection of the rural electric infrastructure that powers our homes, schools, hospitals and businesses. The electric pole network owned by NineStar is also used by cable, telephone and broadband companies. It is incumbent upon our cooperative to make sure that pole infrastructure is structurally sound for all intended uses and meets electric reliability and safety standards. However, legislative or regulatory proposals can jeopardize safety and reliability while driving up costs for electricity. We asked legislators to leave rules about our local electric infrastructure up to state policymakers.

Throughout our meetings, the strong support from cooperative members was evident and impactful. Legislators recognize our role as representatives of you, the rural voters, ensuring that your voices are effectively heard in Washington, D.C.



YOUNG DRIVERS SHOULD BE AWARE OF HAZARDS

## INDIANA ELECTRIC CO-OPS WARN TEEN DRIVERS TO "STAY IN THE CAR."

Stepping out of the car immediately after striking a utility pole may kill you. Here's why:

**Power lines fall.** When a pole is struck, power lines and hardware can break loose.

**Power lines are not insulated.** Grabbing one, grazing up against one, or touching something that's touching it can kill you.

**Electricity seeks the quickest path to ground.** You become that path if you get out of the car and touch a live power line and the ground. If you are alive, you are not creating that deadly "path to ground."

**Call 9-1-1.** After hitting a pole, call 9-1-1. Tell them you hit a pole. And wait patiently. Tell others to stay back. Wait till you know it's safe before exiting.

PLUG INTO SAFETY

# President's Message

By Michael R. Burrow, President & CEO

I'm a big believer that growth is a good thing for a community. To be sure, the type and quality of growth is something that can and should be debated vigorously by members of a growing community but nonetheless, whether to pursue a strategy to grow shouldn't be debated. Allow me to explain.

A few weeks ago, a little noticed article from the Indiana Business Research Center at the Indiana University Kelley School of Business predicted some pretty remarkable population projections for Indiana over the next three decades. Specifically, while the eleven-county area around Indianapolis is expected to grow by around 19% by 2050, more than two-thirds of Indiana's 92 counties will have fewer residents in 30 years than they currently have. Their loss of population likely will offset gains made by metro-adjacent counties like Hancock and Hamilton Counties ultimately leading to near stagnation in population growth for the entire state of Indiana. Regardless of whether you live in a county with a growing, stagnant or declining population, all Hoosiers need to recognize how they might be impacted by this phenomenon and why the subject should be of some importance to them.

First, let's imagine that you live in a county served by an electric cooperative like NineStar. For the sake of illustration and keeping the math simple, let's look at three different scenarios: The first being a 1000-member co-op in a county that has stagnant population. The second is a 1000-member co-op in a county that is losing population and the third is a 1000-member co-op in a county that is gaining population. In each of these scenarios, I've identified an expense in operating the co-op at \$1000 in year one which increases 5% by year 10 and

increases another 5% by year 20. In the scenario with declining population, I've assumed a 3% decline in members by year 10 and another 3% decrease in year 20. Conversely, in the county with a growing population, I've assumed a 3% increase in population by year 10 and another 3% increase by year 20.

As you can see in the table below, the members of the co-op A that serves a county with a stagnant population bear the full burden of any inflationary impacts on the cost of providing the service as both inflation and the cost to each member increase 10% after twenty years.

Co-op A	Year 1	Year 10	Year 20
# of Customers	1000	1000	1000
Cost/Customer	\$1.00	\$1.05	\$1.10

In the county with declining population illustrated in the second table, you can see the members of co-op B are actually bearing an expense significantly greater than the inflation rate. In fact, they are paying an increased cost of the hypothetical expense 70% above the rate of inflation.

Co-op B	Year 1	Year 10	Year 20
# of Customers	1000	970	941
Cost/Customer	\$1.00	\$1.08	\$1.17

In the county with population growth illustrated in the third table, you can see that while members of co-op C are paying more for the hypothetical service in years 10 and 20, they are nonetheless paying 60% less than the rate of inflation. In other words, the population growth minimizes the impact of inflation on the rates the members are paying for the services.

