

# the connection

Kennebec Telephone Co., Inc

## *Rest in peace, Rod. We will take it from here.*

**Veronica Gerard**  
Marketing Manager

*"The funny thing about firemen is, night and day, they are always firemen." – Gregory Widen ~*

Rod Bowar was a true fireman. He lived it night and day no matter where he was or what he was doing. He was "all in". He applied that concept to everything he did in life whether it was for his family, company or his community.

Rod knew every aspect of the business because he started the "hard way" as Rod referred to it, from the ground up beginning at the early age of 14. He was given the opportunity to go onto technical school after graduating, but when owner Lloyd Johnstone was killed in a vehicle accident, wife and owner, Delores, called Rod to come back and work full time as the Plant Manager of Kennebec Telephone Company Inc. He had to learn the hard and fast way, and that's what he applied to all things he did. Rod and family ended up purchasing the company from Delores in 1998. From that point, he grew the company and added five business divisions to fill the needs of the business and the community that he loved.

South Dakota Representative, Dusty Johnson, made a tribute speech a couple weeks ago on the house floor in Washington D.C. He spoke about how the South Dakota telecom industry has lost four leaders in the last few months. He referred to all of them as "Titans" and I feel there couldn't be a more fitting title for all four men. Rod was a true Titan, a true fireman, a true leader, a true innovator, and a true community leader!

As I sit and reflect on the days since Rod's passing, there are so many empty holes. He started his day with



a drive around town at 4:00am, checking on the community and the buildings and property KTC owns. After some time in the office, he would head over to the firehall or Hutches for breakfast and coffee with his "coffee crew". You always knew what kind of day you were going to have in the office depending on what the crew had to say that morning. Many of us in the office would spend our meetings with Rod trying to convince him that not **all** that they had to say was true or had any meaning, they were just trying to get a rise out of him. His day would continue with picking up his grandson, Jesse, a little before 8am and they would head over to the firehall for chores. They would check trucks and fill the coolers with water and ice so all was ready to go in case there was a fire call.

Rod was always ready for any call that came his way. When the fire phone went off, the race to the firehall began with bragging rights for the first one there as the trophy. He was always available for his family and the many roles he played there. He loved serving his community and being the sounding board for advice and guidance for any matter that was brought to him. The telecommunications industry appreciated Rod for his knowledge and honesty. He held his staff at Kennebec Telephone in high regard and trusted who he put in place. Rod had a knack for knowing how to put a "working puzzle" together. He knew which person could fill a missing piece and he placed them accordingly. Rod appreciated and respected his customers and in return Kennebec Telephone now has the best customers.

**Thank you**, from everyone here at Kennebec Telephone Company Inc., for reaching out during our time of loss. We truly have the best customers, community, and industry! Rest in peace, Rod. We will take it from here.

*Since Rod's passing, employees have been asked about what is going to happen to the company. We've also heard the many different rumors going around as well. We want to let everyone know that Kennebec Telephone Co., Inc. is moving forward with business as usual, just as Rod would have wanted and expected of us. Some employees have taken on new roles, so let us update you with the changes:*

Matt Collins - President/General Manager  
Chris Zirpel - Assistant Manager  
Chaz Bowar - Operations Manager

Justin Collins - Construction Supervisor  
Lesa Patrick - Executive Assistant/Safety Director

Jake Longville - PowerCom Manager

# Time for Trunk or Treat!

Monday, October 31st 4:00 pm-6:00 pm  
Main Street Presho

Presho Area Chamber invites any business or individual to participate in this fun event. If you're not familiar with the concept, here's the scoop. Decorate your vehicle, put on a costume, bring some treats and join us on Main Street! All kids are welcome to do some early, safe trick or treating at the event!



## PHEASANT SEASON IS UPON US!



Pheasant opening weekend is fast approaching, which is not news to folks that have a lodge or even host hunters in their homes. If you haven't considered adding the benefit of Wi-Fi to your hunting packages yet, it may not be too late.

How would having Wi-fi benefit your hunting operation? If you currently have satellite tv for your guests' entertainment, you might be able to provide more options using streaming tv or even allowing the hunters to use their own streaming accounts.

Many devices use wi-fi networks for calls and data when those networks are available. With many hunting locations not being in prime cell service areas, this would be a bonus to some hunters.

While most hunters are here to "get away from it all" there are bound to be those who would sincerely appreciate having an internet connection while they're away from home. Who knows, they may be willing to pay a bit extra for the experience overall, with Wi-Fi as an added amenity.

If you'd like to explore adding Broadband/Wi-Fi to your hunting operation, call (605)869-2220

## GROSS RECEIPTS PAID

One of the benefits of doing business with KTCI is that the company provides support to your local school district through a variety of sponsorships and donations, and through the payment of gross receipts taxes.

Each year KTCI pays gross receipts taxes on all the revenue that the company collects. These taxes are then distributed to the school districts in each of the counties where the revenue was generated.

For the period ending on December 31, 2021, KTCI paid a total of \$109,555.64 to Lyman County, \$25.62 to Mellette County, and \$3.12 to Tripp County.

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE

KTC Construction currently has the following position available:

### KTC Construction Position

Kennebec Telephone Co., Inc. is now taking applications for a year around, full-time construction position that offers excellent pay and benefits. The position consists of such things as underground plumbing, digging, trenching, and operating equipment. Experience preferred but would be willing to train. Position will be open until filled.

Please submit resume to PO Box 158, Kennebec, SD 57544 or email to: [christiec@kennebectelephone.com](mailto:christiec@kennebectelephone.com)

*Our mission is to provide the highest quality telecommunications and information service to our customers at an affordable price. We will strive to offer prompt, friendly, and dependable service along with the latest technology to attain the highest possible customer satisfaction. If you would like more information or have questions about anything in this newsletter, feel free to contact us at 605-869-2220. Kennebec Telephone Co., Inc is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**KTC**  
KENNEBEC TELEPHONE CO., INC.  
More than "just" a telephone company!



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After Hours Please Call  
(605) 869-2424