



# THE Connection

## A FIBER-FILLED YEAR: 2023 RECAP

December is here, Christmas is upon us, and how has 2023 flown by so quickly? At GBT, we are counting our blessings and thankful for all our customers and the relationships we have built with you! As your local communications company, every GBT employee knows how important it is for us to provide reliable, state-of-the-art communication services, and we strive to do that each day.

2023 has been an extra special year for GBT as we have enjoyed celebrating our 70th year as a cooperative. GBT believes in giving back to the area through donations and participating in the numerous community events held throughout the year.

2023 was also a year where our employees got to play Santa Claus to many homes and businesses with the upgrade to fiber optic technology. Many of our customers have been experiencing the reliability, fast speeds, and benefits of GBT's fiber

optic technology since 2008, but 2023 was a monumental year in that we built and installed more fiber optic cable than in any of our previous 69 years of business! Areas that saw fiber expansion in 2023 were St. John, Macksville, Stafford, Larned, Rural Pawnee County, Rural Bison, Rural Otis, Rural Utica, and Rural Beeler. Our employees are still working hard to finish a few of these projects up, and we look forward to 2024 when we plan to announce more fiber expansion projects!

**GBT understands the trust you place in choosing us to be your communications provider. We are proud to celebrate our 70th anniversary, but also are committed to advancing our service offerings and making sure we continue to be a leader and trusted partner in the area. We want to thank you for an incredible 2023, and wish you a Merry Christmas as we wind down the rest of the year!**

## KEEPING IT LOCAL: CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATIONS

GBT was established in 1953 as a cooperative to provide quality telecommunications in rural Kansas, eventually building 18 telephone exchanges to serve our Member-Owners (Customers). Capital credits are allocated each year based on each traditional telephone customer's usage, and when the cooperative has a profitable year after all expenses and future infrastructure needs are addressed, a percentage of the capital credits are paid back to the member-owners with Board approval.

For the 36th year, the Board of Directors has voted to retire and pay out capital credits back to the members. GBT Controller Drew Clarke says, "The overall health and prosperity of GBT shines through with this retirement as the difficulties of 2022 weighed down on businesses across the globe. The staff at GBT remains focused on providing top quality services to our members in an efficient manner so that we can continue retiring capital credits to our members for years to come!"

Contact customer service@gbtlive.com with any questions.

# CHRISTMAS TECH SURVIVAL GUIDE

Here are a few tech tips and tricks to help you out this holiday season!

## 1 HOLIDAY HARMONY WITH TECHNOLOGY

During this merry season don't let tech steal the show—keep it in its place with tools like "Do Not Disturb" (DND) and focus settings on your phone. Activate DND to hush the digital jingles and silence notifications, to spend quality time with loved ones around you. Activate focused settings to carve out tech-free dedicated moments for family festivities. This Christmas, let technology enhance the magic of the season rather than detract from it.

## 3 PRE-RECORDING MOVIES ON STR

Pre-recording movies on StreamIT's gives you a ready-to-watch list of all your favorites. Just press play and enjoy cozy movie nights. See the list below of where to watch.



### How the Grinch Stole Christmas

**StreamIT's NBC** — 7 p.m. Nov. 30, 7 p.m. Dec. 25; **StreamIT's Bravo** — 1:30 and 7 p.m. Nov. 24; **StreamIT's E!** — 5:30 and 6 p.m. Nov. 29; **StreamIT's Syfy** — 7 p.m. Nov. 24; **StreamIT's TBS** — 6 and 6:30 p.m. Dec. 10, 7 a.m. Dec. 16, 7 p.m. Dec. 22, 6:30 p.m. Dec. 23; **StreamIT's TNT** — 6:30 p.m. Dec. 14, 4 p.m. Dec. 17; USA — 7 p.m. Nov. 24.

**StreamIT's AMC** — 6, 8 and 10 p.m. Dec. 2, 5 p.m. Dec. 3, 8 p.m. Dec. 4, 5 p.m. Dec. 5, 6 and 9 p.m. Dec. 8; 7 and 9 p.m. Dec. 10, 7:15 p.m. Dec. 11, 5 p.m. Dec. 12, 7 and 9 p.m. Dec. 13, 6 and 8 p.m. Dec. 16, 7 and 9 p.m. Dec. 18, 9:15 p.m. Dec. 19, 7 p.m. Dec. 20, 8 p.m. Dec. 21, 6 p.m. Dec. 23, 8:15 p.m. Dec. 24, 5:15 and 9:30 p.m. Dec. 25, 7 p.m. Dec. 26; **StreamIT's Cartoon Network** — 4 p.m. Nov. 26, 11 a.m. Nov. 27; TBS — 7 p.m. Nov. 24 (shortened to a marathon over the next 24 hours); **StreamIT's TNT** — 6 p.m. Nov. 23, 2:30 p.m. Dec. 1, and 9 p.m. Nov. 27, 7 and 9 p.m. Nov. 28.

## 2 SIMPLIFYING YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE WITH SMART PLUGS

Using a smart plug for your Christmas tree brings real convenience. These plugs connect to WiFi, so you can control when the tree turns on and off from your phone. If you have Alexa or Google Assistant, you can even use voice commands.



This means no more worrying about leaving the lights on all night, saving energy and avoiding safety issues. With built-in timers and schedules, you can manage your tree's lights without the hassle of manually plugging and unplugging it every day.

## 3 WATCHING CHRISTMAS CLASSICS WITH STREAMIT

StreamIT is a holiday game-changer! It means setting up your favorite festive films. No more last-minute searches—easy movie nights with your loved ones hassle-free! See the top 10 of our favorite Christmas classics!