Co-op C	Year 1	Year 10	Year 20
# of Customers	1000	1030	1061
Cost/Customer	\$1.00	\$1.02	\$1.04



Michael R. Burrow

The examples above are simple but illustrate an important concept most people simply do not consider. In areas of stagnant or declining populations, the costs to maintain infrastructure (both utility as well as other public facilities) become a larger burden on the people who remain. Over time, that infrastructure isn't as well-maintained and deteriorates which impacts the quality of life and quality of place. Given enough time, it will not only become a handicap in attracting new residents who could possibly reverse the trend but can also lead to an acceleration of out-migration of existing residents – particularly younger residents who want a higher quality of life and place.

Over the last twenty plus years, the NineStar Connect board has been focused on what it can do to both promote quality growth as well as improving the quality of life and quality of place in the communities we serve. Whether it is investment in the utility infrastructure that delivers the services we provide or investments in our local communities, the drive to insure our community continues to grow and prosper is tantamount to the mission of your non-profit cooperative utility.



# OUT & ABOUT

## COMMUNITY NIGHT

Employees Chase Riggs and Andrew Fields working the booth at Hancock County Community night.



## DONKEY BALL

Winners of the 2024 Donkey Ball Team Champions at the Hancock County 4-H Fair.



## 4H FAIR QUEEN FLOAT

Energy Advisor, Matt Strahl pulling this year's Hancock County 4-H Fair Queen float in the parade.



## BLOOD DRIVE

Employees Rhett Parsons and Rusty Hansen donating blood at NineStar's employee blood drive



## MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Employees Amy Wisheart, Alisha Roland, and Andrew Cox donating their time at the Henry County Mobile Food Pantry



## 4H FAIR

Darrin Couch and Matt Strahl spent lots of time volunteering at this year's Hancock County 4-H Fair



## DONKEY RACE

Congratulations to Robert Simpson for being the individual 2024 Donkey Race Champion at this year's 4-H Fair.



## DOG ADOPTION

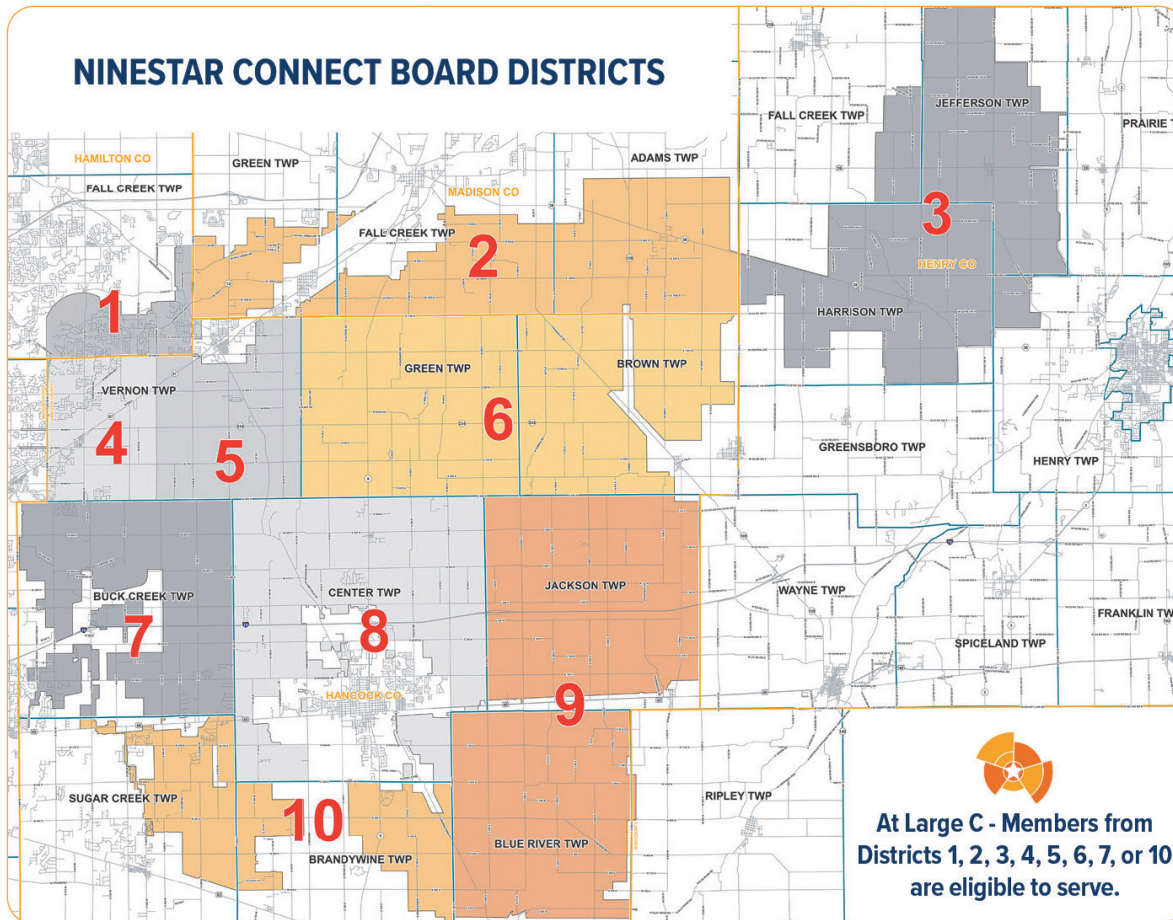
Kellee Johnson, adopts Zeke, a Yorkie from Frenzy Animal Rescue who attended NineStar's employee luncheon.





