



Services Friona/ Bovina
All around communications.

A MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

WTS Connection

Self-reliance in life, communications are confirmation that “Rural is Cool”

The Washington Beltway crowd may little know nor understand that the real world hums in the rural American heartland, bread-basket to the nation and the world, bastion of community and caring. Those of us out here know that America

Payment by bank draft nets discount of 1%

WT Services Friona/Bovina customers can get a one percent discount by paying their bill by bank draft.

Customers who authorize draft payment agree to have their bank account drafted for the amount of their outstanding balance on their account with WT Services. Drafts will occur between the 20th and 23rd of each month.

To arrange for payment of your WT Services bill via bank draft and net the one percent savings, contact the WT Services office in Friona at 1010 Columbia to obtain the necessary authorization form that includes bank routing and account information.

would be a lesser land but for the cool of rural.

Because the big companies on the urban side didn't much care to serve us since it didn't seem profitable, we built our own rural electric and telephone systems out here—neighbors working together, pooling resources to extend service so far back into the country that we even reached the people who keep their own tomcats. Through our own efforts we're making sure—with broadband internet, and the solid security of wireline—that we aren't left in the dark or cut off from the rest of the world. We're working toward a smart community so that we can be in touch with distant learning, health, and public service agencies from our homes, offices, and schools. We like the security of wireline that lets us dial 911 and get a rapid response, even in a disaster.

From rural America's wheat and corn, cotton and sorghum, potato and vegetable fields, from pastures and hay patches storing up solar

energy, come the beefsteaks, pot roasts and hamburgers, pork chops, ham, bacon, butter and eggs, fried chicken and roast turkey, spuds and assorted veggies, biscuits and gravy, grandma's homemade bread, milk and cookies, and yes the all-American fare of hot dogs, Mom, Dad, and apple pie that sustain us. On the rural farmlands, hard working folk tend fields and herds that convert sun energy into our daily fare. A lot of the work is done today with the vital tools of electric power and landline or wireless communication that came about only because of those aforementioned cooperatives that we formed.

Our own High Plains produces fully a quarter of the nation's cotton crop, 66 percent of all the cotton grown in Texas, and four percent of world stocks, sprouting sprawling acres of white fiber that become blue jeans, tee and dress shirts, towels and sheets, and stylish apparel that would never be but for rural fields and those who

farm them.

Hungry and unclothed—that's us without the cool of rural.

Out here in the land of small town, tall concrete grain elevators, cattle feeding yards, water towers, and the autumnal Friday night lights of football fields are our landmarks. Noon and five o'clock traffic jams last maybe ten minutes—if there's a traffic light. Local mood amongst the coffee shop set at the Dairy Queen soars and plummets with the success of the high school sports teams.

In the heartland, the local sheriff can get the busy major national railroad that runs through town to suspend train traffic for the 45 minute duration of the annual summer celebration parade that passes over the tracks. Fire trucks and ambulances—all of them in town—lead the parade. All of them, driven by friends and neighbors, also show up at the summons of a single phone call when there's

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smoke coming out of your house, the barn, or a blaze flares in the back pasture, or you've been in a scary fender bender.

Rural kids raise money for their high school band by collecting pledges and marching through the streets.

Nobody gets road rage over the momentary traffic slowdowns they cause. The same kids show up on the eve of Memorial Day to help place flags on the graves of deceased veterans.

Organization of such efforts happens thanks to rural phone and Internet service—neighbors helping neighbors because they can communicate.

Rural police escort funeral processions—and people pull over until they pass—out of the respect and courtesy that still exists in these parts.

Your stroll along the roadside for exercise and solitude will be repeatedly interrupted. Folks pull over to see if you've had a breakdown and need a ride—or just to visit.

A pair of similarly small rural towns have a heated rivalry between their basketball teams—one constantly the obstacle to the other's advance to the playoffs. But, there's respect between the teams and communities, too.

When a massive tornado levels part of one of the small towns, kids from the rival team are on the phone with one another that very night and sunrise finds the whole basketball team and a lot of companions on hand, dressed

in work clothes, heavy boots and gloves, to set to work clearing the storm debris. Sportsmanship, community, rural.

In the midst of tragedy from a farm accident, or the passing of a family man whose widow and children are left fretting over how to gather crops left standing unharvested in the field, phone calls in the night prove that neighboring still resonates.

Combines and grain carts and trucks, cotton strippers

and boll buggies and module builders and the rural folk to run them converge in such numbers that the whole of harvest is completed before supertime—aid, comfort, compassion practiced rural-style.

In the little towns and the farm communities, we help each other—that's the cool rural way.

So, we keep working at and supporting things like stock shows and public speaking

events for the 4-H and FFA kids, Lions Club pancake suppers, fund raising dinners for those in need.

And the phone service we created ourselves keeps working to bring better communication and technologies to our rural world.

That's just another cool thing about living and working out here in the rural heartland—neighbors helping one another to move forward.

FCC proposes rulemaking to address problems with rural long-distance calls

In late October, the FCC unanimously adopted a report and order and further notice of proposed rule making (FNPRM) to address problems with completing long-distance calls to rural areas. NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association, says it appears both actions represent positive developments for rural consumers who have suffered the frustration of long-distance calls not completing, lost business, and safety concerns.

The order marks an important milestone in NTCA's nearly three-year campaign to resolve the frustrating call completion problem. The FCC action:

- Requires that providers with more than 100,000 lines that make the initial choice as to how to route a call collect and retain data for six months

and file quarterly reports.

- Prohibits false audible ringing that leads the calling party to believe the phone is ringing at the called party's premises when it is not.
- Allows providers taking advantage of the safe harbor to receive reduced data retention and reporting obligation.
- Gives providers the option of requesting individual waivers to have their retention and reporting obligations further reduced by adopting practices to ensure calls to rural areas are completed.

"NTCA first brought the troubling occurrence of rural call failures and other call completion issues to the FCC's attention nearly three years ago. We are grateful to Chairwoman Clyburn for making resolution of this epidemic a priority during her tenure, to Commission-

ers Pai and Rosenworcel for pressing for common-sense and effective solutions, and to the agency's staff for their hard work in seeking answers to these issues.

"There is still much work to be done to ensure that no consumer will be cut off from critical communications, but NTCA is hopeful that this order will help to minimize consumer confusion by precluding false ringing, provide immediate incentives for providers to better manage completion of their calls, give the FCC a useful tool in identifying bad actors for enforcement, and serve as a springboard for further conversations about what else remains to be done to achieve truly universal and seamless connectivity," said NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield.