

# THE BUZZ

## NEMR

It's Faster! It's Fiber! It's NEMR!

June, 2024  
Volume 27/Issue 6

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## NEMR ADVOCATES FOR RURAL BROADBAND

NEMR's Jennifer Chrisman (Marketing and Sales Manager) and James Kigar (Board of Directors) joined other members of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, in Washington, D.C. in late April to advocate on behalf of rural telecommunication providers.

NEMR, Chariton Valley, Grand River, and Green Hills Communications companies met with Senators Eric Schmitt and Josh Hawley's office staff, and Representative Sam Graves and his office staff to advocate on the need for Universal Service Funds (USF) contribution reform, ending federal taxing of broadband grants, and funding future-proof networks with fiber deployment through the upcoming Farm Bill.

"Congress has seen the need to bridge the digital divide and deliver broadband infrastructure funding," said Chrisman. "However, without USF reform, the cost to sustain the infrastructure will fall on the providers and thus on to the consumers." A USF funding idea proposed by rural broadband providers suggests that streaming services utilizing broadband networks for free, could be charged fees. "Streaming giants like Netflix, Hulu, and others utilize our fiber network to deliver video content to consumers without contributing to its upkeep. This expense is currently borne by us," Chrisman explained.

A recent Missouri Senate bill allows 100% income tax deduction for federal grant funds received to provide or expand access to broadband internet in areas of the state lacking such access. "The federal government continues to tax these grants, resulting in less money available for recipients," said Kigar, "We would like the federal government to follow our state's example."

Rural broadband providers are also advocating for the Senate Farm Bill to uphold a minimum speed requirement of 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload. According to Chrisman, low speeds might not need fiber optic cable and funding could go to providers who cannot provide future-proof broadband infrastructure.



*Pictured with Representative Sam Graves on left are Chrisman and Kigar in center and constituents from GRM, CVC, and GH.*

# GIG COUNTRY



**Annual Meeting**  
Wednesday, June 19, 2024  
6:30 p.m. on Facebook

## VOTING ENDS JUNE 17, 2024

**In appreciation for participating in the online voting, all members who vote will receive a \$10 bill credit in July and be entered in a random drawing to win a cash prize of \$1,000, \$500, or be one of 10 names drawn to win \$100!**

### Voting options:

- Cast your vote when you receive a vote link in an email from the following email address: [noreply@direct-vote.net](mailto:noreply@direct-vote.net).
- Click the **Member Vote** link at [www.nemr.net](http://www.nemr.net). Enter your member number, cast your vote, and click SUBMIT.
- Need help voting? Please call our office during business hours, 660-874-4111.

## Father's Day



Sunday, June 16, 2024

## CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION NOTICE

Your NEMR Capital Credit Allocation Notice is on your June bill. This shows your share of the Cooperative's profits for the previous year. If you had service with NEMR in 2023, you will have a notice on your June bill. The profits of the company are allocated to each member based on the individual member's patronage. Patronage is all member billed telephone services, including long distance, HSI (High Speed Internet) and nemrTV.

The 2023 capital credits that have been allocated are not immediately available to you, but are retained by the cooperative until such time as the board of directors and RUS (Rural Utilities Service) decide the financial situation of the cooperative justifies retiring some of the accumulated capital credits. The retained capital credits are vital as a means of partially funding new plant construction and service enhancements.

Accumulating capital credits and receiving capital credit distributions is another important reason to purchase your communication services from NEMR.

## NEW TECHNICIAN IN MEMPHIS

Justin Williams has joined the NEMR Team as an Installer/Repairman. He's a hometown guy, having grown up in the Memphis community. Justin is married to Cecily, and they have two boys, Silas (15) and Eli (13). With all his years coaching kids' football, some might call him "coach". Congratulations and a warm welcome to Justin!



## DOWNING DEPOT MUSEUM



NEMR donates prizes for The Downing Depot Museum's annual fundraising Smorgasbord Luncheon and gives a monetary donation to the building maintenance fund.

Picture: Jim Sharp, volunteer and NEMR's Chrisman

## MILAN GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

It's official! Rural Milan (parts of Sullivan & Linn Counties) are getting fiber from NEMR. A groundbreaking ceremony took place just outside of Milan on Friday, May 3, 2024. Present for this historic groundbreaking were Representative Danny Busick, Sullivan County Associate Commissioner, Rye Page, and many other community leaders.

"Getting this type of service is very valuable," said Busick. "There are people who want to move to smaller areas. If they don't have fiber available, they can't work online. This gives the same information to those in rural areas as they can give to those in urban areas."

Contractors will lay 255 miles of fiber giving nearly 500 homes and businesses the opportunity to connect. The project planned completion is by the end of this year.

NEMR received the \$8.9 million grant last year from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to deploy fiber-to-the-premise projects in Putnam, Sullivan, and Linn Counties. The Putnam County project was completed in 2023. The total estimated rural Milan project cost will be near \$11.1 million.



Front row L to R: Nick Gardner, CO Tech; Kayla Blaser, Accounting, Representative Danny Busick, R-Newtown; Michele Gillespie, CEO; and Kyle Rogers, Plant Mgr.



### NEW DIRECTORY LISTINGS

Hines Grain Farms Inc	660-328-6294
Lawrence, Dale L	660-355-4330
Lapsley, Tina	660-465-2288
Borron, R	660-766-2337
Wright, E.W.	660-945-3022
Wright Logging	660-945-3022
Shannan, Patrick	660-945-3096
Bowen, Joseph M	660-945-3725
Unionville License Office	660-947-3621

Michele Gillespie, CEO

Board of Directors

Rick Kent  
Jim Kigar  
Mark Grgrurich  
Dennis Fechtling

Shane Bradshaw  
Scott Aylward  
Kenneth Hauk, Jr.  
Junior Bertram



Equal opportunity provider and employer.

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