## NOTICE TO MEMBERSHIP OF UPCOMING ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The 2025 NineStar Connect Annual Meeting will be held on March 14, 2025. The following director districts are up for election: 2, 6, 9, 10, At-Large C.



Any member in good standing residing in districts 2, 6, 9 or 10 is eligible to serve for a director position in these districts. Any member residing in districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 10 is eligible for consideration to serve as the At-Large C director.

Any member interested in being considered for director must first attend one of the mandatory information meetings to be held on October 10th, 16th and November 4th at 6:00 pm. To RSVP for one of the meetings, please send an email to [candidateinfo@ninestarconnect.com](mailto:candidateinfo@ninestarconnect.com).

Meeting attendees will receive the nomination

application form at the information meetings.

Nomination applications may be personally delivered to any NineStar Connect business office that is open to the public. **Deadline** for submission in order to be considered for nomination by the Nominating Committee is **Wednesday, November 6th at 12 o'clock noon.**

Members who have attended the mandatory information meeting and completed the nomination application by the deadline will be eligible to be interviewed by the Nominating Committee on November 11th or 12th.

## 2024 DEBBIE ROBERTS EMPLOYEE EXCELLENT AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED

Debbie Roberts was a former employee who started working at NineStar after her high school graduation and served the company with over 47 years of service until her passing. All who knew Debbie loved her as she exemplified customer service with her warm spirit, commitment to her job, and thoughtful and caring demeanor. After her passing, an award was created in her honor to be presented annually to an employee who best emulates the professionalism and selflessness demonstrated by Debbie.

Nominations were accepted by employees wanting to select a co-worker that checks all the boxes of what Debbie brought to NineStar as an employee and as a person. We're proud to announce that this year's winner of the Debbie Roberts Employee Excellent Award is Bryan Smith. Bryan was nominated by Christa Riggs and Jamie Bell for his continued dedication through his work at NineStar and in the community. Congratulations, Bryan.



# GENERAC GENERATORS NOW OFFERED

NineStar is happy to announce that we are officially an authorized Generac Generator dealer. Why is NineStar getting into the generator business, you may ask? The frequency in severe weather can mean a bigger threat of outages. Generac home standby generators automatically provide backup power whether you're home or away. In the event of a power failure, these reliable systems automatically start up, supplying electricity to your home until utility service is restored.

Permanent installation of a standby generator is not a do-it-yourself project. NineStar has factory-trained technicians who meet Generac's high standards for service and customer satisfaction. We will prepare the installation site outside your home, place the generator, run the natural gas or LP fuel line, install the transfer switch, and make all of the necessary electrical connections. The installation process is fast and easy, minimizing any disruption to daily routines. We will ensure that generators are installed safely and functions properly, giving homeowners peace of mind knowing that they're protected during power outages.

As an authorized dealer, NineStar has a direct line to the manufacturer, giving us access to the latest information and support. We are up-to-date on the latest technology and advancements in the field, allowing us to provide the best possible service.

