

GRISWOLD Connections

SPRING 2020

Annual Meeting Coming in April

Griswold Communications' Annual Meeting will be held April 8, 2020, at 2:00 pm at our business office at 607 Main Street in Griswold. More details will be mailed soon to each stockholder.



Contact

Griswold Communications
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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



Subscribers of blueSURGE television can enjoy a four-day free preview of the best of HBO (channels 650-655) and Cinemax (channels 670-677) on Friday, March 13 through Monday, March 16. Catch up or binge watch all that HBO and Cinemax have to offer.

This preview will feature an array of new original programming, including the premiere of *The Plot Against America* and the return of *Westworld* and *My Brilliant Friend*, along with the theatrical premiere of *Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw*, which did \$174 million at the box office.

Like what you see and want to subscribe to HBO and Cinemax movie packages? Call Griswold Communications at 778-2121 by close of business on March 16 and we'll waive the fee to add them.

Tech Home and Windows 7

Effective January 14, 2020, Microsoft ended support for the Windows 7 operating system. That means Microsoft no longer provides technical support or software and security updates for Windows 7. The good news for Tech Home subscribers is that Tech Home products will continue to be tested for and support Windows 7 through at least September 30, 2020.

Microsoft has been sending courtesy reminders this past year to Windows 7 users recommending they upgrade their PCs to Windows 10 or consider buying new ones. Beginning January 15, 2020, Microsoft started displaying alerts to Windows 7 users reminding them they are no longer supporting the operating system. If Tech Home subscribers buy new PCs, they can convert their Tech Home product licenses to new devices.

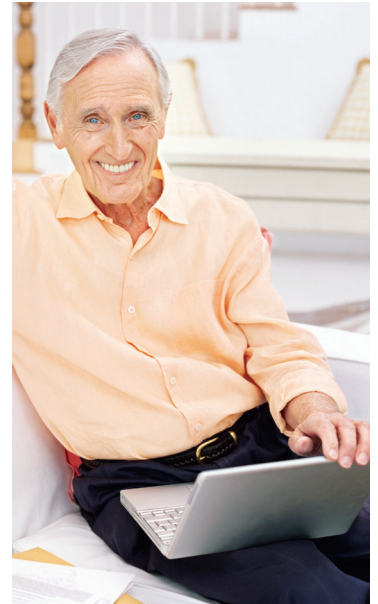
If you need assistance converting the product license to a new PC, contact Tech Home support at 877- 373-3320.



IRS Warns of Social Security Number Scam and More

According to the IRS, taxpayers should be on the lookout for new variations of tax-related scams. In the latest twist on a scam tied to Social Security numbers (SSN), scammers claim to be able to suspend or cancel the victim's SSN. It's yet another attempt by con artists to frighten people into returning threatening 'robocall' voicemails.

During these calls, scammers may mention overdue taxes in addition to saying they will cancel the person's SSN. 763-4670 If taxpayers receive a call that threatens to suspend their SSN for an unpaid tax bill, they should just hang up. It's definitely a scam.



In addition to these SSN scam calls, the IRS is warning people about fraudulent emails designed to look like official communications from the IRS or others in the tax industry (such as tax software companies). These emails may seek information related to refunds or filing status, or they may ask for confirmation of personal information including a PIN.

Remember, the IRS and its authorized private collection agencies will never do any of the following:

- Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, iTunes gift card, or wire transfer. The IRS does not use these methods for tax payments.
- Ask a taxpayer to make a payment to a person or organization other than the U.S. Treasury.
- Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have the taxpayer arrested for not paying.
- Demand taxes be paid without giving the taxpayer the opportunity to question or appeal the amount owed.

If you've received an IRS-related scam phone call, you can report it to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration using the online form here: www.treasury.gov/tigta/contact_report_scam.shtml.

To learn more about tax scams and how to avoid them, visit www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-scams-consumer-alerts.



Are You Foggy on Cloud Computing?

Cloud computing, used in the marketing of services like Apple's iCloud, is one of the more prominent buzzwords in technology today. But do you understand what it means? In basic terms, cloud computing is the use of computing resources controlled by someone else and not located near the user. 767-2473 Cloud computing relies upon a vast network of hardware and software to distribute computing resources to users, and the Web is the network upon which almost all cloud computing operates.

There are three general categories of cloud computing: Storage, Software, and Hosting (such as for email or a website). The easiest way to understand the difference between local and cloud computing is to look at a few examples of software and hardware that perform the same or similar functions.