## 4 PROTECT YOUR TECH FROM FROSTY DAMAGE

In chilly weather, electronic devices feel the frosty sting too. Freezing temperatures can damage device batteries, reducing their future charge capacity. Sudden temperature shifts, like going from cold outside to warm indoors, may cause condensation inside devices, leading to short circuits that can fry parts. Screens, especially on larger devices like tablets or laptops, are at risk of cracking in freezing temperatures, allowing moisture in and potentially causing short circuits. To keep your tech toasty, keep them indoors within their comfy temperature range of 32 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and steer clear of leaving them in frigid spots like cars.



### It's a Wonderful Life

**StreamIT's NBC** — 7 p.m. Dec. 24; **StreamIT's Bravo** — 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. Nov. 24; **E!** — 11 a.m., 2, 5 and 8 p.m. Nov. 23.



### Miracle on 34th Street

**StreamIT's AMC** — 6 p.m. Nov. 27, 11:45 a.m. Dec. 10.

### ELF

Nov. 22, 7 p.m. Dec. 5, 7 p.m. Dec. 13, 7 p.m. Dec. 22, 7 p.m. **StreamIT's AMC** — 7 p.m. Nov. 24, 7 p.m. Nov. 30.



### National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation

**StreamIT's AMC** — 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 3, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 5, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 7, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 9; 5 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 11, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 15, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Dec. 19, 4:45 p.m. Dec. 20, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Dec. 21, 8 p.m. Dec. 23, 6 and 10:15 p.m. Dec. 24, 3 and 7:15 p.m., 4:45 p.m. Dec. 26; **StreamIT's TNT** — 3:30 p.m. Nov. 20, 8 p.m. Nov. 23, 12:30 p.m. Nov. 24, 9 p.m. Nov. 25 (showing in a marathon over the next 24 hours).





## IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MEET KELLY, OUR CSR LEAD SUPERVISOR

### Tell us about your job...

I am currently the CSR (Customer Service Representative) Lead Supervisor. I oversee the Customer Service Department, ensuring that all customer needs are taken care of. Additionally, I oversee the Nex-Tech Wireless division of GBT. Customers are the lifeline of our company, and without them, there wouldn't be a GBT!

### What is a part of your job people might not know you do?

I do all of the uploads for the Directory and 911 systems, which means I ensure the customers' information gets to these systems, and when it does, that it is all correct. If not, I have to issue corrections.

### Your background before GBT?

Before coming to GBT, I worked for another Telecommunications company in rural Kansas, in the Marketing & Sales Department for almost 10 years. My husband and I wanted to move back to the area, so he called Beau Rebel (current GM) at GBT to inquire about any open positions (they played baseball together in High School). There were no current open positions at that time for a technician, but Beau knew I was working for a similar

company and told my husband to have me give him a call, and the rest is history. I was hired at GBT in the Marketing Department, and about 3 years ago, I transitioned to the Customer Service team. My passion has always been helping customers; I absolutely love my job and what I do. I get to assist and train customers and staff on a daily basis, ensuring the products and services they have are meeting and exceeding their needs.

### Tell us a little bit more about yourself...

I grew up in Garden City with 1 sister and 2 stepbrothers, the baby of the family (or the spoiled one, as they would say). My husband and I have been married for 22 years and have two children, Bailey 22 and Ryland 15. My husband is from La Crosse, and we moved back to the area in 2015. My dream job was always to work at a zoo; I love all animals, and if I could, I would have a sanctuary and just take in all the strays I find. Not sure how I ended up in the Telecommunication Industry, but I sure do love it!

### What are your non-work highlights of this past year?

My husband and I live in La Crosse, and our local grocery store shut down unexpectedly in August 2022. Our family took a leap and decided to purchase and renovate the store. In April, we finally reopened the only grocery store in Rush County, which is now B's Hometown Market. The community support we have received and the joy this store gives my family made it all worth it. This year will definitely be one to remember.



### Christmas Chex Mix

Prep time: 15min | Cook time: 1 hr 10 min | Servings: 16

**This is an excellent treat that is great to have on hand around the holidays!**

#### Ingredients

- 1 (12 ounce) package crispy corn and rice cereal (such as Crispix®)
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 3 cups pecan halves
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 cups whole almonds
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees F (120 degrees C). Lightly butter a large roasting pan. 2. Mix corn and rice cereal, pecans, and almonds together in the prepared roasting pan. 3. Combine brown sugar, corn syrup, and butter in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Heat to 240 degrees F (115 degrees C) or until a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a soft ball that flattens when removed from the water and placed on a flat surface. Remove saucepan from heat and stir vanilla extract into syrup. 4. Drizzle syrup over cereal mixture and toss to coat. 5. Bake cereal mixture in the preheated oven for 30 minutes; stir and continue baking for 30 minutes more. Spread cereal mixture in 1 layer onto 2 lightly buttered baking sheets, separating any large chunks with 2 forks; allow to cool.



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**Ellis**  
101 W 9th | Open: Mon., Wed., Fri.  
8 am - 12:30 pm; 1:30 pm - 5 pm

**Ness City**  
114 W. Main | Open: Mon.-Fri.  
8 am - 5 pm

**St. John**  
602 N US Hwy 281 | Open: Mon.-Fri.  
8 am - 1 pm; 2pm - 5pm

**Larned**  
122 W. 5th | Open: Mon.-Fri.  
8 am - 11:30 am; 12:30 pm - 5 pm

**Rush Center**  
103 Lincoln St. | Open: Mon.-Fri.  
8 am - 5 pm



## The Connection

If you have questions or comments about this newsletter or any of our services, please email us at [marketing@gbtlive.com](mailto:marketing@gbtlive.com)  
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