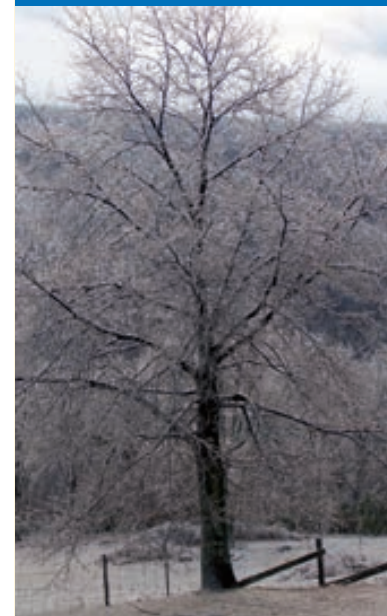


Communicator

A Semi-Annual Newsletter for Cooperative Customers



About 400 people attended the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members at East Hardy High School, enjoying a pork barbecue meal.

Two Directors Re-Elected At Hardy Annual Meeting

Two directors were re-elected at Hardy Telecommunications' annual meeting on October 4 at East Hardy High School. They will serve new three-year terms.



Gerald Smith

In that time, the company has made OneNet available to an additional 1,100 homes and have installed 2,300 of the current more than 3,200 OneNet customers without borrowing more money.

Scott said the biggest challenges to the company include a new Universal Service Funding program, called ACAM II for short, started by the Federal Communications Commission. The program offers a stable and predictable amount of federal funding for the company over 10 years, but it does have some stringent requirements regarding build-out and speed offering obligations.



Greg Zirk

The ACAM II program should allow Hardy more predictability in how it expands OneNet.

Scott also talked about continuing increases in television content costs. Content providers keep charging more and more for their channels, and even though Hardy has absorbed much of the cost, it has had no choice but to raise prices.

About 400 people attended the meeting. The EHHS Band and Band Boosters, FFA, ProStart, Bob Thompson, and Nancy Kline prepared and served the meal featuring pork barbecue. We appreciate their hard work!

The two directors were re-elected by acclamation. They are Gerald Smith of Baker, for Lost River serving area 1; and Greg Zirk of Moorefield, for Moorefield serving area 2. Both were unopposed in their bids for re-election.

Hardy General Manager Scott Sherman gave the latest details about Hardy's OneNet fiber-to-the-home network. As of the end of August 2019, Hardy has made fiber service available to almost 6,000 homes and businesses throughout Hardy County.

Since the end of the federal program in July 2015, Hardy has spent more than \$7 million of its own funds to continue to expand and make OneNet services available to more Hardy County residents.

What's Inside

- Hardy Sponsoring FRS College Scholarship
- Hardy Sponsoring Local Students For D.C. Tour

Calendar

- Dec. 24-25 Holiday - Offices Closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- Jan. 1, 2020 Holiday - Offices Closed For New Year's Day
- Feb. 14, 2020 Deadline for Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour Applications
- Mar. 6, 2020 Deadline for FRS Scholarship Applications

From our family to yours, best wishes for a joyous holiday season and happy new year!



Hardy To Send Two Local Students To Nation's Capital For Youth Tour

Hardy Telecommunications will send two local students on a four-day trip to our nation's capital, giving them the chance to see our country's historic sites and meet students from all over the United States.

One student each from Moorefield and East Hardy high schools will be selected to attend the 2020 Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., June 6-10. The trip includes sightseeing to D.C.'s famous landmarks as well as educational sessions to teach today's youth about the telecommunications industry. Hardy Telecommunications will pay all basic expenses, including travel.

The Youth Tour provides students from rural areas with a first-hand look at the telecommunications industry and educates students about the legislative and governmental processes. Students will visit the U.S. Capitol Building and hear presentations from representatives of Capitol Hill and the Federal Communications Commission.

In addition to the FCC and U.S. Capitol, past groups have visited the Lincoln Memorial, the World War II Memorial, Mount Vernon (home of George Washington), the Vietnam War Memorial, the Smithsonian Museums, the Korean War Memorial, and Arlington National Cemetery. A night tour of Washington is also planned.

Hardy can only sponsor one student from Moorefield High and one from East Hardy High. Applications for the tour may be picked up from the high schools or by contacting

Derek Barr at Hardy's Moorefield Office, telephone 304-530-5000. To be eligible for the trip, students must be 16 or 17 years old at the time of the tour and receive either telephone, Internet, or television service from Hardy Telecommunications. Preference for selection also will be given to students from the 2021 graduating class.

