



BEACON

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019

SMALL BUSINESS ND



PAUL ERDELT

Publisher of The Steele Ozone and Kidder County PressOzone

For Paul Erdelt, the intersection of family and business opportunity is his hometown of Steele, North Dakota. Erdelt is a Kidder County native who graduated from Steele High School before spending his college years and early career in Fargo. After NDSU, majoring in mass communication and spending a little over a decade in the technology sector, he was ready to come back.

“My reason for moving back here was the community.” He says that moving to a less populated area came with some trade offs, “I told my wife we won’t make a lot of money, but we’ll always be rich. I grew up here, and I’d be proud to raise my kids here. Kidder County offers a feeling of closeness you can’t find in the larger cities.”

When Erdelt relocated to Steele in 2005, he bought the Steele Ozone and has grown traditional circulation over 25% in the last 13 years. “I know the value of the hometown newspaper on the kitchen table,” he adds, “The local subscriber base is growing because we run stories that inform and involve people from our communities – your neighbors.” A standing rule at the Ozone is that a story runs if it affects 25 or more people in the area. Adding close friends and family, that’s pretty easy to do.

Erdelt is always on the lookout for service gaps and new ways to build up the community. While running the Ozone, he also founded Legendary Renovations, a small company selling windows, cabinets, and flooring. It’s a big help to rural homeowners who need upgrades and can do the work themselves, but they can help find local contractors too if needed.

Erdelt is also active in other local and regional circles. He served two terms on the board of the North Dakota Newspaper Association before being elected President in 2018. He is also on the Steele Betterment Committee and actively volunteers around town whenever he is needed.

Paul Erdelt is always quick to turn the conversation to the bigger picture. Asking him about the future of

“Kidder County is thriving and is absolutely on the map for more development.”

South-Central North Dakota brings out his animated small-town pride. “I believe we’re one of the top fisheries in the state. We have great access to hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities, after all; Steele is the Four Season City and the people in Kidder County are friendly. More people need to take advantage of what rural North Dakota offers. A great example is birding. Birding is a multi-billion-dollar business, and as of yet, no one has taken advantage of that, but we do have a plan for next summer for birders,” he adds.

DATES TO REMEMBER

BEK BILL PAYMENTS ARE DUE ON THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.

FEBRUARY 14

VALENTINE’S DAY

FEBRUARY 18

PRESIDENT’S DAY

FEBRUARY 27

BEK COOPERATIVE - NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETS

MARCH 6

ASH WEDNESDAY

MARCH 10

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DUE DATES:

FEBRUARY 15

BEK TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP - VCSU

MARCH 1

BEK TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP - UNIVERSITY OF MARY FOUNDATION FOR RURAL SERVICE (FRS) SCHOLARSHIPS

MARCH 8

BEK - ACADEMIC, VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL, BEK BROADCASTING



GROWING YOUR COOPERATIVE

DERRICK BULAWA
Chief Executive Officer

BEK Communications Cooperative had an exciting year in 2018. In the first six months, BEK Sports wrapped their 12th successful season of broadcasting your beloved hometown teams all over North Dakota. The Broadcast team went on to sweep the Eric Sevareid Broadcasting Awards in Minneapolis, for the third straight year, for excellence in play-by-play sports broadcasting. The BEK plant and sales teams also finished turning up BEK Fiber services to over 450 new customers in Morton and Oliver Counties.

In the second half of the year, BEK Communications was awarded two grants totaling nearly \$4 Million that will help us extend gigabit broadband and other services to even more rural North Dakotans. And we finalized our merger with ICTC, bringing another 1500 new customers to BEK. It is important for BEK to find ways to continue to grow our customer base, service territory and product lines as we face more competition and less support from the FCC.

To all our new customers who joined the BEK family, we extend our warmest welcome. Developing innovative products and providing legendary cooperative service experience is our mission.

I would also like to welcome you to our new BEK Beacon. We've changed the format to feature more local stories around our cooperative, as well as information about all the products and services BEK offers. Also, adding a small business section helps us spotlight the important small-town economies that keep our cooperative thriving.

We look forward to another active year in 2019. These are exciting times at your cooperative, The BEK Communications Cooperative!

IS THAT EMAIL REAL OR FAKE?

Scammers often try to emulate trusted institutions in order to steal money or information. These tips can help you decide if an email is real or fake.

- 1. Urgency and scare tactics.** Fake emails often demand money or threaten to shut down your account for dubious reasons.
- 2. Suspicious files attached.** Don't open attachments unless you know the email's source. Identity theft or a virus aren't worth the risk.
- 3. Uncommon or poor language.** Look for grammatical errors, misspellings, and whether the email is even addressed directly to you.
- 4. You're a winner!** Scrutinize any message that claims you're a lucky new millionaire.
- 5. Read links before clicking.** Hover the mouse arrow over the link to see if the destination looks legitimate. If they don't match, don't click.

For more information and help, check out staysafeonline.org.



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019

The BEK Beacon is a bimonthly newsletter published by BEK Communications, © 2018. It is distributed without charge to all customers.

BEK COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

was founded in 1952 as a local telecommunications cooperative serving Burleigh, Emmons and Kidder Counties. Since then, we've invested in state-of-the-art infrastructure, developed new products and services, and expanded to serve new areas. BEK has changed quite a bit in 67 years, but we're still a small-town cooperative at heart.

BEK COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

888-475-2361
P.O. Box 230
200 East Broadway
Steele, ND 58482
325 2nd St. NW
Valley City, ND 58072

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT I

Shane Morris
Regan
Sanford Williams
Wing

DISTRICT II

Doug Kalianoff
Steele
President Brett Stroh
Tappen

DISTRICT III

Vice President Kevin Bernhardt
Linton
Vickie Martin
Linton
Leo Meier
Hague

DISTRICT IV

Secretary/Treasurer William (Bill) Becker
Wishek
Gerald Burlack
Wishek

IMPORTANT: *The following information and notices are directed to the members of BEK Communications Cooperative. Cooperative membership includes patrons receiving BEK services in the telephone exchanges of Hazelton, Kintyre, Linton, Lehr, McKenzie, Napoleon, Pettibone, Regan, Robinson, Steele, Sterling, Strasburg, Tappen, Tuttle, Wilton, Wing, Wishek and Zeeland.*

COOPERATIVE MEMBERS: Nominations for BEK Board of Director Seats Now Open

The 2019 Nominating Committee is now accepting nominations for BEK Board of Director positions. Districts I, III and IV each have one position open for nomination as current three-year terms expire on June 13th, 2019. District II will have a special election to fill the one remaining year of Director Doug Kalianoff's term due to his upcoming June retirement.

The BEK Communications Cooperative Board of Directors have chosen nine cooperative members to serve on the 2019 Nominating Committee. These individuals will meet at BEK's office in Steele on Wednesday, February 27th, 2019, at 11:30 a.m. to make their selections for Board of Director nominees. BEK Cooperative members will cast their district vote during BEK's annual meeting on June 13th, 2019.

INCUMBENT DIRECTORS FOR DISTRICTS I, II, III AND IV ARE:

DISTRICT I – Shane Morris, Regan

DISTRICT II – None

DISTRICT III – Vickie Martin, Linton

DISTRICT IV – William (Bill) Becker, Wishek

MEMBERS OF THE 2019 NOMINATING COMMITTEE ARE:

DISTRICT I

(Wilton, Regan, Wing, McKenzie and Sterling)

Paul Burnell (Wing) 943-2475

Sarah Gratton (Wilton) 516-2461

DISTRICT II

(Pettibone, Tappen, Robinson, Steele and Tuttle)

Bob Subart (Robinson) 392-8452

Randy Kapp (Medina) 327-4403

DISTRICT III

(Linton, Kintyre, Strasburg and Hazelton)

MaryAnn Gefroh (Linton) 254-4528

Holly Will (Hazelton) 782-6857

Ronald Volk (Strasburg) 336-7218

DISTRICT IV

(Lehr, Zeeland, Wishek and Napoleon)

Mike Welder (Napoleon) 754-2814

Steve Fettig (Wishek) 452-2813

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW INTERESTED IN BECOMING A BOARD OF DIRECTOR?

If you would like to be considered for a director position or would like to nominate someone from your district, please contact one of your Nominating Committee members prior to February 27th, 2019. You may also file a petition as provided in BEK's Cooperative Bylaws.

The bylaws in their entirety are printed in the BEK/West River Missouri Slope Telephone Directory and they can also be requested via email to bekcomm@bektel.com or by calling 1-888-475-2361. Please note that Nominating Committee members are not required to nominate all interested persons and will judge nominees based on the following qualifications:

QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEK'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Directors should possess sound business sense, long-term vision and a commitment to shaping the Cooperative's future through changing technologies, economies and services. Candidates must be willing to spend at least 20 days per year conducting Cooperative business and furthering BEK's participation in the communities we serve.

