

ALLBAND COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

COOPERATIVE AND COMMUNITY NEWS



Infinity is not impossible!

Special Points of Interest:

- *Allband activates its first co-op member on November 30, 2006!*
- *Internet Rate lowered to \$30.92 per month with service contract*
- *Billing to begin March 1, 2007*
- *Call feature and voicemail access now available online at www.allband.org*

ALLBAND HAS ACTIVATED ITS FIRST CUSTOMERS!

CONSTRUCTION TO CONTINUE IN MID-SUMMER 2007

On November 30, 2006 Allband Communications Cooperative activated its first telephone subscriber, Jerry McBride, a full-time resident in Allband's Robbs Creek exchange, a previously un-served 177 square mile area located between Hillman and Curran, Michigan.

Allband's President and founder, John Reigle, accompanied by his Board of Directors and Management team, witnessed their hard-work become a reality when the first phone call was made from Mr. McBride's house. This call was witnessed firsthand by representatives from the USDA Rural Develop-

ment division that funded the Allband project which had been under development for more than six years with assistance from Professor Ron Choura and students from Michigan State University.

Allband now offers advanced telecommunication services with Fiber to the Home (FTTH) technology and currently offers traditional telephone and high-speed Internet access with plans for video services in phase 2 of development.

As of March 2007, Allband has thirty customers operational and will have up to

sixty active by Spring 2007.

Allband also plans to continue construction in the Robbs Creek Exchange in the Summer of 2007 and will finish the installation of fiber optic cable that will serve up to 300 people in the exchange that has never had traditional wire line telephone service before.

For information about remaining locations that will be eligible for service, please contact Allband at 989-369-9999 or email us at: info@allband.org

VOLUME I, ISSUE I

MARCH 2007

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Jerry and Sheryl McBride complete their first phone call.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT WITH MANY THANKS

Allband would like to send out a special thank you to Jerry McBride, Bob Hastings, Al Kaercher, Vivian Kus and the rest of the community who assisted Allband with the completion of our central office (CO). Their unselfish efforts and support was an immeasurable help while we worked to bring our services online.

The support, hard-work, time and effort that our

board of directors and the rest of the community has shown is an indicator of the type of community that we all live/work in and defines the character of the community as a whole.

Allband looks forward to passing on those same qualities while providing quality telecommunication services and support to your families and businesses.



Board Member Jerry McBride and Brad Smith from Don Smith Electric in the CO.



Board Member Bob Hastings taking his sports car out for a cruise!

ALLBAND COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

LOCAL VERIZON CALLING ISSUES AND TROUBLE TICKET REPORTING

Most Verizon subscribers in the 989 area code have not been able to call Allband subscribers. This is true for calls from local calling areas, i.e., adjacent exchange areas - Hillman, Lachine, Hubbard Lake, Fairview, Atlanta and Lincoln as well as calls from long distance calling areas, e.g., Alpena, Mio, Rogers City, etc. When a Verizon customer dials an Allband subscriber, the caller is unable to get through and receives an error message. This problem is due to Verizon choosing to not make the required connection with Allband. Allband has made arrangements for the necessary connections so that Allband customers can make calls to any Verizon customer. While Allband cannot force Verizon to make

this connection, we are in contact with the Michigan Public Service Commission and the Michigan Attorney General to resolve the problem. Please note that there are no problems when trying to make outgoing calls from Allband phone lines, this is strictly related to receiving calls.

If people you know are experiencing calling issues with Verizon or other companies (someone can not call you from lower Michigan for example) such as Nextel, AT&T or Talk America, this is due to lack of connection and/or routing errors on their networks. Unfortunately, there is nothing Allband can do to correct this since it is the other company's responsibility

to make the required arrangements to terminate their customer's calls to Allband. The required paperwork to allow these companies to connect with Allband has already been completed by Allband. Since Allband is not a retail customer of these customers, this problem must be resolved by the subscriber who cannot reach you. To correct this, the person who is trying to call you must call their telephone or cell phone provider and request to open a trouble ticket with their technical support group and explain that they cannot reach your phone number. If further assistance is necessary, do not hesitate to contact us at 989-369-9999. We are very sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused you and we hope to have this issue resolved as soon as possible.



