

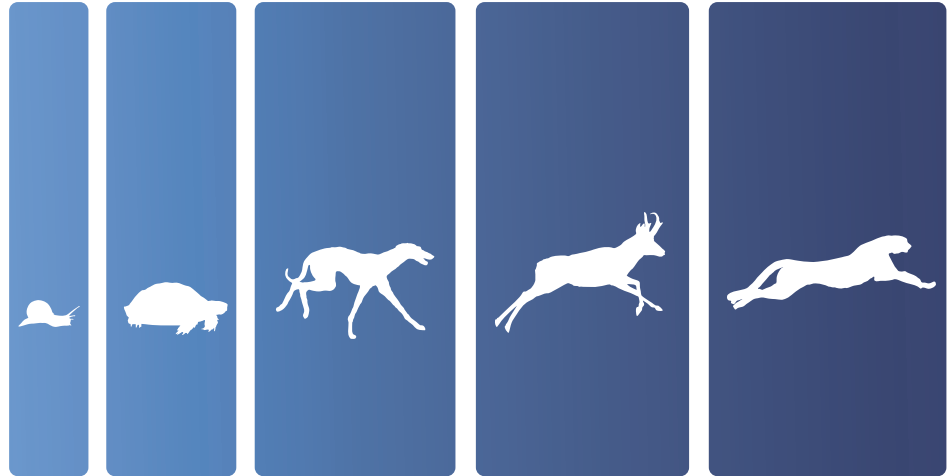
Connections

FEBRUARY 2020

HERE'S TO



Guthrie Center Communications wishes you a wonderful 2020. May you stay focused on your goals and look forward with joyful anticipation. Also keep an eye on your household's growing internet usage and watch for signs—such as frequent buffering when streaming—that it's time for a speed increase. Call (641) 332-2000 to sign up.



Should You Move from a Snail's Pace to a Cheetah's?

Compared to what it was several years ago, today's internet usage is a whole new animal. First of all, your household's internet connection is being used simultaneously by more devices—more computers, smartphones, tablets, streaming players, gaming consoles, smart TVs, smart home monitoring and management equipment, and so on. Secondly, your online activities have probably expanded to include streaming movies and TV shows using services such as Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube TV. Streaming requires a high-speed internet connection to avoid the annoying rotating arrow or spinning circle that indicates buffering is taking place.

Getting back to the animal kingdom idea, look at it this way: You may be OK with a basic "snail's pace" internet plan if all you do is check email occasionally. But if your household has lots of devices and wants to enjoy lots of online activities, everybody will be happier if your internet speed is something closer to a "cheetah's pace."

Why settle for a crawl when you can enjoy a run? Guthrie Center Communications offers a variety of FiberFast internet plans with speeds up to 1 Gig (equivalent to 1,000 Mbps.* Call Geri at (641) 332-2000 or stop by our office for help selecting the best plan for you. Ask about getting a FREE bump up to the next higher speed for a month, so you can experience what faster internet feels like.

*Availability depends on location. Contact us for details.

Win a \$10 Bill Credit

How many giant corporations own or control nearly 90% of today's TV networks?

Answer: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Clip and return by February 29, 2020 to Guthrie Center Communications, 403 State Street, Guthrie Center, IA 50115

Congratulations to Rita Halsey, 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



Be on Guard for Tech Support Scams

Here's how it works: Scammers may use pop-up ads claiming to sell fixes for your computer, which lead you to a website to download the software. You're told to call to "register" the software, and if you do, you'll be asked for remote access to your computer. Using remote access, they "examine" your computer and say it has problems needing additional "solutions." Next they want your credit card number to purchase these so-called solutions, often leading to credit card fraud.

Alternatively, some scammers call and claim they're on the tech support team at Microsoft or another well-known technology company. They go through the same process of accessing your computer, getting credit card or other information, and causing trouble.

Follow these tips to avoid being scammed:

- Never give access to your computer to someone who calls you out of the blue.
- Never provide credit card information or other sensitive data to someone claiming to be a tech support representative.

