

ALPINE COMMUNIQUÉ

Real Access. Real Value. Real People.

ALPINE
communications

Q1 2018 Newsletter

Meet the Crew - Austin Winch

Please join us in welcoming Austin Winch to Alpine Communications as a combination technician. Austin joined Alpine in November and his duties include installing, servicing, and supporting phone, FusionTV, and internet services.

Austin is a native of Garber, Iowa and he is a Clayton Ridge graduate. He received his Police Science degree from Hawkeye Community College after graduation. Austin brings a diverse range of expertise to Alpine as he was previously employed in agriculture and manufacturing.

Outside of work, Austin is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys fishing, hunting, and boating on the Mississippi. He loves his three dogs Orka, Chumly, and Carly.

“When asked about his experience at Alpine Communications so far, Austin said, “It’s a very enjoyable company to work for!”

Welcome, Austin!



McGregor-Marquette Chamber Awards Alpine for Fusion Fiber Project

Thank you to the McGregor-Marquette Chamber of Commerce for recognizing Alpine Communications at its annual dinner and awards banquet. Fellow honorees are Lynette Sander, Juanita Lang and Crystal Scarff who are pictured with Alpine’s Lori Kepler.



If your phone number appears in parentheses (XXX-XXXX) in this edition of the Alpine Communiqué, please give us a call at 563-245-4000 by March 31, 2018, and we’ll apply a \$5 credit to your account!



Aureon Awards Charity Grants to Area Organizations

Alpine Communications in partnership with Aureon is pleased to announce that Aureon Charity Grants have been awarded to three organizations within Alpine Communications' service area. The Guttenberg Rec Board received a grant for \$300.00 towards a cement pad for the skate park. McGregor Hook and Ladder Company #1 received a grant for \$1,450.00 to purchase new chainsaws. The Elgin Betterment Club received a grant for \$500.00 towards playground renovations. Upon reviewing an abundance of applications, our Aureon Charity Grant Committee delegated funds to projects committed to the betterment of local lowan communities. The grants were presented in conjunction with Alpine Communications who sponsored the grant application. (252-8254)

Aureon is now accepting applications for the quarterly Aureon Charity Grant Program. Our grants are available to lowa communities sponsored by its participating telecommunication companies. The Aureon Charity Grant Committee looks to accept proposals from organizations seeking to better their local communities.



Pictured are J.D. Siebert from Aureon, Molly Moser from the Guttenberg Rec Board, and Lori Keppler from Alpine Communications.



Pictured are J.D. Siebert from Aureon, Jerald Thorton and Kent Johnson from McGregor Hook and Ladder, and Chat Ruegnitz from Alpine Communications.

Grant application forms are available from Alpine at www.alpinecom.net/library/aureon-charity-grant/ or the Aureon website (www.aureon.com). There are virtually no restrictions on the number or types of charities that may apply for the grant; however, the program must benefit and be made available to all members of the community. The deadline for submission is the end of each calendar quarter.

Interested organizations are encouraged to contact their local Independent Telecommunications Company to learn more information, as well as obtain and complete the application. All Charity Grant awards will be presented by Aureon and the participating local Independent Telecommunications Company.

AUREON
NETWORK SERVICES
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
 Up to \$1,000 for students pursuing a STEM-related course of study and those residing in the trade area of an Iowa Independent Telecommunications Company. Apply by April 30, 2017.
 VISIT AUREON.COM/SCHOLARSHIP FOR DETAILS

Aureon Charity Grant Committee delegated funds to projects committed to the betterment of local lowan communities.

2018 FRS Scholarship Opportunity

Alpine Communications has teamed up with The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) to offer scholarship opportunities to our service areas' high school seniors.

In 2018, FRS will award scholarships per geographic region of the NTCA membership and one sponsored by an NTCA associate member. The awards will be distributed proportionate to the number of applications received per region. FRS will fund \$2,000 of each scholarship, with the sponsoring organization of each winning student providing a \$500 match.

Additionally, FRS will award four (4) \$5,000 Staurulakis Family Scholarships, with a preference to students who are majoring in math, science, engineering or medicine; two (2) \$1,500 TMS Scholarships, and one (1) \$7,000 Everett Kneece Return to Rural America Scholarship will be awarded.

Eligibility requirements and the application can be downloaded from FRS at www.frs.org. Completed applications must be returned to our office by February 15, 2018, so that we may complete the sponsor certification and forward the applications to FRS by March 1, 2018.

Contact Sara Hertrampf at Alpine for more information or assistance with applying for a scholarship.



2018

College Scholarship Program

RETURN APPLICATIONS TO ALPINE BY FEBRUARY 15, 2018



FOUNDATION FOR RURAL SERVICE



Alpine Contributes Towards McGregor Street Banners

Pictured is Sara Hertrampf, Alpine along with Marueen Wild of McGregor who designed the new street banners which will adorn Main Street and the riverfront this spring. The July 19 tornado destroyed many of the banners and Alpine donated \$250 to help fund the project to replace them.