In addition, specific qualifications as outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the BEK Bylaws state that a director candidate:

- 1) must be a Cooperative member and presently reside in the district from which they are elected or appointed;
- 2) cannot be employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business engaged in selling communication services or supplies, or constructing or maintaining communication facilities other than as a business operating on a cooperative nonprofit basis for the purpose of furthering rural communications, or other than a business in which BEK Communications Cooperative has an ownership interest;
- 3) cannot be one of the following described relatives of an incumbent director or employee of the Cooperative including mother, father, husband, wife, sister, brother or child; and
- 4) cannot have been an employee of the Cooperative in the previous two years.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

PHONE SERVICE DURING A POWER OUTAGE:

If your home or business loses power, you may also be without phone service. You cannot connect to family and friends during poor weather. You may not be able to call 911 for an emergency.

Backup power for your corded phones gives you peace of mind that your family and emergency help is always available. BEK Communications can install and maintain a voice service battery backup for your home.

The standard battery offered by BEK lasts up to eight hours on standby power. You may also choose a longer lasting option that gives up to 24 hours on standby power.

WHAT A BATTERY BACKUP CAN AND CAN'T DO

The battery backup is for corded voice services only. Security systems, medical monitoring devices, internet services, wireless access points, cordless phones and other equipment and services will not run on this home battery backup.

Note that the 8-hour and 24-hour standby times describe the length of time your phone line is available for use. Making a phone call during a power outage depletes the battery faster and may shorten the standby time.

BATTERY CARE AND TESTING

To maximize the function and lifespan of your battery, please follow the instructions included with your battery backup equipment and pay special attention to the temperature requirements. We recommend you store your battery above 41 degrees and below 104 degrees. Failure to follow the instructions may shorten the useful life of your battery.

These batteries are rechargeable but do not last forever. You should periodically test your battery, as described in the instructions included with the battery backup equipment, to verify both the operation of the battery backup and its condition.

SERVICE COSTS AND DETAILS:

Our eight-hour battery backup service is available for only \$2.99 per month, and our 24-hour solution for only \$4.99 per month. The monthly subscription includes installation and testing, warranty coverage, and battery replacement every four years. If you have any questions or wish to purchase the service, call 1-888-475-2361 at any time.

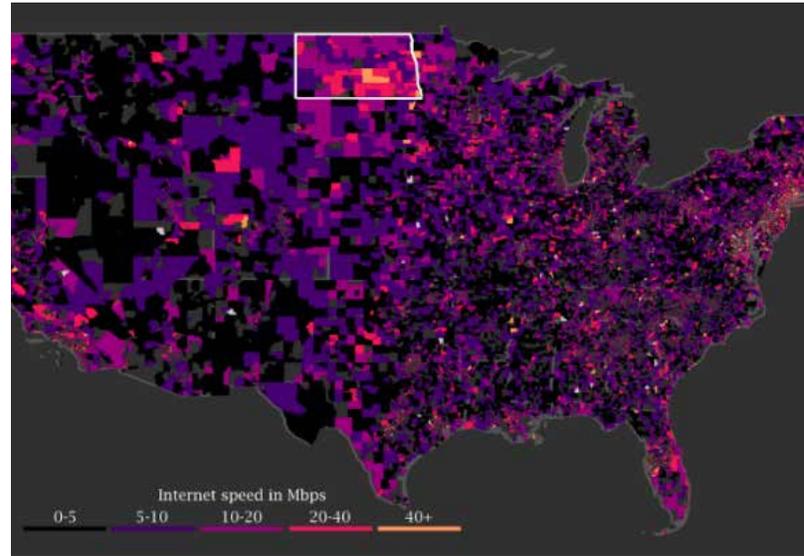


NORTH DAKOTA THE CROWN JEWEL OF MIDWEST INTERNET

A November article on NewAmerica.org showcased North Dakota as the “Crown Jewel of the Internet in the Midwest” because of our accessibility to broadband. The credit largely goes to the member-owned cooperatives who spend years investing in infrastructure to reach places larger corporate internet providers won't touch.

Plowing fiber into the soil doesn't turn a quick profit. Far from it. Those hundreds of miles of construction take years recoup. But telecommunications cooperatives know that even the most remote members benefit from these projects. Rural folks prosper when they have business, healthcare, education and other resources readily available.

For the real numbers, we go back to the New America article.



“For rural communities, many experiencing related population loss and slow job growth, establishing high-speed internet is now a necessity, much the same way the rural electrification of America was in the 1930s and '40s. Like electricity, faster broadband has well-documented economic effects, with, among others, a 2013 study estimating that a 4 Mbps increase in internet speed increased annual household income by \$2,100.”

One of the questions most asked of BEK is why our Lightband internet speeds only come in 250Mbps, 500Mbps and 1 Gbps. The answer is clear – a better product creates better opportunities.

