

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

## Annual Member Meeting Highlights

In April, Blackfoot hosted our Annual Member Meeting. This year's theme was *Full Speed Ahead* and we were pleased that so many of you joined us after a two year hiatus due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was a great success and a special celebration. Thank you to all our member-owners for putting your trust in us with your continued patronage.

- Jason Williams gave a state-of-cooperative update that included an update on our fiber network investments, our plans for the year ahead and ways we focus on the communities we serve. Importantly, member-owners voted to change two bylaws related to meeting quorum and Trustee elections to ensure we are well prepared to perform business in any unusual future circumstance. **Stay up-to-date regarding our network upgrade project at: [GoBlackfoot.com/NetworkUpgrades](https://GoBlackfoot.com/NetworkUpgrades)**
- Congratulations to the nine Trustees who were re-elected at the Meeting. Cindy Lewis (District 1) Ross "Butch" Friede (District 2) Les Iverson (District 3) Jim Newberg (District 4) Stuart Morton (District 5) John Teague (District 6) Jim Blush (District 7) Tom Eggensperger (District 8) and Geoffrey Wilson (District 9). **Your Trustees welcome questions and feedback directly or at [boardoftrustees@blackfoot.com](mailto:boardoftrustees@blackfoot.com)**
- CFO, Stacey Mueller, shared information about our positive financial performance. In 2021, your Cooperative member equity grew to \$116M, Cooperative assets grew to \$165M, and we gave back \$1.3M to our member-owners via our capital credit distribution. **For more details about our financial performance: [GoBlackfoot.com/AnnualMeeting](https://GoBlackfoot.com/AnnualMeeting)**
- Education is a top priority at Blackfoot and this year we were pleased to award \$41,500 in scholarships to local students, many of whom joined us at the meeting. **Learn more about our education efforts and scholarship opportunities at: [GoBlackfoot.com/Education](https://GoBlackfoot.com/Education)**
- Congratulations to June Rae Macdonald who won photo contest as voted by attendees. June's picture of the Jocko River will appear on our 2022- 2023 phone book cover. **Learn more about our popular photo contest: [GoBlackfoot.com/PhotoContest](https://GoBlackfoot.com/PhotoContest)**
- Our Community Partner this year was the Montana Natural History Center. We are grateful for their work in our cooperative schools and appreciate their continued partnership. **Learn more about their work: [www.montanaturalist.org](https://www.montanaturalist.org)**
- We were honored to receive invocation from Tony Incashola Sr. and our national anthem was sang beautifully by Gwenyth Reed. Attendees were also treated to a quartet performance by the Missoula Symphony Orchestra.
- Check out photo highlights from the Annual Meeting on the inside of this edition taken by Jordan Lefler, a past photo contest winner!

**Save the date for our next Annual Member Meeting: Saturday, April 25, 2023**

## TECH TIP

# Summer Cyber Safety

Keep these in mind while school is out and good practice for all of us!

**Be careful how much information you share.** Talk to family members about why it is important not to share address or phone numbers with strangers.

**Be thoughtful about what you post.** Teach kids to be cautious about what they share online. Once information is posted it's difficult to control how others will use it and it can't be permanently deleted.

**Connect only with people you know.** Help kids understand the importance of connecting with people they know in real life and regularly check privacy settings to ensure strangers can't see profile settings.

**Keep your location private.** Many apps, devices and even networks can access and broadcast your location. Ensure these features are turned off.

**Protect your password.** Always create strong passwords that others cannot guess and never share with friends.

**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)**

# Full Speed Ahead



## OUR MISSION:

**We connect people,  
businesses and communities.**





# Annual Meeting Memorable Moments



2021 Impact:  
**\$360,000+**



## **DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENT?**

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

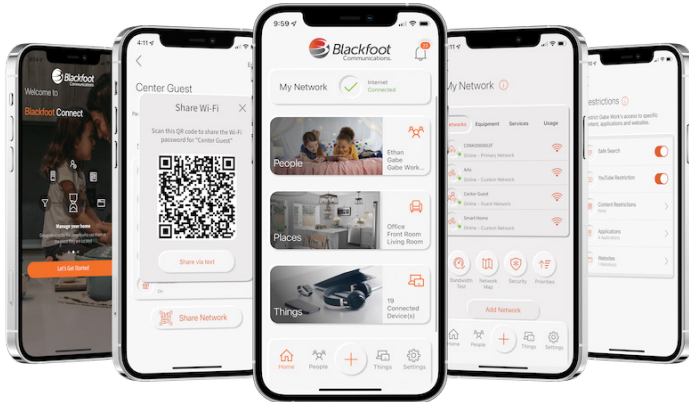
At Blackfoot, we are always working to build relationships with the communities we serve. We value time honored traditions in our service areas and look forward to seeing you out and about this summer.



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## A Message from Jason Williams BLACKFOOT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### ***Dear Cooperative Member,***

As highlighted in this newsletter, our Annual Meeting held on April 30 was a huge success. Thanks to everyone that showed up and participated. If you were not able to make it, we look forward to seeing you next year.

Summer is the busiest time of year at Blackfoot. This year, we are busy with fiber-to-the-home construction projects in Thompson Falls, Plains and the Mission Valley. We have also been busy pursuing state and federal grants to build additional fiber-based broadband services throughout other parts of our cooperative service territory. We will know by later this summer where we will be building in 2023 and beyond.

Like you, Blackfoot is feeling the sting of increasing costs. Everything from fuel to fiber is costing up to 20% or more than it did just a couple of years ago. While one of Blackfoot's core values is

fiscal responsibility, we are now more than ever being mindful of how we are spending precious cooperative dollars. Over our nearly 70-year history, Blackfoot has seen this before—sky-rocketing prices and increasing inflation. And like previous periods of economic instability, Blackfoot will prevail. It is because of you and your patronage that your cooperative is able to persevere.

Lastly, Blackfoot will be out and about in your communities this summer—parades, rodeos

and fairs. When you see us in your community, please stop by to say hello and let us know how we're doing.



***Enjoy the summer!***