



**3 Rivers Southern Town Hall Meeting in Virginia City, May 2007**

Winners of the gift certificates were: Raymond Harrison of Sheridan (\$25); Dan Doornbos of Alder (\$25); and Krista Berry of Sheridan (\$50). Thank you to all attendees!

**NEW EMPLOYEES**



**Diane**  
Call Center  
Office Department

**3 RIVERS INFORMATION**

**Service Information**

3 Rivers Communications Divisions  
3 Rivers Telephone, Internet and Long Distance  
Fairfield: 406.467.2535 or 800.796.4567  
Great Falls: 406.216.2535  
Conrad: 406.271.2535 Shelby: 406.424.8535  
Payments: P.O. Box 489, Fairfield, MT 59436-0489  
Correspondence: P.O. Box 429, Fairfield, MT 59436  
3 Rivers DBS - Satellite TV/Internet Services  
406.467.2535 or 800.796.4567  
P.O. Box 159, Fairfield, MT 59436-0159

Website: www.3rivers.net  
E-mail: 3rt@3rivers.net  
On-line Billing: https://ebill.3rivers.net

**Board of Trustees**

- Steve Krogue, Interim General Manager, 467.2535
- Harry R. Barnes, Browning, 338.3440
- Kirk Dige, Big Sky, 995.4769
- William Dringle, Ennis/Harrison, 682.7489
- Brian D. McCollom, Choteau/Pendroy/Dupuyer, Valier, 466.2443
- Keith Good, Carter/Highwood/Great Falls, 734.5371
- Howard Johnson, Brady/Conrad/Power East Conrad/Valier/Shelby, 627.2121
- Michael Johnson, Fairfield/Augusta/Ft. Shaw/Helena, 467.2350
- Mary Hill, Raynesford/Geyser/Neihart/Belt/Stockett, 738.4220
- Loren Tucker, Melrose/Sheridan/Twin Bridges Lima/Virginia City, 843.5566

**SecureIT Plus - Now With Parental Controls**

3 Rivers is pleased to announce parental controls have been added to SecureIT Plus, our Internet security software. All customers who use this software now have the added protection of content filtering, access and time management controls, and monitoring/reporting capabilities, at no additional cost!

After May 1 all 3 Rivers SecureIT Plus users have automatically had their software upgraded with this new parental control enhancement during the regularly scheduled live update.

If you're a 3 Rivers dial-up customer and are considering upgrading to high speed DSL Internet, now is the time. SecureIT Plus is free for one computer when you sign up for 3 Rivers' DSL service.

It is available for purchase by dial-up



customers or for additional computers for DSL users for \$3.95 per month (assisted installation is available for a one-time fee of \$4.95).

SecureIT Plus is a comprehensive suite of fully managed and fully automated security software featuring antivirus, patch management, firewall, pop-up blocker, and spyware detection and removal, all with free 24/7 technical support. Visit [www.3rivers.net](http://www.3rivers.net) or call a 3 Rivers customer service representative at 1-800-796-4567 for more information. ■

**Attention current SecureIT Plus users:**

The parental controls feature will initially be inactive until you activate it and proceed through the menus. To enable Parental Controls, open the SecureIT Management Console by right-clicking on the gold padlock found in your icon tray. At the Management Console, select the "Parental Controls" button on the left hand navigation bar. At the Parental Controls page, click the white box entitled "Enable Parental Controls" in order to activate the service and begin setup. For technical support, call 1-877-373-3320. ■

**And the New Board Trustee is...**

Big Sky area co-op members have a new face representing them on the 3 Rivers Board of Trustees. During the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative in March, Kirk Dige was elected to the Board for a three year term. Upon his selection Kirk commented, "I am excited to learn more about the communications business and to be part of the successful, efficient and economical operation of the cooperative."

Since moving to Big Sky in 1986, Kirk has seen rapid changes and is dedicated to giving back to the community. He has donated his time to serve as a volunteer fireman, is a former trustee on the Gallatin Canyon Consolidated Rural Fire District and served on various condominium association boards. He went on to add, "I look forward to representing my fellow members in the Big Sky area. I believe 3 Rivers has a dynamic future." Kirk is currently a broker for ERA Landmark Real Estate in Big Sky. ■



**Kirk Dige**  
Big Sky Trustee

**Montana Homefront Contributors Acknowledgment**

We'd like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals who contributed to the Montana Homefront this issue:  
*Susan Wilson, Don Serido, Callie Moss*



**Montana homefront**

3 RIVERS COMMUNICATIONS NEWSLETTER

JULY / AUGUST 2007

**Meet 3 Rivers' DBS Department**

Some companies tout customer service but at 3 Rivers we live it...and we have the fresh baked cookies to prove it!

