

BEK beacon

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BEK Sports Fall Season Just Around the Corner

Imagine... Katrina is a typical grandmother living in the area served by BEK where BEKTV is available. Katrina is a regular at her local senior center and at Wednesday's lunch her friend, Pete, approaches her to say, "Hey, Katrina, I saw your grandson Thomas on TV last night; his block was amazing; that play was probably the turning point for the game and his team's victory!" "Wasn't that something?" Katrina comments, beaming with pride. "I wasn't feeling quite up to par so I didn't go to the game; I'm sure glad I was able to see him play on TV, that Thomas is such a good boy."

Who wouldn't want to have the option of viewing your local high school sports team on TV? There is nothing like actually attending the game, but sometimes the best seat in the house, is in YOUR house. Let's face it; for various reasons we can't always make it to every volleyball, football or basketball game. BEK Sports offers an excellent alternative by broadcasting several local high school games LIVE throughout the year. This past season BEK Sports broadcasted 127 Live games including 21 football games, 36 volleyball games, 25 girls basketball games, 31 boys basketball games, 13 wrestling matches and one hockey game. Additionally, BEK Sports broadcasted the 2009 State Volleyball Tournament live from Minot and the 2010 State Wrestling Tournament live from Fargo. All in all, BEK Sports broadcasted live games from 44 different cities reaching thousands of people.

Could you ask for more? Our BEKTV members have. They said, "Please let us see more of our territory games." We heard their requests and our upcoming schedule will prove it. Next season's goal is two LIVE broadcasts per week with BEK service area teams. Our imaginary grandmother, Katrina, will not only be able to see some of her grandson's home games, but she may also get to watch him in a rival venue that is also located in the BEK area. Illnesses, disabilities and weather are just some of the factors that keep people from attending games. Hopefully BEK Sports can fill the void. We're looking forward to the upcoming sports season; we offer valuable TV content giving you the opportunity to watch some of the best local sports talents with just a click on your remote.

BEK Sports can be found on BEKTV's channels 28, 29 and 30. Look for the fall season lineup of BEK Sports coming soon and don't forget to check us out online at www.beksports.com.



Dates to Remember

- August 2
August Bills Mailed
- August 11
Disconnect Day
- August 20
Reminder Notices Mailed
- August 20
Calendar Photo Contest Deadline
- September 6
Labor Day, BEK Office Closed

Results of the BEK Communications Cooperative Annual Meeting

"Right 'BEK' at Ya" Food Drive:

Approximately \$720 in merchandise and \$600 cash were collected from the employees, Board of Directors and members. Checks and/or food items were distributed in July right "BEK" to eight local food pantry distribution sites.



New Players on the BEK Sports Employee Roster

Central Region



Sometimes parents have a tremendous influence on their children's walk in life. Case in point – **Scott Loerch** begins a new career path with BEK Sports to realize his passion for sports and

broadcasting. He credits his interests to his father Roger, who is in the N.D. Babe Ruth Baseball Hall of Fame for coaching and in the N.D. Wrestling Hall of Fame for broadcasting.

Scott joined BEK Sports on July 1, 2010 as Live Event Director for the Central area of BEK Sports Network. This means that Scott will be one of the local BEK Sports talents in the BEK Communications service area at local high school sporting events. Among other things, Scott has been a freelance videographer since 1993 doing a wide range of freelance work including wedding videography and working with the "Antiques Roadshow" on PBS, the "PBR" for Versus Network and also work with NBA TV. For nine years, he was an editor for KNDX FOX 26 where he became the Production Director in 2005.

Scott knows about North Dakota high school sports from attending Harvey High School. He knows about big sports rivalry from attending the University of North Dakota, home of the UND Fighting Sioux. He also knows about communications and broadcasting from attending the Baillie School of Broadcasting in Seattle, W.A. He brings this knowledge and experience to the BEK Sports staff and he is anxious to work along side the youth in our area to produce top notch shows for the BEK Sports audiences.

If you ask Scott what brings him to BEK Sports, he will say, "I am very excited about the growth of BEK Sports and I love the opportunity to be involved in live sports action." Based on past years' performances, our local high school teams, fans and BEK Sports crews will give Scott what he needs to help produce quality TV sports action.

Scott is from Bismarck. This summer, as time allows, he has been trying to master

the game of golf and when winter comes, he will be following the UND Fighting Sioux Hockey team's progress. In the past, Scott has served on various civic boards. He's been a volunteer firefighter, president of the Harvey Chamber of Commerce and president of the Fraternal Order of Eagles. His focus now is the upcoming BEK Sports fall season; let's show him what we've got!



