School will be in session soon, protect our children by driving safely at all times!

KEEPING YOU...

In Touch

August 2021 ■ Volume 45 ■ Number 493

Local Bank *Payments* to be Discontinued

Venture Communications will be making a change effective October 1, 2021 as to the authorized payments that are accepted each month. We will continue to accept checks, credit cards and ACH payments but will no longer accept payments at the following local banks:

- Plains Commerce Bank, Hoven
- Heartland State Bank, Wessington
- Heartland State Bank, Tulare
- Bankwest, Onida
- Cortrust Bank, Onida
- Sunrise Bank, Onida

Help for Hearing or Speech Impaired

The Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TED) for South Dakota, allows those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and/or speech disabled to communicate effectively on the telephone by obtaining special equipment at little or no cost. To be eligible for the equipment, you must be a resident of South Dakota. You must also have difficulty communicating on the telephone because of a hearing or speech disability. You also need to have an existing telephone service in your home.

The TED Program stocks phones that offer speakerphone with volume adjustments, volume amplifier, and large visual display. They also provide oversized and lighted dial buttons, hearing aid compatible phones, visual ringer alert or adjustable loud ringer, sound frequency clarifying adjustment, and tone adjustment.

To apply, visit **www.relaysd.com**. Under the TED Program at the top is a section called TED Program Overview. There you can apply for a free or reduced phone. If you have questions or need help, call 711 or customer service assistance at 1-877-866-8950(TTY/Voice).
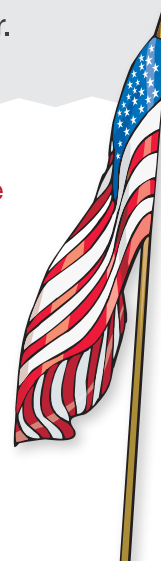
The 64th Annual Meeting of the Members of Venture Communications Cooperative will be held on Wednesday, September 29th

Mark Your Calendar!

Venture Communications will hold its 64th Annual Meeting of the Cooperative on Wednesday, September 29th at Highmore, SD. A noon meal will be served followed by the business meeting. Look for more details in the Annual Report which will be mailed to all members in early September.

Venture Communications will be **CLOSED** on Monday, Sept. 6th to observe Labor Day.
Have a safe & enjoyable weekend!

venture
communications
cooperative

Protecting Your *Personal* Information!

Criminals look for weak points to exploit before the software companies can fix them, but updating your software as soon as a newer version comes out, helps ensure you have critical patches and protections against security threats. Be sure to update:

• **Security software.** Your antivirus or firewall programs must be up to date to work, whether they came pre-installed or you loaded them onto your device.

• **Operating system software.** This could be Windows, AppleOS, or Chrome, for example.

• **Internet browsers and apps.** Developers often provide updates to address security issues, fix bugs, or add new features.

• **Secure your accounts.** Once your computer, tablet, and phone are secure, then protect your accounts with personal information, such as your bank, email, and social media accounts.

• **Create & use strong passwords.** That means at least 12 characters. Making a password longer is generally the easiest way to increase its strength. Consider using a passphrase of random words so that your password is more memorable, but avoid using common words or phrases.

• **Choose security questions only you know the answer to.** Many security questions ask for answers to information available in public records or online. So, avoid questions like your zip code, mother's maiden name, and birth place.

• **Back up your data to protect it.** Backing up your data means making an extra copy of all your files. That way, if something happens — say a virus, your device crashes, or you're hacked — you still have your files. It's important to do it once a week so you don't lose important data, like your photos, documents, and files. If you do need to restore a backup, it will only be as current as the last time you backed up. You can save your files to the cloud or an external storage device.

• **Peer-to-peer file-sharing programs** can give you access to free music and videos, but they come with risks. For example: strangers might be able to see and share your personal files the program might share files and folders you didn't plan on sharing you might unknowingly download malware, pirated or copyrighted material, or pornography. If you decide to use a peer-to-peer program, use your security software to scan any files before you open them, and before you play any downloaded files. Avoid any peer-to-peer program that asks you to disable or change the settings of your firewall. Disabling or changing these settings could weaken your computer's security.

• **Protect your home network.** Think of your home router as the connecting point between your devices and the internet. If malware gets onto any of your connected devices, it can spread to the other devices connected to your network. Your devices, accounts, and whole network are only as secure as your router.

• **Protect yourself while on Wi-Fi.** You can control how secure your home network is — but you can't do the same for public Wi-Fi. It's always best to assume it's not secure. The easiest solution? Save your online shopping, banking, and other personal transactions for when you're on your home network. Or use your mobile data, as that data is typically encrypted.

• **Report identity theft.** If you think someone has gotten into your accounts or has your personal information, visit IdentityTheft.gov.

August 2021 New Listings

Tulare:
Patriot TakeOut 596-4100

Wessington Springs:
Dale's Auto Body & Repair . . . 539-1291

New VOD Releases!
VIDEO ON DEMAND