COOPERATIVE ⬤ CONNECTION

Building more value for our cooperative members.

In April, Blackfoot hosted the largest attended Annual Member Meeting in our 65-year history! We were thrilled that more than 600 members, partners and employees joined us to hear how your cooperative is performing.

CEO, Jason Williams, shared how Blackfoot is *Building on Success* (the theme of this year's meeting) which includes continuing our multi-year network upgrade project. In 2018, Blackfoot has plans to deploy more than 100 miles of fiber in Arlee and Charlo, replacing and improving existing equipment with advanced network technologies. Learn more at: **Blackfoot.com/NetworkUpgrades**

CFO, Stacey Mueller, shared highlights regarding Blackfoot's 2017 financial performance, including: growing assets to $115.8M; increasing member equity by $9.9M; and giving back $1.19M to member-owners via our Capital Credit distribution. To read the full annual report, visit: **Blackfoot.com/AnnualMeeting**

The meeting provided an open forum to ask questions. A few members asked about online personal security practices. Blackfoot shared our commitment to keeping customer data secure and account information private. We will continue to be good stewards of our customers' privacy, as we have been for more than 65 years. Check out our tech tip in this newsletter with helpful hints to protect yourself from scams and viruses. Plus, get more resources online at: **Blackfoot.com/TechTips**

Member-owners re-elected three Blackfoot Trustees up for election. Congratulations to Butch Friede, District 2; Jim Newberg, District 4; and Geof Wilson, District 9! New this year, attendees also had an opportunity to engage with Team Blackfoot. We featured interactive tables for members to learn about fiber and equipment, how to optimize internet speed, snap a pic in our photo booth and more. Thanks to everyone who joined us! If you weren't able to make it, we hope to see you next year.

Enjoy fun photo highlights from the Annual Meeting featuring members and Team Blackfoot on the inside of this edition!

WANT MORE BLACKFOOT NEWS?

Sign up for updates at: **Blackfoot.com/OptIn**

5 Tips to Protect You From Ransomware

What is ransomware? *Ransomware is an advanced type of malware that infects your computer, gains control of your files and restricts your access until you pay a ransom to have your files restored.*

1: Keep your antivirus and firewall up-to-date! To prevent malicious activity on your computer, maintain a strong firewall and keep your antivirus software current.

2: Enable your pop-up blocker! To minimize the chance of accidentally clicking on an infected ad, enable your browser's pop-up blocker.

3: Click carefully! Think twice when opening emails from an unknown sender (check the sender's email address).

4: Be cautious downloading content! Even though you can download anything you want to watch, listen or use, not all websites are safe and they may infect your device with malware.

5: Backup your files regularly! To ensure your photos, contacts and important files are safe, regularly back them up to an alternative location such as another device, a USB or online file storage.

Read more helpful tips at: Blackfoot.com/TechTips

DID YOU KNOW? Blackfoot's *Tech Home* plans include antivirus and firewall protection, personal file backup and more. Contact us today for details!

Blackfoot Connect to more.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Blackfoot's 2018 Annual Meeting

Do you have an upcoming community event?

Blackfoot is committed to the communities we share and serve. That's why we annually invest in countless events, programs and causes to give back to our communities. Learn more about our efforts and request support from us at **Blackfoot.com/Community**. Plus, look for Team Blackfoot out and about at your favorite Montana events this summer!

Giving Back Blackfoot Connect to more. **Looking Ahead**

Look for Easy Access classes this fall!

Blackfoot's Easy Access program offers free basic computer classes for our member-owners. Each fall, we take our Easy Access tour on the road, delivering classes throughout our cooperative communities. Our 2018 class schedule will be announced soon. Stay up-to-date at **Blackfoot.com/EasyAccess** or call 541-5000.

EASY access

Blackfoot
Connect to more.

1221 North Russell St | Missoula, MT 59808

A Message From Jason Williams
Blackfoot Chief Executive Officer

Summer is here! We so look forward to this time of year and participating in events and celebrations across our communities. Our employee ambassadors are out and about every weekend donating their time to parades, rodeos, fairs, festivals, community clean-up days and much more!

The warm weather also means our construction crews are out in full force as we continue our multi-year comprehensive network upgrade project. Whether it's for education, the economy or entertainment, access to affordable, quality broadband is essential. It is because of the support of you, our cooperative member-owners, that Blackfoot is able to embark on such expansive additions and enhancements to our network. These investments will ensure we are able to continue to deliver superior experiences to our customers in the years ahead.

In March, your Board of Trustees authorized a nearly $1.2 Million Capital Credit distribution to our member-owners. In addition, Blackfoot issued capital estate pay-outs totaling nearly $400,000,

as well as committed more than $400,000 to education initiatives, academic scholarships, community sponsorships and more. Put simply, over the last 12 months, Blackfoot has returned more than $2 Million to the communities we serve. We are able to do this because of our strong financial position, which is the result of careful management of the hard-earned funds you pay us to provide service.

Please say hello to the hard-working, dedicated Blackfoot employees as you see them around your communities this summer. They truly are the backbone of everything we do!

Have a safe and enjoyable summer!