Ryan Scott Camden also joins BEK Sports in the Central region as Broadcast Director/Play-by-Play. He will assist in bringing the region the best in high school sports coverage. Whether

he's in front of the camera or behind the scenes, Ryan plans to capture the emotion and passion of the game and relaying that to the viewer. He wants to impress you because he knows how important the various events and games BEK broadcasts are to its communities. The local high school sports arena is now his new playground.

Graduating Cum Laude and fresh from Ball State University, Ryan has won some impressive competitions. He finished 2nd in the Indiana Association of School Broadcasters 2010 College Competition for his radio coverage of the Ball State Football team and he is Emmy-nominated for his work on a live weekly, sports show.

Ryan began work July 19, 2010 to be a part of the BEK Sports team; a team that he sees as growing and expanding in the right directions.

We suspect that you're not going to miss anything in a broadcast with this guy's input because he shamelessly announced, "I LOVE sports. I could argue sports for days!" So to get the talk started, let's just fill you in on a little secret: Ryan is a die-hard Indianapolis Colts fan and an avid follower of Peyton Manning.

From Muncie, Indiana to his new home in North Dakota, Ryan will have many opportunities to explore some of his off duty interests as well, like reading (you'll have all winter to do this Ryan) and scuba

diving (Ryan, we've got some lakes getting bigger by the day, so check them out and have fun!).

West Region



Jeris DeBoer hales from Sioux Center, I.A. where a young man's goals can reach heights high above the cornstalks. Jeris joined Nick Hulberg on the BEK Sports West team on April 1, 2010 as

Live Event Director. Jeris has an associate degree in television production from Brown College in Mendota Heights, M.N. and now he gets to put elements of that degree to work.

One of the many advantages of growing up in any rural community is the work ethic you develop and hold tight to. When you are raised on a farm in Iowa you can work in a general store, learn the meaning of full service as a gas station attendant or become skilled in the local meat market. These are just some of the work experiences Jeris had to help him earn a supervisory position at Up North Plastics while attending college to earn his degree. Jeris' journey has now led him to BEK Sports West.

Nearly one year after completing his degree, Jeris is joining BEK. Why? Because he wants to combine the best of two worlds, sports and TV. He is pumped about directing live events and delivering exciting sports action to those who want to view it on TV.

Minot is currently the home for Jeris and his family. Jeris is fortunate to have three special ladies in his life – his wife Rebecca and his daughters, Nevaeh and Faith.

Jeris enjoys playing basketball, riding bike, golfing and last but not hardly least, spending time with his family.

Please join us in welcoming Scott, Ryan and Jeris.



BEK

To Our Roots



with employee Randy Sugden

Somewhere between BEK telephone repairmen scaling poles (steadied by men and pickups) and communications troubles being fixed with the aid of a computer network, Randy Sugden entered the BEK “scene” of operations.

When working in a rural area, familiarity and understanding of the demographics is an excellent start to a good working relationship with your customers. Randy came to BEK territory where “ag” is the main industry, similar yet different, from the rich

Red River soils of Hallock, M.N. Hallock’s people are mainly Swedish and Norwegian so we’re pretty much speaking the same language here, right Randy?

Randy’s BEK beginnings started in October of 1994. He was hired as a Direct Broadcast System (DBS) TV/Cable TV installer/repairman. He crossed the brand new threshold of the BEK headquarters to find the company transforming from a telephone provider to a communications provider, nearly doubling the customer base less than two years after his arrival.

His world of satellite and cable TV duties changed quickly to include Internet. Then satellite and cable TV were eliminated with the focus on telephone and Internet connections only to come full circle by the introduction of digital TV, today’s current BEKTV product. Not only do we keep Randy occupied with various service offerings, but we also keep him busy in all the BEK exchanges. He used to handle the areas of Tuttle, Tappen, Robinson, Pettibone and Dawson. Today he is a roamer, doing installations for telephone, Internet, TV and phone systems wherever he is needed.

His main interest lies in trouble shooting. He looks forward to the solution, whether the problem is mice in the pedestal (not so enjoyable) or a bad cable pair. It’s a great day when he is able to get to the bottom of an issue and the end result is a good connection. Since the beginning of phone connections, there have always been troubles and if you’re going to have multiple connections, like phone, Internet and TV, the troubles naturally increase. Randy’s job consists of understanding the issues his customers are experiencing. He then has the software tools to evaluate the problem and begin his search in the communications circuit between BEK’s central office and the customer’s home. He uses various test meters when troubleshooting, both on cable and in the customers’ home. Sometimes it’s a simple solution and sometimes it’s frustrating, such as a problem that appears, then disappears and then reappears randomly. If Randy was “MacGyver,” it wouldn’t be a problem, but he doesn’t use tape, bobby pins or matchbooks to fix our troubles. Randy??