Our Customer Service Representatives in the Satellite Division have received home made cookies, coupons for pizza and even a carving of a bear as thank yous from satisfied customers. Bonnie Mayer, DBS Operations Manager, explained that providing excellent customer service has always been a big part of the way 3 Rivers does business. The Satellite Division started in 1994 with 5 employees and now has 20 people providing customer service for 3 Rivers' satellite TV (DirecTV) and satellite Internet (WildBlue) products. According to Mayer, you can't be this successful without great employees. "The people are the best part of my job," she said.

Rhonda, a DirecTV/WildBlue CSR, had a memorable moment with a satellite TV customer who had lost reception. She had the customer try several quick fixes that didn't work. She contacted a technician and together they tried a couple of things but the customer still had no reception. She asked the customer if there could be something blocking his dish. "Oh no," he assured her. He said he knew there was nothing in front of the dish. After she brainstormed a couple more ideas with the customer and the technician, finally exhausting all possibilities, Rhonda convinced the customer to go outside and check his dish. When he came back in and said he knew what the problem was, Rhonda was surprised he figured it out so quickly. It turns out someone had stolen his dish! Hence no



reception, problem solved! Rhonda sums up it up by saying, "The best part of my job is taking a challenging situation where the customer is frustrated and working to find a solution that leaves the customer happy." That sounds like a great definition of "excellent customer service."

The Satellite Division provides customer service for 3 Rivers DirecTV customers and WildBlue satellite Internet customers. They also have an after-hours staff that takes calls for 3 Rivers telephone customers from 5 p.m. until 10 p.m. on week nights. The department in addition has DirecTV and WildBlue technicians to help with installation and technical problems along with general office personnel that handle accounting, payment and collection duties. This last group also includes employees that process service orders. As DirecTV changes its procedures 3 Rivers must make sure to maintain compliance with DirecTV requirements. Mayer pointed out that they are an extremely busy department and all the employees have to be good at multi-tasking.

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**Upcoming Events**

- Ennis 4th of July parade July 4
- Browning Indian Days parade July 14
- Ennis 3 Rivers Charity Golf Tourney July 14
- Fairfield Swim Day parade July 21
- Great Falls Montana State Fair July 27 - August 5
- Twin Bridges Madison County Fair August 9 - August 12
- Big Sky Country Fair & parade August 11
- Lima Lima Days August 11
- Great Falls Co-op Nite @ the Ballpark August 25

**Come see us!**

....continued from front  
 "Meet 3 Rivers' DBS Department"

She went on to add how surprised she was when DBS first started at how many more calls 3 Rivers receives from a TV customer compared to a telephone customer. "You may get one call a year from a telephone customer," Mayer commented, "but TV customers tend to call more frequently." These calls run the gamut from questions about changes in programming, information for new packages or deals, equipment upgrades, pay per view assistance, billing questions, and trouble shooting.

Another surprise Mayer encountered when starting in the Satellite Division was how important TV service was to many of her customers. She mentioned that the reason 3 Rivers went into this area in the first place was to, "offer our customers a service that they wanted. We were excited about this product and knew we could do it well and be successful." She added, "I never realized how essential this was to people until I started noticing that they would let their telephone service get disconnected but not their TV."

Steve, a technician, knows that it's all about the service. He commented, "The customer appreciates the time I spend helping them and that's a great satisfaction for me." And while Bonnie and Rhonda mentioned the *best* things about their job, Steve took a different approach. "The *worst* part of my job is that when I'm not able to help someone, I feel like I've let them down. I'm a problem solver and so it's important to be able to help them," he said. Another great description of customer service at 3 Rivers.

Each division at 3 Rivers is proud to uphold the tradition of providing excellent customer service to all members of the cooperative. In fact, after 54 years of serving rural Montana we all have our favorite stories of memorable customers and wonderful successes in "taking that frown and turning it upside down." ■

## Fiber Optics - The Best Choice for Communications Services

3 Rivers Communications is in the process of upgrading major portions of its network, using fiber optic cable whenever feasible. Fiber optic technology is a reliable and efficient way to serve our telephone, Internet and future video customers and it positions us to better meet needs yet to come.

Most people currently receive telephone and Internet services via copper wire, which has a limited bandwidth capacity compared to fiber optic cable. The farther your home or office is from a central office, the slower your data delivery is. Fiber optic cable is a thin strand of glass that allows pulses of light (data) to pass from one end to the other. Light can travel great distances over fiber optic cable without any weakening of the signal, so the speed of data delivered via fiber optic cable is not distance dependent. And with a much greater bandwidth capacity, it can transfer more data to and from your home or office at a much faster rate.

