

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

WINTER 2022 NEWSLETTER

## 2022, A YEAR OF PROGRESS AND PROMISE

December is the perfect time to thank our member-owners for your patronage and your steadfast trust in our cooperative. In 1954, a neighborhood group of farmers and ranchers in Clinton collaborated to bring phone service to their community and from that humble beginning Blackfoot was born. Today, we deliver vital connectivity to nearly 14,000 members who depend on our services to connect to the world! As a cooperative, we are still proudly owned by a network of neighbors focused on the needs of the communities we serve. One way we stay connected to our member-owners is via our locally elected Trustees who represent our nine districts. Our Trustees help make important decisions about our future and they also uphold the cooperative principle of "concern for community" by supporting many organizations including food banks, schools, libraries, fire departments,

veterans programs, ecology projects, rodeos and much more. Your trustees welcome feedback at [boardoftrustees@blackfoot.com](mailto:boardoftrustees@blackfoot.com).



Board of Trustees 2022

2022  
COMMUNITY IMPACT:  
**\$380,000 +**

**1,100+** FIBER  
DROPS  
COMPLETED

**570+** MILES  
OF FIBER

**Our Mission:**  
We connect  
people, businesses  
and communities

**83,000+**  
CALLS ANSWERED BY OUR  
HIGHLY SKILLED TEAM MEMBERS

Please save the date to join our annual meeting on Saturday, April 25, 2023



## A cyber security tip:

Protect yourself from Ransomware! Ransomware is a type of malware that infects your computer, gains access to your private information and blocks your access until you pay a ransom to have your files restored. Here are four tips to protect yourself:

### Know Your Sender and Always Click with Caution:

Avoid opening suspicious emails and never open an attachment from an unknown sender.

### Backup Your Files Often:

A reliable way to avoid losing files to a ransomware attack is to backup all your important files to an off-site location. You can accomplish this by using an external hard drive or using one of many online file storage and backup solutions like Dropbox.

### TECH TIP

### Enable Your Pop-Up Blocker:

Pop-ups are a common tool criminals use to infect computers. Enable your pop-up blocker to minimize the chance of inadvertently clicking an infected ad.

### Stay Current on Antivirus and Firewall Options:

Maintaining a strong firewall and keeping your security and antivirus software up to date is critical to prevent malicious activity on your computer.

**NEED HELP? WE ARE HERE 24/7**  
Blackfoot's Technical Support:  
1-877-881-1155

**GET MORE TECH TIPS AT**  
[GoBlackfoot.com/TechTips](http://GoBlackfoot.com/TechTips)

**CHECK OUT OUR EDUCATIONAL**  
**VIDEOS AT**  
[GoBlackfoot.com/Education](http://GoBlackfoot.com/Education)





## DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENT?

Request support at [GoBlackfoot.com/Community](https://GoBlackfoot.com/Community)

At Blackfoot, we are always working to build relationships with the communities we serve. We value time honored traditions in our service areas and look forward to connecting with you in 2023.



Connect with us

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[GoBlackfoot.com/BlackfootConnect](http://GoBlackfoot.com/BlackfootConnect)

## A Message from Jason Williams BLACKFOOT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*Dear Cooperative Member,*

What a year! Your cooperative was as busy as ever investing tens of millions of dollars in fiber infrastructure. We also switched over 1,500 customers from our old, legacy copper network to our state-of-the-art fiber network, providing the fastest, most reliable Internet connection available. We have more of the same planned for 2023. Beyond all our hard work, we found time to show up in your communities, committing volunteer time and funding to make Western Montana an even better place to live, work and play. The photographs in this newsletter show just a small sample of your Trustees and employees along with cooperative members, their families and friends out and about.

Speaking of family and friends, I hope all of you will be able to spend quality time with both this holiday season. We've seen plenty of snow over

the last few weeks and it really is beginning to look a lot like Christmas! As we head into 2023, be sure to say hello if you see a Blackfoot truck or our employees in your communities. On behalf of myself, your Board of Trustees, and the more than 180-employees that make up the Blackfoot family:

***Happy Holidays and  
Best Wishes for the New Year!***