LOCAL APPLICATION	CLOUD APPLICATION	FUNCTION
Microsoft Outlook	Google Gmail	Email
Microsoft Office	Google Docs	Office suite
Intuit Quicken	Mint	Personal finance
Adobe Photoshop	Sumo Paint	Graphics editing
Computer hard drive	Online Backup	Data backup
Media player	Pandora	Music
Games on disk	Flash-based games	Entertainment

Not all cloud services are one-for-one substitutes for their desktop counterpart. For example, Microsoft Office has many more features than Google Docs, although the latter makes cooperation between remotely located users easier. You also have much more control over music that you've purchased than what you rent from a cloud service like Pandora.

All things considered, it's safe to say that tomorrow's forecast will include clouds. If you're looking for cloud computing solutions for your home or business, contact Griswold Communications for more information on Tech Home or Midwest Data Iowa.

Be on Guard for Tech Support Scams

Here's how it works: Scammers may use pop-up ads claiming to sell fixes for your computer, which lead you to a website to download the software. You're told to call to "register" the software, and if you do, you'll be asked for remote access to your computer. Using remote access, they "examine" your computer and say it has problems needing additional "solutions." Next they want your credit card number to purchase these so-called solutions, often leading to credit card fraud.

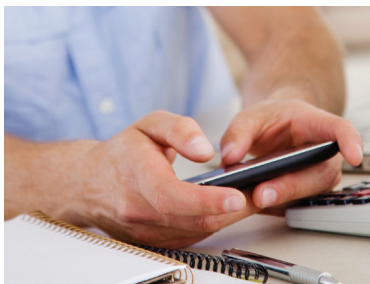
Alternatively, some scammers call and claim they're on the tech support team at Microsoft or another well-known technology company. They go through the same process of accessing your computer, getting credit card or other information, and causing trouble.

Follow these tips to avoid being scammed:

- Never give access to your computer to someone who calls you out of the blue.
- Never provide credit card information or other sensitive data to someone claiming to be a tech support representative. 769-2507

Griswold Communications wants you to stay informed and vigilant so you can outsmart the scammers. If you need help with computer issues, contact us and ask about Tech Home or Total Tech Services.





Access Our Online Telephone Directory

The Griswold Communications' 2020 Telephone Directory was mailed to all telephone subscribers. Did you know we also provide an online version at griswoldcommunications.com?

With our online telephone directory, the information you need is always at your fingertips:

- Access it via your computer, mobile phone or tablet.
- Search by category, yellow pages or white pages
- If there is a website listed, click on it to go directly there.

Take advantage of the convenience of this online resource.

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 March 31 to receive a \$5.00 bill credit.

Last newsletter's Hidden Number Contest winners were Bill Taylor and Dale Austin. Congratulations to you.

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

5 Clever Ways to Save Money When You Shop Online

To get the best deal from online merchants, you need to know the tricks of the trade. It pays to use these shopping tips:

1. Use multiple coupon codes strategically.

If the website lets you combine different coupons and promo codes at the checkout, use them in the right order. Say you have a promo code for a 20% discount and a coupon worth \$10 off. Apply the 20% promo code first, which will subtract 20% from the full price. Then use your \$10 coupon.

2. Use live chats.

Live chats are available on most websites. Be polite and ask a few questions about the product you'd like to buy. Next, ask if there are any discounts available. 778-4125 It's not a well-known fact but chat support can issue special promo codes that are not widely available.

3. Leave items in your cart.

This strategy works two ways. By placing items in your cart and stepping away for a day or two, you may avoid making an impulse purchase you'll later regret. Secondly, most retailers hate unclosed deals and will try to get you to buy by emailing a discount code. This only works when you have an account on the merchant's website and are logged in when you leave your cart.

4. Accumulate more coupons with multiple email addresses.

Increase your chances of saving big bucks by signing up for an online merchant's newsletter or email list with multiple email accounts. This way, you may end up with two or three 50% discount codes instead of just one.

5. Download the Honey app.

This app, available at www.joinhoney.com/install, will automatically find and apply coupon codes when you shop online. Click on the Honey button during checkout and Honey will automatically apply coupon codes to your shopping cart. Click on the Honey button on a supported online store and instantly see all the coupons and sales available for the store.

Be sure to also check out Griswold Communications' website and Facebook page for our current money-saving promotions.