Other fiber-based internet companies around the country offer slower speeds and higher prices, along with strict usage caps and throttling during peak hours. We don't do that.

Uncapped, unthrottled gigabit broadband delivers better economic opportunities to our rural members. We are proud to help North Dakota stand out as a crown jewel of the Midwest.

BEK SPORTS SCHEDULE



DATE	DESCRIPTION	TITLE	CHANNEL
1/3/2019	Wrestling	Napoleon-GS @ Linton-HMB	BEK SPORTS PLUS+
1/4/2019	Boys Basketball	Linton-HMB @ LaMoure-LM	BEK SPORTS PLUS+
1/8/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Jamestown High @ Mandan High	BEK SPORTS
1/10/2019	Girls Basketball	Wilton-Wing @ Linton-HMB	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
1/10/2019	Girls Basketball	Grant County @ Shiloh Christian	BEK SPORTS
1/12/2019	Mens Hockey	Minot State University @ University of Mary	BEK SPORTS
1/15/2019	Boys Hockey	Bismarck Century @ Minot High	BEK SPORTS
1/17/2019	Boys Hockey	Bismarck High @ Minot High	BEK SPORTS
1/19/2019	Mens Hockey	University of Mary @ University of Jamestown	BEK SPORTS
1/22/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	South Border @ Kidder County	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
1/22/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Bismarck Legacy @ Mandan High	BEK SPORTS
1/24/2019	Boys Basketball	Strasburg-Zeeland @ Napoleon-GS	BEK SPORTS PLUS+
1/25/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Standing Rock @ Shiloh Christian	BEK SPORTS
1/26/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	New Town @ Shiloh Christian	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
1/26/2019	Womens & Mens Basketball	Bemidji State University @ University of Mary	BEK SPORTS
1/28/2019	Girls Basketball	Strasburg-Zeeland @ South Border	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
1/28/2019	Womens & Mens Basketball	United Tribes @ Bismarck State College	BEK SPORTS
1/29/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Kidder County @ Medina-Pingree-Buchanan	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
1/29/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Turtle Lake-Mercer-McClusky @ Wilton-Wing	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
1/31/2019	Girls Basketball	St. Mary's Central @ Minot High	BEK SPORTS
2/5/2019	Girls Basketball	Fargo North @ Valley City High	BEK SPORTS
2/5/2019	Boys Basketball	Strasburg-Zeeland @ South Border	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
2/8/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Bismarck High @ St. Mary's Central	BEK SPORTS
2/11/2019	Girls Basketball	District 5 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
2/11/2019	Girls Basketball	District 6 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
2/12/2019	Boys Basketball	Shiloh Christian @ Linton-HMB	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
2/18/2019	Womens & Mens Basketball	Lake Region State College @ Bismarck State College	BEK SPORTS
2/19/2019	Girls & Boys Basketball	Dickinson High @ St. Mary's Central	BEK SPORTS
2/21/2019	Girls Basketball	Region 3 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+
2/22/2019	Womens & Mens Basketball	Northern State University @ University of Mary	BEK SPORTS
2/25/2019	Boys Basketball	District 5 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
2/25/2019	Boys Basketball	District 6 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST
3/7/2019	Boys Basketball	Region 3 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ EAST
3/7/2019	Boys Basketball	Region 8 Championship	BEK SPORTS PLUS+ WEST

Dates and Times are Subject to Change. Current Schedules and Channel Listings Available at beksports.com



BEK COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE
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BEACON TRIVIA

- 1 How much did the Ozone's circulation go up since Paul Erdelt purchased the company?
- 2 Which district or region is BEK Sports broadcasting on February 21st?
- 3 Which District is holding a special election at the June 13th annual meeting?

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 15, 2019.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Clip and send to the BEK at **PO Box 230, Steele ND 58482**. You can also email answers to bekcomm@bektel.com. We will be drawing for five \$5.00 credits to be applied to the winners' bill.

CONGRATS!
BEACON NOVEMBER/DECEMBER WINNERS.

Susan Gimbel – Hazelton	Mrs Linda Kapp –
Diane Ketterling – Wishek	Tappen
Nadine VanDyke – Valley City	Sherri Haak - Hague

BAND

broadband association of north dakota



Introducing BAND: the Broadband Association of North Dakota.

For over 65 years, we have served our communities as the North Dakota Association of Telecommunication Cooperatives (NDATC), providing the highest quality connectivity for North Dakotans. Today, we're proud to unveil a new name; one that reflects our commitment to evolve with the needs of our subscribers.

We are BAND. Keeping North Dakota connected.