Don't forget to look for your phone number to win!



How to Reduce Unwanted Calls and Mail

Your time is valuable. So if you're tired of answering annoying telemarketer calls or having to safely dispose of credit card mailings, take action today by visiting the websites below. (245-3812)

NATIONAL DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

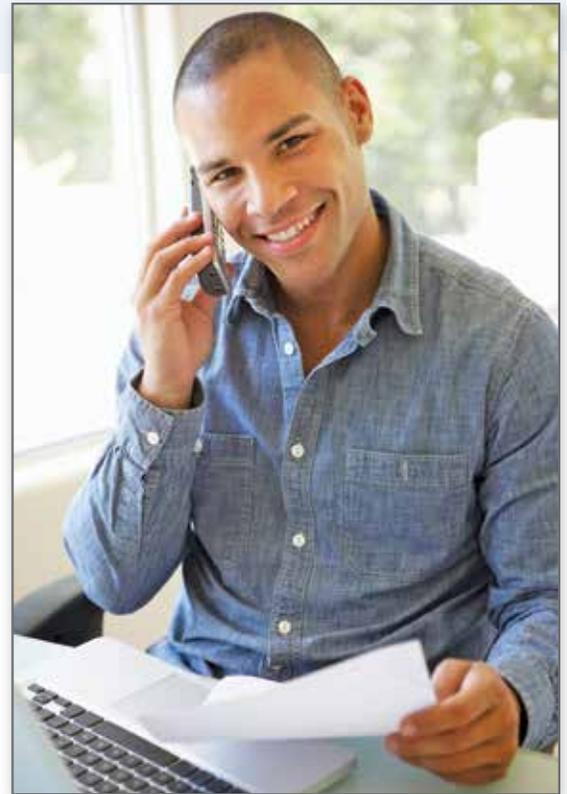
www.donotcall.gov

The National Do Not Call Registry gives you a choice about whether to receive telemarketing calls at home. Most telemarketers should not call your number once it has been on the registry for 31 days. If they do, you can file a complaint at this website. The service is free and you can register up to three phone numbers (landline or mobile) in the online form.

CONSUMER CREDIT REPORTING INDUSTRY

www.optoutprescreen.com

Credit card offers may help you compare interest rates and get good deals, but they can also be stolen by identity thieves from your mailbox. For security reasons, these mailings should be shredded before being thrown away, which can be time-consuming. OptOutPrescreen.com is a centralized service to accept and process requests from consumers to opt-out of these credit card offers. It's a joint venture among the Consumer Credit Reporting Companies of Equifax, Experian, Innovis, and TransUnion.



Stay Safe From Cybercrime During Tax Time

Tax season is prime time for online scams. With the April 18 filing deadline just two months away, cybercriminals are looking to lift your personal information to cash in on a refund request and/or steal your identity. The problem is rampant: in 2015, the Federal Trade Commission received close to half a million complaints, and nearly half (45 percent) - were tax fraud-related. Cyber thieves are crafty: they can break into your account or device and literally steal your online life - as well as your tax refund.

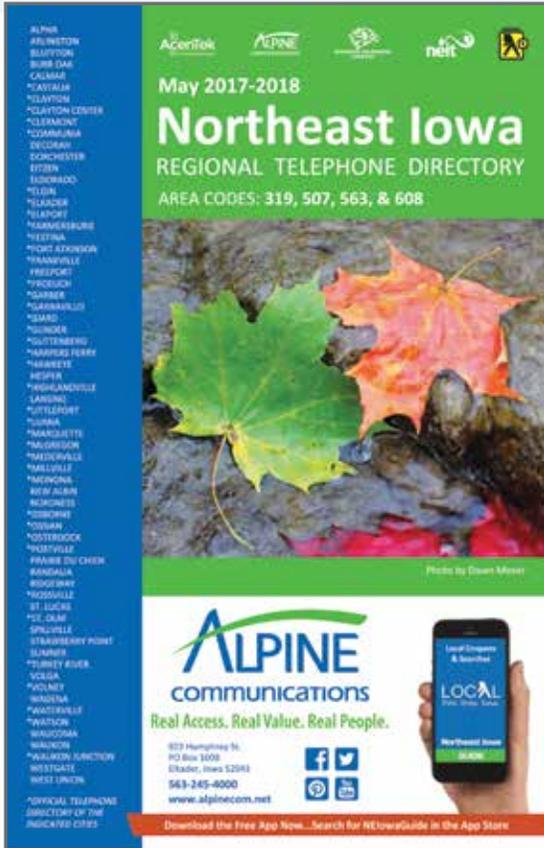
FOLLOW THESE TAX SEASON TIPS

The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) has some easy-to-use STOP. THINK. CONNECT. tips that will help protect you against fraudster tricks.