Guthrie Center Communications wants you to stay informed and vigilant so you can outsmart the scammers. If you need help with computer security, call (641) 332-2000 or visit www.guthriecentercom.com/internet/it-security-services.

Put Some Tasks on Autopilot to Simplify Your Life

You have enough on your plate already. So grab every opportunity to automate a household task. It will automatically cut down on stress and save you time.

Automatically save when online shopping.

You don't need to manually search for the best deals and promo codes. Get the free Honey browser extension with just two clicks at www.joinhoney.com. Honey will automatically apply the biggest savings to your cart when you make a purchase.

Automatically manage household tasks.

It's easy to set up timers to handle tasks such turning on and off lights and watering your lawn. You can also use a robot vacuum to clean your floors.

Automatically get air filters.

If you tend to forget to change the air filter in your home, you could take advantage of Second Nature. This subscription service delivers air filters when it's time to change them, keeping the air fresh and your heating and cooling system functioning properly.

Automatically back up your smartphone's photos and videos.

You don't want treasured images to be lost. If you have an Apple device, you can set up iCloud Drive to use the iCloud Photo Library to store and back up your photos and videos. And if you have an Android device, you can use your Google Drive account to do the same using Google Photos.

Automatically sync your to-do list with your calendar.

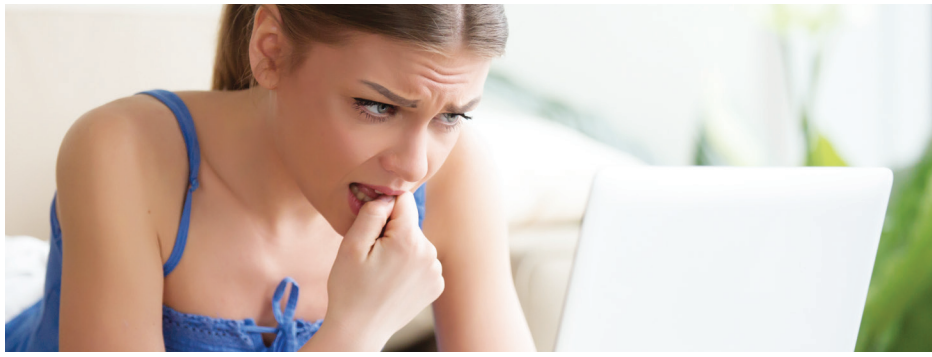
When you add things to whatever calendar app you use, they typically don't automatically show up on your to-do list app when the day arrives. Same goes for when you add something to your to-do list and it doesn't show up on your calendar. For a solution that achieves both, check out the gTasks app.

Automatically pay your bills.

Most online banking platforms have automatic payments that you can set and forget. You can also use a finance and budgeting app such as Mint to have automatic reminders sent to you when due dates for bills come up.

Guthrie Center Communications offers the convenience of eBilling. To get started, call (641) 332-2000 for your security code.





What are Common Causes of Wi-Fi Interference?

If you're experiencing slower than expected performance from your home's Wi-Fi network, it could be the result of wireless interference. This typically comes from three types of sources:

1. Walls and floors blocking wireless signals

The construction materials in your home can greatly affect wireless communication speed and range. Materials such as wood and glass don't have much of an effect. However, denser materials such as concrete, brick, and metal can make it difficult to connect. These denser materials can also slow your network speed or even completely block wireless signals from reaching certain parts of your home. Large furniture items such as filing cabinets or bookshelves, as well as appliances like stoves or refrigerators, can also interfere with Wi-Fi. You may be able to solve the problem simply by moving your router to a different location.

2. Appliances and electronics emitting radio frequency interference

Wi-Fi interference can also come from other electronics and appliances that aren't connected to your wireless network but use the same 2.4GHz or 5GHz frequencies to communicate. Examples include cordless phones, Bluetooth devices, and baby monitors. Microwave ovens generate radio frequency noise as a byproduct, so if yours is located close to your Wi-Fi router, you may notice a network slowdown or get disconnected only when you're using your microwave. Again, try relocating your router.

