

Connections

NOVEMBER 2019

Happy Holidays from Guthrie Center Communications!

Thanksgiving and Christmas offer so many wonderful opportunities to gather with those we love and enjoy treasured meals, decorations, and activities. We hope you enjoy this season to the fullest.

Our office will be closed:

Thanksgiving, November 28 & 29, 2019

Christmas, December 25, 2019

New Year's Day, January 1, 2020

Win a \$10 Bill Credit

How many robocalls did Americans receive in 2018?

Answer: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Clip and return by November 30, 2019 to Guthrie Center Communications, 403 State Street, Guthrie Center, IA 50115

Congratulations to Judy Flanery, the most recent winner.

One winner chosen at random per quarter. Contest open to Guthrie Center Communications customers age 18 and over. Applicants can win once per 12-month period. Other restrictions may apply.



403 State Street
Guthrie Center, IA 50115
(641) 332-2000

Online: www.guthriecentercom.com
Office Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
but closed 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. for lunch



Enjoy Slow-Roasted Turkey With a Side of Fast Internet

Getting ready for Thanksgiving can be a lot of work, but most of us view it as a labor of love. Thankfully, many of the preparations can be conveniently done online such as:

- Inviting guests
- Researching recipes
- Reviewing turkey cooking tips
- Ordering groceries
- Gathering ideas for tabletop decorations
- Compiling playlists for cooking and dining
- Reviewing Black Friday ads
- Planning your holiday shopping strategy

Then on the big day itself, you'll probably be using your home's internet connection to stream football games and the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. You may also be enjoying video chats with faraway friends and family.

You can make your Thanksgiving (and all the holidays and regular days to come) go more smoothly by upgrading to a faster internet connection from Guthrie Center Communications.

We offer a range of speeds—either packaged with a voice line or as a standalone internet-only plan—and can help you select what would best fit your household's internet usage. For more details about internet options at your location, call us at (641) 332-2000 or stop by our office.



How to Thwart Porch Pirates

Brazen thieves (also known as porch pirates) are stealing packages from front porches. To help prevent this from happening to you, try these strategies:

- **Have packages delivered to your workplace.** That way, packages will be brought inside the business rather than being left outside your home.
- **Ask the delivery company for signature-required delivery.** If the delivery person leaves the package without obtaining your signature first, you may be entitled to a full refund or replacement if it's stolen.
- **Place a vacation hold on packages.** In addition to having the USPS hold your mail when you'll be gone, place a hold on your packages with FedEx and UPS so they won't be left at your home.
- **Install security cameras.** Visible security cameras can serve as a deterrent and help to prevent thefts.

Our Solutions Center at 112 East Main Street in Panora offers security cameras to help you keep an eye on your front porch and more. You'll also find great holiday gift ideas such as smart home equipment, computers, tablets, TVs, and streaming devices.

Here's What Happens in an Internet Minute

It's fascinating to see how much online activity takes place every minute of every day. According to *Social Media Today*, here are the 2019 statistics as compiled by Domo, an operating system company:¹

#LOVE is posted 23,211 times

GIPHY serves up 4,800,000 GIFS

NETFLIX users stream 694,444 hours of video

GRUBHUB receives 8.683 orders

INSTAGRAM users post 277,777 stories

YOUTUBE users watch 4,500,000 videos

TWITTER users send 511,200 tweets

EMAILS totaling 188,000,000 are sent

SKYPE users make 231,840 calls

INSTAGRAM users post 55,140 photos

UBER users take 9,772 rides

AMERICANS use 4,416,720 GB of internet data

AIRBNB books 1,389 reservations

VENMO processes \$162,037 in transactions

TINDER users swipe 1,400,000 times

GOOGLE conducts 4,497,420 searches

TEXTS totaling 18,100,000 are sent

APPS are downloaded 390,030 times

TUMBLR users publish 92,340 posts

TWITCH users view 1,000,000 videos

These numbers are sure to increase since the world's internet population is growing significantly year after year. As of January 2019, the internet reaches 56.1% of the world's population and now represents 4.39 billion people—a 9% increase from January 2018.

Approximately how much time do you spend each day online? What applications do you use most often? If your home's internet speeds are not providing the experience you'd like, call us at (641) 332-2000 to discuss an internet upgrade.

¹ www.socialmediatoday.com/news/what-happens-on-the-internet-every-minute-2019-version-infographic/558793





Crazy About Corny Christmas Movies?

Both Hallmark and Lifetime are going all out with their Christmas movies in 2019, which is great news for fans of unbelievably cute small towns, holiday-themed businesses, and love that conquers all. Sure, almost all of the plots follow a predictable format, but these movies aren't designed to surprise you. They're meant to provide an escape from the real world that's as sweet as a plateful of cookies and as comfortable as an evening with an old friend.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Hallmark's hugely popular "Countdown to Christmas" event. The network will air 40 new Christmas movies—starring favorites like Candace Cameron Bure, Erin Krakow, and Dolly Parton—on the regular Hallmark channel and on Hallmark Movies and Mysteries.

To give you a taste of what's to come, here are some of the titles of the new Hallmark movies: *A Christmas Love Story*, *Christmas in Rome*, *Christmas at Dollywood*, *Christmas Town*, *Christmas Wishes & Mistletoe Kisses*, *Christmas Camp*, *A Merry Christmas Match*, *Nostalgic Christmas*, and *Check Inn to Christmas*. Look carefully and you'll see a pattern there!