The local calling issue where Allband subscribers can not receive calls from local Verizon customers is nearly fixed. Allband will contact you by phone or email to notify you that the problem has been corrected. Thank you for your patience while we resolve this complicated issue!

911 SERVICE FULLY OPERATIONAL

If you received phone service prior to March 1, 2007 you may have been instructed that you had the ability to call 911 emergency services, but that they could not see your name and address information. This was due to a lack of database information in their systems. Allband has worked diligently to create and update the necessary databases to upload this information to Verizon, who

is the E911 Database Administrator for our counties. This process proved to be complicated and time consuming, but is now fully functional. If you have been otherwise notified, your name, address and number will now be available in the event that you need to dial 911 for assistance.

If you do not have a property address, Allband will work with the counties on

your behalf to assign an address which is mandatory when using the E911 system. If you live off of a long trail that crosses property other than your own, an official road name must be assigned to your trail. In the event that this is necessary, a representative from Allband will contact you to go over the assignment process and to obtain a name for your trail or road.



Due to unforeseen delays in the billing process, account balances will be higher than usual. Please contact Allband if you are unable to pay your balance in full by the due date on your invoice.

BILLING AND PAYMENT INFORMATION - BEGINS MARCH 1, 2007

We apologize for the billing delays you may have experienced over the last few months while our billing system was being developed and updated. Billing commenced on March 1, 2007; invoices were mailed to the billing address specified on your membership applications.

Please note that Allband bills in arrears, meaning we do not bill one month in advance. If your address has changed

since then, please include your new address with payment or contact us at 989-369-9999.

To better service you, Allband will offer the ability to pay by check, money order, credit card and bank transfer (Direct EFT). We are also in the process of developing Direct Bill Pay via our website at www.allband.org. Please check back often for updates on this service!

Due to the delays with our billing system, some subscribers may experience a higher than normal bill due to pro-rates from previous months of service. If you are unable to pay your balance in full by the due date on your invoice, please contact Allband at 989-369-9999 to arrange payment. Please note that there will be a Non Sufficient Charge (NSF) of \$25 for each check that rejected with NSF when payment is made.



A typical installation at a member's premise which includes a battery supply (left) and an optical network terminal (right) which provides services into your home.

AVAILABLE SERVICES AND CHARGES

The following services/products are currently available from Allband:

- Basic Local Telephone: \$19.90/month
- Adjacent Exchange Calling: \$0.10/month
- Domestic Long Distance: \$0.09/min
- Unlimited Domestic LD: \$24.99/month
- High-speed Internet: \$30.92/month
- Wireless Router: \$40 or \$50 (one time)

Taxes and Charges that will appear on your bill:

- Interstate End User Access Charge
- 911 Taxes
- State Use Tax
- Federal Excise Tax

All calling features including voicemail, three-way calling, caller ID, call waiting, etc. are free with our Basic Telephone service unless otherwise noted in the Calling Services Overview Guide. Services such as call waiting can be turned-off per the request of the subscriber.

Allband offers the ability to check your email, voicemail and change your calling features via our website at www.allband.org. This feature is available at no charge for our members.

High-speed Internet (up to 3 Mbps up/down) includes five email accounts, web hosting space, customized web portal and spam/virus protection. Pre-configured wireless routers are available at our cost and allows you to share your Internet connection wirelessly throughout your home.

NEW LOWER INTERNET RATE EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2007

To insure operational stability, Allband, which is an incumbent local exchange carrier, has opted into the current National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA) tariff.

Effective March 1, 2007, Allband began to provide High-speed Internet Service per the rate and terms contained in the tariff. The new rate for High-Speed Internet was reduced from \$40 per month to \$30.92 per month.

Please note that there will be no change to your current service and you will receive the same amount of bandwidth, number of email accounts, virus/spam protection and web hosting space. We are also adding a customized web portal similar to msn.com or yahoo.com, where you can check email, look at news, weather, etc. and change your account settings. This service should be available within a month.

Per the NECA tariff, there is a service connection charge of \$99.00 which is waived for a service commitment of 12 months or longer. If service is discontinued before 12 months, the \$99.00 charge will be applied to your account at that time.

If you have questions regarding these changes, please contact us at 989-369-9999.

