

GRISWOLD Connections

WINTER 2020

Dividend Checks Mailed December 1

Dividends to Griswold Communications shareholders are paid 10 years in arrears; therefore, the checks were for services from 2010. If you do not get your dividend check or you have questions, call our business office at 712-778-2121.

Happy Holidays

Griswold Communications employees and board wish you and your family a happy holiday season. Our business office will be closed Thursday, December 24 and Friday, December 25 for the Christmas holiday, and Friday, January 1 for New Year's Day.



Contact

Griswold Communications
607 Main Street / PO Box 640
Griswold, IA 51535
Phone: 712-778-2121

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
7:30 am to 12:30 pm and
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Email us at gctc@netins.net

Visit us online at
griswoldcommunications.com



When you can't be together in person this holiday season, gather virtually instead. With our blueSURGE internet, group video calls will go more smoothly and feel more festive. You'll also enjoy merrier online shopping, gaming, learning, streaming, and more.

**SIGN UP FOR NEW
OR UPGRADED
INTERNET NOW
CALL 712-778-2121**



GIVE YOUR FAMILY THE GIFT OF FASTER INTERNET!

Increase your blueSURGE internet speed in December and Griswold Communications will waive the \$27 fee to change your speed.* Speed offerings are available up to 1 GIG!

*Certain restrictions apply. Online experience is impacted by devices used and their performance capability as well as by wireless router capability and environmental conditions.

What are the Most Popular Christmas Cookies in the U.S.?



Baking Christmas cookies is a cherished tradition and one that adds sweetness to the season. While there are many kinds out there, here are the five most popular:

1. Chocolate Peanut Butter Blossoms

Peanut butter cookies topped with Hershey's Kisses top the list of favorites in the U.S.

2. Gingerbread Cookies

Loved by both adults and kids, they combine traditional flavor with the fun of frosting and decorating the gingerbread people.

3. Thumbprint Cookies

These classics are made with a sugar cookie dough that's rolled in sugar and then indented with a thumb and filled with jam.

4. Snickerdoodles

Similar to sugar cookies, snickerdoodles are rolled in cinnamon sugar before baking. The source of their name is up for debate. Some say it's of German descent, while others believe it's simply a funny name without meaning.

5. White Chocolate Cranberry Cookies

These beautiful cookies look like Christmas, since they combine white chocolate chips with red cranberries.

What's your favorite? Share your favorite cookie and maybe even the recipe on our Griswold Communications Facebook page.

Tips to Help You Host Virtual Holiday Gatherings

This year, it may not be possible or safe to host holiday parties at your home. But that doesn't mean your entertaining traditions can't continue, albeit in an altered form.

Virtual holiday gatherings using video calls can still provide much of what you love about in-person parties—such as seeing people you don't get to see very often, sharing fun conversations, and enjoying seasonal food and decorations.

How do you go from being physically together in a room to being virtually together on Zoom? Check out these tips:

Come Up With a Fun Theme

Virtual gatherings need to be engaging and interactive. Host a dinner party by sending the recipes to guests beforehand and have everyone cook the same meal and eat together. Or throw a virtual cocktail hour and have everyone make a common cocktail or mocktail and do toasts around the (virtual) room.

Make Sure Guests Have the Video Platform

You can choose Zoom, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, Facebook Portal, or Skype. If you're concerned some older guests may need help with the setup, consider scheduling a test call beforehand. 769-2695

Send Goodie Boxes to Guests

To treat your guests and simplify preparations, consider mailing or delivering goodie boxes with snacks and beverages. It doesn't have to be fancy. Even hot chocolate mix and Christmas cookies will do.

Dress Up and Decorate

Ask guests to wear ugly Christmas sweaters and/or Santa hats. This instantly says "fun party" on the screen rather than "dull business meeting." Also encourage them to sit in front of a Christmas tree or other decorations during the call. Another option is to use a virtual holiday background, such as the ones offered by the Hallmark Channel at www.hallmarkchannel.com/hallmark-channel-virtual-backgrounds.

Set Some Ground Rules

If your virtual gathering will have more than several guests, you'll probably want to have people mute themselves unless they're talking to avoid the distraction of background noises and multiple people trying to talk at once.

Open Gifts Together

If your extended family can't gather in one room to open holiday gifts, do it virtually. You can still share the excitement of seeing delighted faces as each gift is opened.