Over at Lifetime, you can enjoy more Yuletide cheer during the "It's a Wonderful Lifetime" holiday event. This lineup features 28 Christmas movies including ones starring Melissa Joan Hart as an event coordinator and Tia Mowry-Hardrict as an antique store owner. Fans of *One Tree Hill* will be pleased to hear that Lifetime will air the movie *The Christmas Contract* starring the show's cast mates Hilarie Burton, Robert Buckley, Danneel Ackles, and Antwon Tanne.

So during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, be sure to carve out some time to relax with these delightfully festive Christmas movies. You can watch the Hallmark and Lifetime channels via Guthrie Center Communications' FiberTV or by using a streaming service such as Roku combined with our high-speed internet. To learn more, call (641) 332-2000.



Three Reasons for a Weak Wi-Fi Signal

Given how much use your home's Wi-Fi network gets, the last thing you want is a weak Wi-Fi signal that can reduce your available bandwidth and internet speed. Here are some issues that often cause Wi-Fi problems:

1. Distance

The farther away you are from wireless routers and access points, the weaker your Wi-Fi signal will be.

2. Construction

If your Wi-Fi signal mysteriously drops off in certain rooms, it may be due to your home's construction. Especially thick walls can muffle Wi-Fi signals, as can certain types of construction materials such as metallic mesh inside plaster and lath walls.

3. Device Interference

You may find intermittent signal problems caused by interference from other devices. Wi-Fi operates in the 2.4-gigahertz band, as do cordless phones and some remote alarm products. Additionally, microwaves can produce substantial interference in the frequency range used by wireless devices and can completely disrupt a Wi-Fi connection.

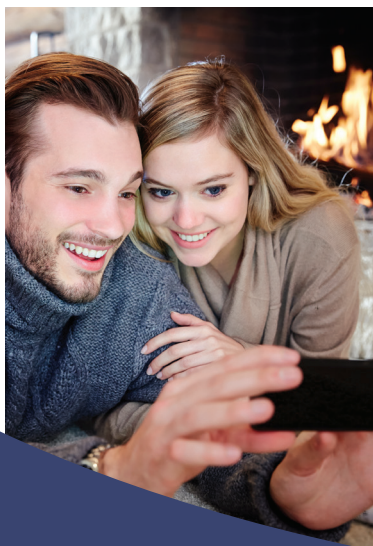
If you'd like Guthrie Center Communications to select, locate, and manage your Wi-Fi equipment for you, call (641) 332-2000 and ask about our Managed Wi-Fi service. For a low monthly rate, you'll enjoy reliable Wi-Fi coverage throughout your home.

Video Chats Can Help You Feel Closer During the Holidays

In a perfect world, families would all be together in one place to celebrate the holidays. But as families grow and spread to different cities, it's often not feasible for everyone to attend holiday events in person. Fortunately, video chats—via services such as Skype, FaceTime, and Google Hangouts—allow faraway family members to make a virtual appearance and participate in activities remotely. To quote the vintage commercial for long distance, "It's the next best thing to being there."

While you can use a variety of devices for video chats, you may find using a tablet to be the most practical option. Some families set a tablet at the empty spot around the dining room table so the person who's away can participate in the conversation. Or you could pass around a tablet to family gathered for the gift exchange so the person being streamed into the room can share in the excitement as each gift is unwrapped.

You don't have to limit video chatting to major holiday events either. A quick, spontaneous chat can be a fun way to stay connected at any time of the year.



Good News for You, Bad News for Robocallers



Americans received 47.8 billion robocalls in 2018, according to a Federal Communications Commission report released in February 2019. Nearly 50% of those calls were from scammers. The report also showed the number of complaints about illegal robocalls has been increasing, jumping from 172,000 complaints in 2015 to 232,000 complaints in 2018.

Robocalls use autodialers and recorded messages to make millions of phone calls. Often the numbers that show up in caller ID appear to belong to friends or neighbors, when they're actually "spoofed." These calls hide the real number to trick people into answering the call.

On May 23, 2019, the Senate voted in favor of bipartisan legislation to help stop annoying robocalls. The Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED) Act is designed to do the following:

- Improve enforcement policies, such as criminalizing illegal unsolicited robocalling, and increase fines.
- Improve coordination between agencies policing robocalls.
- Require phone service providers to use a new technology protocol known as SHAKEN (Secure Handling of Asserted information using toKENs) and STIR (Secure Telephony Identity Revisited). These standards would validate that calls are originating from where they claim to be coming from and would allow for faster tracing of illegal calls to find out who's responsible for them.

Federal Communications Commission chairman Ajit Pai said in a statement, "I applaud the Senate for taking an important step to crack down on unwanted robocalls and spoofed calls by passing the TRACED Act. This bill would allow industry to continue to drive implementation of call authentication technology on a timely basis, while recognizing that smaller providers may require more time to fully implement the technology. The bill is a significant step toward ending the scourge of spoofed robocalls."

If you haven't already, be sure to place your phone number(s) on the National Do Not Call Registry by calling 888-382-1222 or going to www.donotcall.gov. To learn about Guthrie Center Communications' Fiber Voice service, visit www.guthriecentercom.com.