On March 1, 2007 Internet rates were reduced from \$39.99 to \$30.92 per month with a 1-year service contract (read article for details)

FUTURE SERVICES - TELEVISION AND SECURITY

As part of our Phase 2 expansion, Allband intends to offer both television and security services, which are expected to be available by Summer 2008 if not sooner.

Our television product will contain a large range of programming as well as local channel availability. Once the service is available (price to be determined), a leased set-top box will be required for each television in your house. The television feed will come

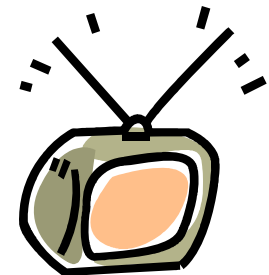
from your current ONT installation and will not require additional units on your house. You will be able to use any coax cable you may have in your house and High Definition (HD) programming is expected to be available at the time of roll-out.

Allband also intends to offer a branded security service which will be designed around our rural environment. This will include 24/7 alarm monitoring and video recording

which would be available to view remotely.

The pricing and availability of these services will be more widely available once we finalize planning. Please check for new updates at www.allband.org or our next newsletter for more information.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas about our products and services please let us know!



Allband hopes to provide television and security services by the summer of 2008.



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ALLBAND HOSTS FIRST MSU CLASS

On February 15th and 16th, Allband hosted it's first educational class with students from Michigan State University's Department of Telecommunication, Information Studies and Media (TISM).

Professor Ron Choura, who is an important advisor to and supporter of Allband, brought a class of seven TISM seniors to Allband's central office for two days to learn about the cooperative and to obtain hands-on experience with a fully operational telephone company.

Operations Manager, Ron Siegel who received his Bachelors and Masters from the TISM department and stresses the importance of hands-on learning, led the class with Professor Choura and provided a guest lecture by Allband President, John Reigle.

Over two full days, the students learned about the cooperative's creation, it's operations and the different components of the network. After receiving a walk-through of the equipment room and learning about service provisioning, the students learned how to perform an installation at a subscriber's home, how to locate fiber in the field and what proved to be the most entertaining aspect of the trip, was allowed to fusion splice their own fiber optic cable.

Allband intends to host three classes with Professor Choura's students each academic semester. Additionally, the cooperative hopes to expand our academic classes/seminars by offering them to government entities, businesses and other educational institutions such as Alpena Community College.

MSU students pose with Operations Manager Ron Siegel during their training seminar at Allband's Central Office



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support and hard work during this most difficult year. Each board member has special skills and has added much to the entire project.

Our General Manager, Paul Hartman has been a true blessing to our Co-op. He has had many obstacles to deal with and yet he remains dedicated to us and the members of Allband.

Operations Manager, Ron Siegel is simply amazing. His work ethic and willingness to work under difficult conditions is something I am very much impressed with.

And of course, thank God for Ron Choura, which without him Allband would not exist. He taught Allband's first educational class with MSU in our central office, and has made history by proving that fiber to the home and being a non-profit Co-op were good ideas that could happen in the state of Michigan. Thank all of you for making this possible.

- John Reigle, President

ALLBAND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**PRESIDENT- JOHN REIGLE
VICE PRESIDENT- BOB HASTINGS
SECRETARY- JERRY MCBRIDE
TREASURER- VIVIAN KUS
BOARD MEMBER- AL KAERCHER**

ALLBAND MANAGEMENT

**GENERAL MANAGER- PAUL HARTMAN
OPERATIONS MANAGER- RON SIEGEL**



The Pioneers

From Left to Right: Ron Siegel - Operations Manager, Allband Communications Cooperative; Dale Sherwin - State of Michigan Director, USDA Rural Development; Paul Hartman - General Manager, Allband Communications Cooperative; Jerry McBride - Secretary, Allband Communications Cooperative; Ron Choura - Michigan State University Department of Telecommunication, Information Studies and Media; John Reigle - President, Allband Communications Cooperative; Curtis Anderson - Program Director, USDA Rural Development (in D.C.); Allyn Kaercher - Board Member, Allband Communications Cooperative; Tom Muth - Michigan State University Department of Telecommunication, Information Studies, and Media; Vivian Kus - Treasurer, Allband Communications Cooperative; Bob Hastings - Vice President, Allband Communications Cooperative.