All generators come with a 5-Year comprehensive warranty. But, it's important to note that this warranty is only valid if the generator is installed by an authorized dealer. By purchasing through us, homeowners can have peace of mind knowing that their warranty is protected. Additionally, each customer will be enrolled in our Generator Energy Savings Program that includes free annual maintenance.

Flexible financing options are also available. Protect your home and family with backup power today and pay overtime with convenient monthly payments. Generac's hassle-free application process makes it easy to apply!

Already have a Generac generator? No problem! You can still enroll in our Generator Energy Savings Program and receive free annual maintenance. Just give us a call or visit our website to enroll.

Contact us to receive a free quote that includes all parts and labor, so you know exactly what you're paying for upfront. Don't let power outages disrupt daily routines and damage appliances and electronic devices.

To learn more or get a free quote, visit [generac.ninestarconnect.com](http://generac.ninestarconnect.com) or call 317-323-0411

## Features & Benefits:



### 5-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY

Included with all home standby generators.



### TRUEPOWER™ TECHNOLOGY

Delivers best-in-class power quality with less than 5% total harmonic distortion for clean, smooth operation of sensitive electronics and appliances.



### BUILT IN THE USA\*

Generac generators and engines are engineered and built in the USA\*

\*Assembled in the USA using domestic and foreign parts.



### 24/7/365 CUSTOMER SUPPORT TEAM

Standing by all day, every day from our headquarters in Wisconsin to answer any questions you might have.

\*When compared to competitive output products

# Power your life

## GENERAC®



Make power outages a thing of the past with a home standby generator.

Purchase a generator from Generac, the industry leader, backed by the experts at Ninestar. To learn more about our generators, scan the QR code or visit [generac.ninestarconnect.com](http://generac.ninestarconnect.com)



Already have a Generac generator? Sign up for our Generator Energy Savings Program and receive FREE Annual Maintenance. Scan the QR code or visit [ninestarconnect.com/generator-program](http://ninestarconnect.com/generator-program)



# CAMP KILOWATT AND WASHINGTON D.C. YOUTH TOUR 2024

Every summer, NineStar Connect looks to sponsor kids in our territory to attend the Washington D.C. Youth Tour and Camp Kilowatt. This year, one student represented NineStar Connect at the D.C. Youth Tour and 4 went to Camp Kilowatt. Camp Kilowatt is a three-day adventure (June 5th-8th) for students going into the seventh grade. Camp Kilowatt takes place at Camp Tecumseh in Brookston, Indiana. Kids get the chance to learn more about energy while making new friends and enjoying fun activities and games such as:

- Electricity generation and transmission education
- Horseback riding
- Bucket truck rides
- Rock climbing
- Archery
- Alternative energy education
- Internet safety
- Zipline
- Live line safety demonstration
- Swimming, and much, much more

Braxton Green (Eastern Hancock),

Beckett Porter (Mt. Vernon), Shreyansh B (Hamilton Southeastern), and Grant Woolston (Mt. Vernon) attended this summer's camp. For the Washington D.C. Youth Tour, Mt. Vernon HS Senior, Vurvian Woolston represented NineStar. The Youth Tour to Washington D.C. (June 16th-23rd) provides young adults with the opportunity to travel to our nation's capital to learn more about how government functions and the complexities of today's electric utility industry, and to meet peers from around the country.

The trip is all-inclusive including travel, meals, lodging and activities. Students enjoyed a visit to Gettysburg, Washington monument, various museum tours, and meetings on Capital Hill with Indiana congressional delegation; all the while making lifelong friends. Vurvian stated "I am so grateful for your sponsorship of my trip. I made a lot of friends and learned a lot. My new friend Natalie and I especially enjoyed seeing the

library of Congress and the beautiful architecture. Throughout this trip, I was able to learn more about making close friends and the way our country is run. Thank you for the trip of a lifetime."

If you have a current high school junior and are interested in attending next year's Youth Tour or a current sixth grader interested in Camp Kilowatt, watch for information this fall/winter from your school's guidance counselors and/or NineStar's website and social media platforms. Application deadline is in March, 2024.





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