

Reflection

Dear Members,

The holiday season is here again, now that everyone has made it through the turkey, we find ourselves getting ready for Christmas. Shortly after that we will be starting another new year. Before it arrives, I would like to take a moment to reflect as we near the end of 2022.

Kathy Huddleston retired in early October after nearly 23 years with Kingdom. If you ever came into the office at Auxvasse, you likely would have found her smiling self at the front desk. Kathy was one of those employees who always arrived early to the work, and took great pride in the work she did. I am not sure how long she was on countdown to her retirement day, but I know that when she would do something that only happened ever so often, she would proclaim that she had done it for the last time. I have only known her since 2015 when I came to Kingdom, but have really become attached to her kindness and humanity. I really miss her and hope she gets everything she wants in her retirement years.

Our Kingdom family experienced a horrible loss this year. Mike Pashia who had been with Kingdom since he was 17 years old, having worked 40 years with our company was tragically lost in late September. Mike had just announced his retirement date for early November. Over his years he worked in construction, installation and repair, marketing, and central office. Mike was a kind and wonderful person and was dedicated to his job, his family, and life. We dearly miss our friend and co-worker.



Renee' Reeter
Chief Executive Officer

Now for some other news, as I have written over and over, universal service revenues (usf) are scheduled to end. When I came to Kingdom, my greatest priority was to make sure Kingdom could survive the loss of those funds. I am so excited to tell you that five and a half years after beginning construction outside the regulated company, Kingdom has replaced our average universal service revenues. In addition to replacing these revenues we have also more than doubled the customer size of the company in that same period of time. This is a great achievement for our employees, our directors, and of course our members.

The industry groups are talking with FCC about revitalizing the usf programs, trying to convince them that some form of support is needed to maintain these high cost rural areas. I don't think they will be successful in a long term enhancement, but maybe some sort of short term extension. Billions of dollars are being made available through grants and auctions to get broadband out to rural Americans. There is no promise of ongoing support in those arrangements, so I believe, the FCC will ultimately, let usf end. USF revenues were important to Kingdom as we served a high cost area that no one else wanted to, but the reality is that we live in a competitive environment and we should accept that it is not fair that one company gets support and another company doesn't.

We have not been able to begin construction in our Audrain County Reconnect 2 area yet due to the delays caused by Osage Nation Tribal interference. We were forced to hire an archeologist to report on the area, which was completed at the end of August. In late October, we discussed the report with USDA and was asked to make some changes to the report in an effort to pacify the Osage Nation. The changes were made in early November and we are waiting for USDA to give us our environmental clearances so we can move to the next step. Once those clearances have been received we will get contractors bids on the job and hopefully get some plow crews working. In all reality I wouldn't be surprised if it is spring before the work can begin. At least I hope it is no later than spring.

Also this year, we applied for another USDA Reconnect 3 grant that covers almost 465 square miles in Audrain and Montgomery Counties. The good news is that we have been awarded this grant after competing with 107 other applicants for the monies. We are not supposed to have the same environmental clearance challenges that we have in Reconnect 2, so I hope we are building in this area sometime in 2023 also. This area surrounds Wellsville, Martinsburg, and borders Laddonia, so we will consider building those towns as well.

Building these areas and all the areas that have been built under our Phynx Fiber brand, will almost double our physical foot print going from about 605 square miles in the Kingdom area to almost 1,180 square miles in total. These areas give us just over 18,000 locations passed for a significant chance at nearly quadrupling the customer size of our company since the expansions began.

Believe it or not, December is the beginning of our planning period for the annual meeting. In this newsletter, you will see the nominating committee for the directors whose terms are up in March 2023. The directors up for re-election are: Jake Baumgartner, Auxvasse, Butch Richards, Tebbetts, and Gene Eldringhoff, Big Spring. If you live in the area of the incumbent and have interest in serving on the Board, please contact one of the nominating committee members in that area.

We will again be doing a push to get all member email addresses updated so that voting credentials can be emailed for the electronic voting process. In addition, this year, we will be emailing the Annual Report to those members with valid emails, so please make sure we have your correct email address on file. Anyone without internet service will receive both of these items via USPS as before. If in doubt about your email address on file go to: <https://kingdomtelco.com/contact-update/> - this will allow you to update it.

One last piece of information before I sign off, you may or may not be aware that one of community hot spots was lost when the restaurant in Rhineland burned down. We have now found a new location in Rhineland, which is located at Main and Lewis Avenue by the ball park. Having hot spots around our area is important to families and their children, so we are happy to have been able to get this one going. The hot spot locations are:

1. Kingdom Telephone 211 S. Main, Auxvasse
2. North Callaway Middle School - Auxvasse
3. North Callaway High School
4. Pleasant Grove Church in Hatton
5. Kingdom's Mokane Central Office - 304 Fulton Ave., Mokane
6. Tebbetts Community Center inside and outside the building
7. Rhineland Ballpark located at Main and Lewis Avenue

Not much more news to share so until next time: enjoy the remainder of your holidays and keep your families safe and healthy!

BOARD SELECTS NOMINATING COMMITTEE; ANNOUNCES MEETING VENUE

Kingdom Telephone members elect three directors each year at the Annual Meeting, and the first step in this process is the selection of a committee to nominate the candidates who will run. This year, the nominating committee members for the Board of Directors appointed are:

- Alan Baumgartner, Auxvasse, 573-239-5492
- Clare Stringer, Auxvasse, 573-826-1104
- Lana Smith, Tebbetts, 295-4259
- Vicki Languell, Tebbetts, 295-4759
- Paul Bader, Big Spring, 252-4594
- Doug Graue, Big Spring, 252-4553

Our bylaws describe two methods of nomination:

1. Selection by the nominating committee. If you are interested in becoming a candidate for Board membership, contact a member of the nominating committee at your earliest convenience. The committee will meet on January 3, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the business office.
2. Nomination by petition. Petitions must be signed by fifteen or more shareholders and delivered to the business office by 5:00 p.m., January 30, 2023.

SCHOLARSHIP

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS: APPLY NOW FOR A \$1,000 KINGDOM SCHOLARSHIP

Kingdom Telephone Company will be offering a college scholarship to help further higher education among our rural youth. The scholarship is available to students for their first year of college, university or vocational-technical school.

Kingdom will award two \$1,000 scholarships to qualified applicants.

Application information will be sent to schools in our serving territory in early December. If you need additional information email us at scholarships@kingdomtelco.com.

The children and grandchildren of employees, board members, former employees, and former board members are not eligible to participate.

RELAY MISSOURI

RELAY MISSOURI PROVIDES FREE PHONE ACCESS FOR HEARING AND SPEECH IMPAIRED

Relay Missouri is a service that provides full telephone accessibility to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-disabled. It can be used to make telephone calls to family, friends, businesses or anyone who has a phone.

The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. It is accurate and transparent. The operator voices everything you type and types everything you say.

All Relay Missouri calls are strictly private. No records of any conversations are maintained.

Relay services are available at no charge. Equipment itself is available upon request to eligible parties. The services are funded by the State.

To learn more, visit relaymissouri.com or kingdomtelco.com/relay-missouri. To use the service, dial 7-1-1 or call the Relay Customer Service Hotline at 800-676-3777 to reach the type of relay needed.