The deadline to return applications is February 14, 2020. Applications may be returned to either the high school guidance counselors or directly to Derek Barr, Hardy Telecommunications, 121 South Main St., Moorefield, WV 26836.

Derek strongly encouraged students to apply.

"Last year we didn't receive any applications from one of the Hardy County high schools, so we sent two students from one school," he said. "We are limited to two students, but we definitely want to send one student each from Moorefield and East Hardy if possible."

Derek has worked as a chaperone for the FRS Youth Tour for several years.

"It's a great experience for the students, because they're assigned to different teams and have the chance to meet peers from all over the country," he said.

"As a chaperone, I have students from other states assigned to my group. Some of those students I'm still in touch with after more than a decade, from Oregon to Iowa. For many students, this is the only chance they'll have to



(Left to right) Moorefield High Seniors Kennedy Hinger and Allison Barr stand outside the U.S. Capitol during the 2019 Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour in Washington D.C.

visit D.C. It's really a unique opportunity," he said.

Moorefield High Seniors Allison Barr and Kennedy Hinger attended the 2019 FRS Youth Tour. Both thanked Hardy Telecommunications for the experience.

"Though I wasn't sure exactly what to expect on the trip, it turned out to be one of the greatest experiences of my life," Allison said. "I went on the trip among complete strangers and came out with a group of close friends from all over the country."

"Overall, this was a once-in-a-lifetime, humbling, educational opportunity!" Kennedy said.

Established in 1994 by NTCA – the Rural Broadband Association, the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that promotes, educates and advocates rural telecom issues in order to sustain and enhance the quality of life within communities throughout rural America. Read more about FRS youth programs by visiting www.frs.org.

Hardy Sponsoring College Scholarship For Area Seniors

Hardy Telecommunications is again sponsoring a \$2,500 college scholarship for graduating seniors from East Hardy and Moorefield high schools.

Members of the Class of 2020 at EHHS and MHS can apply through Hardy for the national Foundation for Rural Service College Scholarship Program. The scholarship, open to applicants who receive local telecommunications service (either telephone, Internet, or television) from Hardy, is worth \$2,000, and Hardy Telecommunications will contribute an additional \$500 to the amount, bringing the total one-time scholarship award to \$2,500.

The Foundation for Rural Service has changed its application process this year so that the entire application is done online. Students can visit their guidance counselors at the two high schools for the guidelines detailing how to apply. Students will need to go to www.frs.org/student and create an account with NTCA per the instructions there.

Completed applications must be submitted online to the Foundation for Rural Service no later than March 6, 2020.

To apply, students will need to submit a 500-800 word essay; a letter of recommendation from a high school teacher or counselor; a letter of recommendation from a local community leader other than an educator; and seven semesters of transcripts. FRS urges applicants to have all of their documents ready to upload before beginning the application.



Hardy Telecommunications' last recipient of the FRS College Scholarship was 2017 EHHS Graduate Caitlin Fitzwater, pictured here accepting her award with Hardy's Derek Barr.

Students no longer have to return any paperwork to Hardy Telecommunications.

The FRS will award scholarships nationwide. A qualified selection committee of current educators determined by the Foundation for Rural Service will select the winners; Hardy Telecommunications itself has no input in the selection process.

Derek stressed that the scholarship is a national scholarship, so Hardy Telecommunications can't guarantee that any local student will be selected. Hardy simply sponsors local applications and agrees to contribute \$500 of the total \$2,500 amount if the national FRS committee does pick a Hardy County student.

"The scholarship selection is divided into regions, and the Foundation for Rural Service does make sure that scholarships are awarded in every region. But West

Virginia is still in a region with several other states, so it's a very competitive process," he said.

Hardy Telecommunications' last recipient of the FRS College Scholarship was 2017 East Hardy High graduate Caitlin Fitzwater.

"Because of how the process works and the nationwide competition, we don't have recipients selected more often than we are notified that we have a winner, but we're happy to offer this unique opportunity," Derek said.

Local applicants must be a U.S. citizen and graduating high school senior; accepted by an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school; have at least a C grade point average; express an interest in returning to a rural community following graduation; and be sponsored by Hardy Telecommunications, a member of NTCA.

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Hardy Telecommunications is an equal opportunity provider and employer.