Randy is a free spirit; enjoying his time off leisurely fishing, tinkering on model railroading, motorcycle riding and gardening. Gardening leads to cooking and cooking leads to entertaining which Randy has done on occasion. Remember when turkey fryers were ever so popular? Some BEK employees got together for a going away celebration for a co-worker and Randy’s two specialty turkey entrees with special seasonings and herbs would have made even the “Colonel” drool. Seriously folks, recipe swapping was a hot topic at this little get together.

Randy doesn’t have to venture far to enjoy a good fishing spot; he likes the short commute north of Steele to Lake Josephine or Lake Fretum to try his luck at his preferred catch of the day, “the illusive Walleye.” Sometimes Randy heads south to the Linton area, where he will launch his fishing vessel in another favorite spot, Langelier Bay.

For the ultimate freedom ride, you might want to join Randy as he straps on his boots, jacket and helmet for a Harley ride down Highway 1804, following the Missouri River or just taking off in no particular direction just enjoying the countryside with its beautiful terrain, fields of grain, livestock and wildlife. Hey Randy, stop gawking – you need to keep your eyes on the road!

Emily Hulm Awarded \$1000

Electronic Telecommunications Scholarship

Emily Hulm won a \$1000 scholarship at the 10th annual Electronic Telecommunications Academy held June 6 – 11, 2010 on the campus of Bismarck State College.

Emily was very surprised to be one of the four scholarship winners at the 2010 Academy. She has been toying with a couple of career avenues and her experience at the academy plus winning a scholarship may have tipped the scale for her decision of choosing computer science. Emily says the highlight of the academy for her was the tour at KFVR News Station. "I thoroughly enjoyed learning about all the wiring and connections, how the backgrounds are used, their computer systems and lighting; everything was amazing."

Emily Hulm from Zeeland and Destiny Osborne and Aaron Kocher of Hague were all sponsored by BEK Communications and they were among the sixteen high school students from across North Dakota who were selected to participate this year's Academy. The academy was a great success thanks to the attendance of our area students. Students from the BEK service area had the opportunity to learn about the Electronics/ Telecommunications industry and explore the possibility of seeking a career in the industry.

Emily encourages other students to attend the Academy. She says, "You've got nothing to lose and much to gain. If given the chance to attend, go for it; you're gathering good information and it's a great opportunity."

The Academy is sponsored by Telephone Apprenticeship Training and Safety, Bismarck State College, Bismarck Public Schools, BEK Communications and several local independent telephone companies throughout the region.

Congratulations to Emily Hulm!



Emily Hulm accepts \$1000 Scholarship award from Dr. Larry Skogen, President of Bismarck State College.



Destiny Osborne receives an Academy certificate from Le Gullingsrud, electronics teacher from Bismarck Public Schools.



Le Gullingsrud, electronics teacher from Bismarck Public Schools, presents Academy certificate to **Aaron Kocher**.

NEW MEMBERS

- | Linton
Cabin Creek Coffee Shop
& Consignments 254-5593
Crouch Jacqueline 254-5538
Fries James 254-5560
Garry Ashley 254-1171
John Beck Insurance, LLC.. 254-4397
Lipp Lee A. 254-4257
Miller Delores 254-5599
Sayler Angela 254-5569
- | Mckenzie-Menoken
Kvasager Erin 673-3277
- | Napoleon
Huss M 754-2369
Meier Tony 754-2064
Wills Brian & Tracey 754-2075
- | Pettibone - Lake Williams
Goter Dean & Deb 273-6881
- | Steele
Bowsher Thom Rev
& Deb 475-2670
Linsenmeyer Eliot
& Christa 475-2186
Wheeler Curtis & Debbie 475-2181
- | Sterling-Driscoll-Moffit
Berg Suzette 387-4465
Pegors Dean 387-4465
- | Strasburg - Hague
Buechler Ferdinand 336-2719
Gabriel Robin & Kimberly ... 336-2822
Kiemele Freda 336-2817
Mittleider Mervin 336-2814
Wiest Trevelyan & Debra 336-2818
- | Tuttle
Saner Angela & Jay 867-2811
- | Wilton
Cleary Building Corp 734-6032
Dorothy's Anytime Daycare 734-6770
Hagseth Troy & Kristie 734-6050
Taylor Terry 734-6038
Walters Jeff & Summer 734-6044
- | Wing-Arena
Siirtola Henry 943-2377
Thorson Nicole 943-2487
- | Wishek
Klipfel K 452-2095
Kranzler Tabitha 452-2093