- **Keep all machines clean:** Having updated software on all devices that connect to the Internet is critical. This includes security software, web browsers and operating systems for PCs and your mobile devices. Having current software is a strong defense against viruses and malware that can steal login credentials or potentially use your computer to generate spam.
- **Get two steps ahead:** Turn on two-step authentication - also known as two-step verification or multi-factor authentication - on accounts. Many popular email services and financial institutions offer this key security step for free, but you must opt in to turn it on.
- **Make better passwords:** If your passwords are too short or easy to guess, it's like giving a cyber thief your banking PIN. Longer passwords and those that combine capital and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols provide better protection.
- **Get savvy about Wi-Fi hotspots:** Public wireless networks are not secure. Cybercriminals can potentially intercept Internet connections while you are filing highly personal information on public WiFi.
- **When in doubt, throw it out:** Links in email are often the way bad guys get access to your personal information. If it looks weird, even if you know the source, it's best to delete.
- **Think before you act:** Be leery of communications that implore you to act immediately - especially if you are told you owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly.
- **File your tax forms on secure HTTPS sites only!**



Courtesy of the National Cyber Security Alliance



Your Photo Could Be Famous

Take a shot at getting your photo on our 2018-2019 directory cover!

Alpine Communications is looking for amazing photos that represent the communities we serve, so we can put them on the cover of our 2018-2019 Northeast Iowa Regional Telephone Directory. Thousands of copies are distributed around Northeast Iowa, Southern Minnesota, and Southwest Wisconsin during the year and all winning images are proudly displayed on the walls of Alpine's office at 923 Humphrey Street in Elkader.

Alpine's Photo Directory Contest is open to amateur photographers at all levels of experience. Our goal is to highlight the natural beauty and scenic settings that surround us while promoting the art of local photography. The winning photographer will receive a \$50 Alpine Communications gift certificate. As a thank you, each person will receive one 5x7 print of one of their entries.

PHOTO CONTEST RULES & ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Entries are open to customers of all ages who are Alpine Communications customers.
- Photos must have been shot within Alpine Communications' serving areas of Elkader, Elgin, Guttenberg, Garnavillo, Garber, Marquette, McGregor, and the surrounding rural areas. (255-1142)
- Photos must have been shot within the past three years.
- Digital photos must be high-resolution, at least 300 dpi, and formatted as a .jpg, .pdf, .bmp, .eps, .tif, or .gif. Scanned or hard copy photo entries will not be accepted.
- Relatives of Alpine Communications employees are not eligible to enter.

HOW TO ENTER:

- Send digital photos by the entry deadline of February 23, 2018.
- Upload your photos using the form at www.alpinecom.net.
- Include name, address, telephone, description of photo, and where the photo was taken.
- Limit two entries per household.

If you'd like more information, call Alpine Communications at 563-245-4000.



Don't forget to look for your phone number to win!

“ I love the “home town” feel and customer service we get. Always a friendly voice when we call! ”

Teri, Elkader

“ I have SecureIT and I never have a problem that they cannot fix!! A great group of people to help out. ”

LuAnn, Colesburg



CONNECT WITH US:

923 Humphrey St.
PO Box 1008
Elkader, Iowa 52043

Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday - Friday

563-245-4000

or 1-800-635-1059

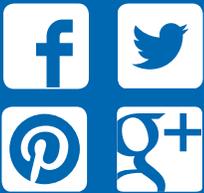
www.alpinecom.net

Internet Tech Support:

1-888-264-2908

SecureIT Tech Support:

1-877-373-3320



With Tech Home, you can keep your devices (and family) safe from online threats, create, store & access strong passwords and backup all of your holiday photos easily. With the Support plan you even get 24/7/365 unlimited premium technical support for things like connecting to your home network and printer.

3 PLANS TO CHOOSE FROM:

Protect \$9.95/mo. or \$7.95/mo. with a Peak Savings Pak

- Covers 1 desktop & 1 smartphone or tablet
- Web security, ransomware protection & bloatware removal for PC
- Password manager
- 50GB file backup
- Anti-theft for mobile

Protect Plus \$14.95/mo. or \$12.95/mo. with a Peak Savings Pak

- Covers 4 devices (desktop or mobile)
- Web security, ransomware protection & bloatware removal for PC
- Password manager
- 250GB file backup
- Anti-theft for mobile

Support \$21.95/mo. or \$19.95/mo. with a Peak Savings Pak

- Covers 4 devices (desktop or mobile)
- Web security, ransomware protection & bloatware removal for PC
- Password manager
- 250GB file backup (873-2095)
- Anti-theft for mobile
- 24/7/365 Whole-Home Premium Tech Support via chat, phone or email

ORDER TODAY! 563-245-4000