5 Reasons Why Talking Can Be Better Than Texting

Granted, texting can be ideal for many types of situations. But if you aren't talking on the phone much anymore, you could be missing out on powerful advantages including these:

1. Hearing a person's voice brings so much more to a conversation.

Think about it. Would you rather read "Hahaha" or would you rather hear a friend's actual laughter? 763-4480

2. You can eliminate the guessing game of trying to figure out tone.

We've all been there with "mystery" texts. Was the person joking or serious? What exactly do all those emojis mean? Does the all-caps message convey anger? With a phone call, the person's message tends to come through loud and clear.

3. It's easier to have a long phone conversation than to participate in a long text exchange.

Let's face it. Nobody wants to read super-long texts (or have to write equally long responses to them). When a conversation is going to require lots of words, make a phone call instead. It's much easier on everyone.

4. A phone call communicates a higher level of importance.

Since phone calls are becoming less common, they're also seen as a sign of an important conversation — perhaps one that announces big news, expresses concern for someone's life challenges, enables joint decisions to be made, and so on. When you make a phone call, you get and give undivided attention and can have a natural conversation in real time.

5. There's a definitive end to a phone call.

When you talk on the phone, there's a hello at the beginning and a goodbye at the end. Text messages are often not that clear, and significant time can go by between texts. You may wait around for a text response that never comes, or get awakened by that "ping" after you've gone to bed.

Take a break from texts and make phone calls part of your everyday life again! To learn more about Griswold Communications phone services, visit www.griswoldcommunications.com.

Beware of Scammers Trying to Exploit COVID-19 Fears

Scammers use every opportunity to try and trick you out of money or personal information, and the COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point.

The U.S. Attorney General issued a warning about these coronavirus scams:

- Individuals and businesses are advertising and selling fake cures and vaccines for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud.
- Phishing emails are being sent from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Malicious websites and apps appear to share coronavirus-related information in order to gain access to your devices and lock them until payment is received.
- Scammers are seeking donations fraudulently for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.

Other reported scams related to COVID-19 include fake e-commerce sites claiming to sell supplies in high demand such as hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and surgical masks. 767-2693 Scammers will keep your money but never provide the merchandise.

Griswold Communications urges you to watch out for these types of scams, and rely only on reputable sources for the products and information you need.



Scholarship Notice for 2021 Graduates and Their Parents

It's never too soon to be thinking about upcoming scholarship opportunities. Griswold Communications offers a local scholarship to students in our school district. There will be additional scholarship opportunities available through other associations of which Griswold Communications is a member.

All details have not been finalized yet, but deadlines for submission of scholarship applications last year were between March 1 and March 15. We anticipate those deadlines to be similar for 2021. More details will be made available as we get them.



Hidden Number Contest

We have hidden randomly selected phone numbers throughout this newsletter. If you find your phone number in *italics* anywhere in this newsletter, please call our office at 712-778-2121 by December 31 to receive a \$5.00 bill credit.

Look now to see if your phone number is hiding in any articles. Good luck and happy reading!



The Internet and Wi-Fi are Two Different Things

Many people use the terms internet and Wi-Fi interchangeably, but although they're related, they're not the same. To help clear things up, here are descriptions of both terms:

The Internet Is a Highway

The internet has been called the Information Superhighway and with good reason. Just like a road that connects two cities and moves people and goods, the internet is a digital maze of routes that connects thousands of computer networks so they can exchange bits of information. Using an agreed-upon language called the Internet Protocol, these interconnected devices use the internet's digital "roads" to exchange data that is then translated into human-consumable form at the other end. 778-2480

To connect to your Internet Service Provider's (ISP) network from your home, you're given access to a physical line connected to a modem. There are two ways to connect a computer to a modem. The first method involves physically plugging the computer into the port on the back of the modem using an Ethernet cable. The second method, which is much more common today, uses a wireless connection made possible by a device called a Wi-Fi router.

Wi-Fi is an Access Ramp

Wi-Fi refers to a wireless network that allows computers, smartphones, or other devices within a particular area to connect to the internet (and each other) without being physically connected by a cable.

The Wi-Fi router can be physically plugged into the modem with a cable or combined with the modem into a single piece of equipment. It uses radio technology to broadcast a unique name (also known as a service set identifier, or SSID), which you or your ISP chooses when the router is first set up.

Because information is transferred using wireless transmitters and radio signals, physical proximity to the Wi-Fi router is necessary for a good connection. But once connected, people can move around freely with their devices without losing their connection to the internet.

To sum things up, Wi-Fi is what transports the internet service to your device but Wi-Fi is not internet service. That's why you can have strong Wi-Fi signals but still experience slow speeds.

Griswold Communications is here to help with a range of internet speeds and Wi-Fi service. To learn more, call 712-778-2121 or visit www.griswoldcommunications.com.