National Broadband Plan Causes Uncertainty for All North Dakota Communications Cooperatives, Like BEK

National Broadband Plan

As a part of the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) passed by the US Congress in February of 2009, Congress mandated that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) develop a National Broadband Plan (NBP) to make broadband Internet service available nationwide, much like telephone service and electricity. In March of 2010 the FCC published to Congress the plan which is designed around, among other things, the use of the existing Universal Service Fund (USF) cost support mechanism, which is vital to the financial health of most rural telephone cooperatives, like BEK. The idea of transitioning the existing USF mechanism to build out broadband Internet services is not bad on the surface because BEK currently uses these funds to deploy phone service, fiber, broadband and digital TV services. However, as we begin to understand this plan, we see that it compromises the future of all rural communications cooperatives including BEK.

Second-Class Citizens

The most disturbing part of the NBP is that it discriminates against the entire rural population of the country. The FCC Chairman outlined one objective of this plan in a news release, which is to provide 100 Mbps to 100 million homes (all cities) by 2020. This is an exciting goal, but this goal excludes the remaining 36 million rural homes, like yours. In the NBP it states that the rural homes will not be funded to support Internet speeds of 100 Mbps, but will only be funded to support Internet speeds of 4 Mbps, which is less than most BEK members receive today. It seems to me that the rural homes, those that are the furthest distance from the conveniences of the cities, are in greater need of high speed Internet, than those who live within the conveniences of the cities, especially for rural businesses, schools and farms. This is a form of institutionalized discrimination, creating a digital broadband Internet divide, when the policies that are drafted within the Washington D.C. Beltway, define our rural citizens as second-class.

The Economics of BEK

BEK has invested in and operates a \$65 million network which is used to provide phone service, broadband Internet service, digital television service, medical communications, emergency services, distance learning, cellular tower connections, cable TV service and business communications. Virtually all of

the communications provided within BEK's 5,700 square mile service territory passes through this network. The revenue that BEK receives, which supports the operation, maintenance, expansion and upgrades of this network, is approximately \$13 million per year. Within the \$13 mm, only \$1.7 mm is collected directly from BEK members through local service charges and related items; \$1 mm of miscellaneous revenue and the bulk of the revenue \$9.3 mm is received from the existing federal USF mechanism which supports smaller, higher-cost to serve rural areas and has its foundation in the 1934 Telecommunications Act; and Access Charges which compensate BEK for state and interstate long distance telephone calls carried over the BEK network, both which have now become part of the NBP.

Policy

Decades ago, Congress established a universal service policy for telephone communications, which required rural areas have access to communications services at prices that are affordable and reasonably comparable to those available in urban areas. BEK Communications Cooperative has fulfilled these obligations for 58 years and most recently has completed 60% of its Fiber to the Home project based on assumptions that the regulators would support this same universal service philosophy for broadband. Should the policies contained in the NBP come to pass, all rural communities (including those served by BEK) will find themselves on the slow side of the broadband digital divide in the future. This in turn will raise the cost of your communications tremendously, which will be devastating to our economies, quality of life and economic opportunities.

Take Action Now

Please contact your congressional representatives and urge them to support regulatory action that ensures that Universal Service Funds will be available to High Cost areas, comparable service speeds will be available at comparable market prices and equal access to broadband for all Americans. You will find several letters on our website which can be downloaded, personalized and sent to our congressional representatives and the Federal Communications Commission FCC. For this information please go to www.bektel.com and click on "National Broadband Plan Info" along the left side navigation.



Derrick Bulawa
GM & CEO
BEK Communications Cooperative



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June Trivia Winners:

D. Dale Ketterling, Wishek;
Denise Stevens, Steele;
Lavonne Hochhalter, Wilton;
Mark Mehlhoff, Arena and
Dale Boelz, Wilton.



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- Virgil Horner..... Strasburg336-7208
District III
- Leo Meier..... Hague336-7258
District III
- Vickie Martin..... Linton254-4577
District III
- Derrick Bulawa, CEO/General Manager,
Manager Feedback..... 701-475-1234
managerfeedback@bektel.com

Beacon Trivia Questions

- BEKTV customers can watch BEK Sports on channels _____, _____ and _____.
- BEK CEO, Derrick Bulawa, advises BEK members to contact _____ and urge them to support regulatory action that ensures that _____ will be available to High Cost areas, like BEK.
- The BEK office will be closed Monday, September 6th to observe _____.

Entries must be received by September 9, 2010.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Clip and send to the BEK office with your phone payment. You can also email to bekcomm@bektel.com. We will be drawing for five \$5.00 credits to be applied to the winners' phone bill.