3. Other Wi-Fi networks using the same channel as your own Wi-Fi network

Interference from competing Wi-Fi networks is especially common in apartment buildings and other densely populated areas. Wi-Fi networks broadcast on channels, so when nearby Wi-Fi networks are set to use the same channel, they'll constantly be competing with each other for limited bandwidth. To rectify this situation, see if your router is able to automatically find the least crowded Wi-Fi channel. If not, you may want to upgrade to a new router with this feature.

Would you rather not have to deal with Wi-Fi network installation and troubleshooting? Sign up for our Managed Wi-Fi service and let Guthrie Center Communications technicians handle it all for a small monthly fee. To learn more, call (641) 332-2000.

February is "Extra" Special Since 2020 is a Leap Year

You'll soon have an extra day to enjoy, thanks to the fact there aren't 365 days in a year, but rather 365.242190. To compensate for this extra time, the bonus day of February 29 is added to the calendar every four years.

Let's leap right into some leap year trivia:

- A person born on February 29 is known as a "leaper" or a "leapling."
- February 29 became the official leap day because of the ancient Romans, who figured out their calendar didn't work without a leap year added.
- The people of Greece believe getting married on a leap year will bring bad luck.
- In 5th century Ireland, St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick about women having to wait for men to propose. He set aside February 29 as the day allowing women the right to ask for a man's hand in marriage.

Ready to leap up to a higher internet speed in 2020? Call Guthrie Center Communications at (641) 332-2000.





NATIONAL DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

Reminder of National Do Not Call Registry

The National Do Not Call Registry was created in 2003 to help stop unwanted sales calls. Registrations do not expire. So if you've previously registered your home and/or mobile phone number, there's no need to register again.

Even when your phone number(s) are on the National Do Not Call Registry, you'll still receive some calls including those from political organizations, charities, and companies with whom you've done business or submitted an inquiry or application. You may also receive calls from scammers, since they ignore the National Do Not Call Registry. Your best defense against calls from scammers is using call-blocking or call-labeling technology. Learn more here: www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-block-unwanted-calls#whatiscallblocking

You can register your phone number for free by calling 1-888-382-1222 from that phone number or visiting www.donotcall.gov. If you register on the website, you'll get an email with a link you need to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration. Your phone number should show up on the National Do Not Call Registry the next day, but it can take up to 31 days for sales calls to stop.

What You Need to Know About Rising TV Costs

Are you frustrated with the cost of cable TV? Here's the root of the problem: **Eight giant corporations own or control nearly 90% of today's TV networks.** To increase their revenue, these corporations require Guthrie Center Communications and other cable TV providers to carry their less-popular networks as a condition of providing the most popular ones. They use their size and market power to regularly demand higher fees for their programming.

In addition, people love to watch sports, and the sports executives know it—so the programming comes at a premium. The price networks pay to air sports has caused your basic cable and satellite TV bills to double over the past decade. The NFL alone makes more than \$7 billion annually for broadcast and cable rights to its games. Combine that with the MLB, NBA, NHL, MLS, college sports, and other sources, and the impact is clear. Escalating salaries of star players and coaches place large financial demands on teams and leagues, which drive up programming costs to cover expenses.

Because of the rising fees we're charged by media giants, Guthrie Center Communications can be forced to pass along some of the costs to our customers. We work hard, however, to control costs and bring you the best possible values in TV services.

We partner with TV on My Side, a national cooperative of cable TV providers, to negotiate fees and programming on your behalf. We want you to have access to the channels you want at a fair price. When disputes occur during negotiations, programmers will often take high-visibility TV shows off the air to try and force deals in their favor (referred to as blackouts). Our goal is to come to an agreement before this happens.

We appreciate your support of us as your local cable TV provider and promise to keep fighting on your behalf. After all, our customers are also our friends and neighbors. If you have questions or would like more information about our TV services, call (641) 332-2000.



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