3 Rivers has long range plans to replace copper lines with fiber optic cable running all the way to customer premises in many exchanges. We refer to this as "fiber-to-the-premises" or FTTP. This process started in Fairfield in the fall of 2006 and will continue in Sheridan and Twin Bridges in the summer of 2007. FTTP allows us to provide even more capacity for fast transfers of large amounts of data.

3 Rivers is developing the capability to deliver phone service, high speed Internet and 3 Rivers' own digital TV service (3RTV - coming soon) all over one line to most customers, whether that line is copper or fiber. However, by providing fiber optic cable to the edge of a property or directly to a home or office, customers will have additional bandwidth capabilities for future applications. While it's impossible to know what your future bandwidth needs will be, we know for sure that fiber optic cable will be much more capable of handling those needs than will copper. Other broadband technologies used today, such as wireless and cable modem, are already struggling to provide bandwidth-heavy services. Fiber optics ensures that as more products and services become broadband enabled, your connection is powerful enough to take it—today and tomorrow. ■

### 3 Rivers News

#### 811—The Easy Way To Call Before You Dig!

3 Rivers customers can now dial a 3-digit number—811—to get a free location check for communications, utilities, and other buried equipment while undertaking excavation or construction activities. Dial the Utilities Underground Location Center (UULC) at 811 from any 3 Rivers landline phone at least two business days before you dig to ensure that you don't accidentally damage buried facilities. You can also call 1-800-424-5555 from any phone. This FREE service will help you avoid paying for potentially expensive repairs—you are liable and 3 Rivers will bill you for their costs if applicable.

#### 911 Fee Increase

A new bill passed by the 2007 Montana legislature increases the fee imposed for 911 emergency services from \$.50 per month to \$1.00 per month. This increase will be reflected in your July bill.

#### 3 Rivers LD Now TTY Compatible

3 Rivers Long Distance service is now compatible with TTY devices that enable deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled customers to use the telephone. For more information, call 1-800-796-4567 (467-2535 local) or check out the Consumer Tips page on [www.3rivers.net](http://www.3rivers.net).

### Network Upgrade

3 Rivers is currently undergoing a system-wide upgrade to its network. We are adding fiber optic cable, changing out switches and upgrading equipment as part of our ongoing commitment to providing our customers with the best and most up-to-date telecommunications service available. We appreciate your patience as there may be short term changes or interruptions in your service during this time. ■

## 3 Rivers 2007 Banner Scholarship Winners



Amy Allen  
Lima High School



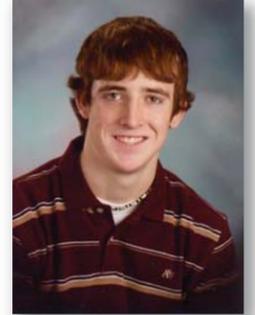
Ashley Rossmiller  
Dutton/Brady High School



Ashton Rossmiller  
Centerville High School



Brittnee' Klick  
Simms High School



T J Murphy  
Augusta High School



Crissy Hill  
Power High School



Donnetta Gondeiro  
Highwood High School



Emily Breeding  
Valier High School



Erica Lee Hansen  
Geyser High School



Adam Banks  
Twin Bridges High School



Laurell McAlpine  
Valier High School



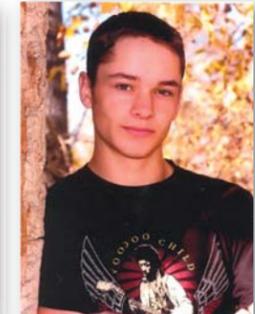
Natalie Veis  
Fairfield High School



Savannah Anderson  
Belt Valley High School



Stacey Buche  
Centerville High School



Jeff Bluett  
Sheridan High School



Tori Eichelberger  
Harrison High School

The future of tomorrow is today's children. Keeping with the cooperative philosophy of giving back to our members the Trustees and staff at 3 Rivers are pleased to offer \$9000.00 annually in scholarships to the youth in our local communities. Our Banner Scholarship program is in its sixth year with over 200 students receiving financial assistance from 3 Rivers to continue their education and fulfill their dreams for tomorrow. ■

**Not Pictured:**  
 Browning High School  
 Conrad High School  
 Heart Butte High School  
 Shelby High School

**Schools Not Participating:**  
 Choteau High School  
 Ennis High School