



the
talk
of Bloomer

Welcome to the first issue of our quarterly newsletter.

We are delighted to have another way of talking to our customers about all the exciting changes taking place in the telecommunications industry, both locally and globally. The newsletter complements our Web site in keeping you informed about the projects we are working on to bring you the best and latest in telecommunications technology.

Inside:

- 2 *Tips to Secure Your PC*
- 2 *Manage Voicemail from your PC*
- 3 *Money-saving Internet Packages WOW Bloomer Customers*
- 3 *Blogging 101*

We are interested in what you think of the first issue so we've included a brief survey at the end of the newsletter. But, as always, please feel free to contact our office directly with any suggestions or questions you might have not only about this newsletter, but about anything concerning your telephone or Internet service.

City of Bloomer Going All Fiber Project to enhance reliability and speed of telecommunications service

Out with the copper and in with the fiber.

Bloomer will soon become one of the first cities in the nation to be completely served by fiber cable for all of its telephone and high-speed Internet service. Work will begin this month on replacing the copper cable, most of which was originally laid in the 1960s, with fiber. Completion is slated for winter of 2007. Every resident and business within Bloomer's city limits will be affected by the change.

What this project means for our customers is faster and more reliable telecommunications service. In addition, it means greater convenience for you because Bloomer Telephone will be better able to take advantage of new telecommunications technology as it becomes available.

As part of the conversion, every home and business will need to have a small Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) device installed on its premises. Our representatives currently are notifying all customers within city limits to schedule a meeting about what the change means to you and to coordinate location of the UPS. Existing cable inside your home or business will not be replaced. The fiber simply will interface with the cable already there.

The plan is to offer advanced telecommunications services as each area of the city is rewired. Tjader & Highstrom, of New Richmond, is the construction firm completing the project.

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Follow these Tips to Secure Your PC

If you own a PC, you're probably concerned about security and protecting yourself from hackers. But how do you do this? Follow these tips from CNN's Gerri Willis:

- *Stay current on patches and updates. (Using Bloomer high-speed Internet downloading patches and updates is fast and easy.) The two places to go to keep current are www.Microsoft.com/security for PCs. For Macs visit www.Mac.com/support.*
- *Buy anti-virus software. This will protect you from viruses and worms on the Internet.*
- *Put up a firewall. Go to download@McAfee.com or www.Symantec.com/downloads.*
- *Check the Help or Tools menu of your Web browser to up your security level. You may lose some options on Web sites, but you'll be more secure as you surf.*
- *Be careful when using wifi. Beware of "evil twin" hot spots. Make sure you are connected via a real hot spot, otherwise all your personal information can be pilfered.*
- *Back up everything on your computer via an external hard drive. That way, in case*

anything goes wrong, you won't lose files that are important to you.

- *Suspicion is a good thing. Don't open e-mails with attachments that you are unsure of. Don't put anything on your computer unless you know-and trust-whom it came from.*
- *Never share files. They can carry viruses, worms and other modes of electronic attack.*

New Voice Mail System Expands Capabilities & Improves Reliability

Bloomer Telephone is in the process of upgrading our voice mail system to better serve you. The new voice mail system offers great unified messaging features that improve reliability and efficiency for our customers.

Some of the capabilities that will be available with our new system include:

- *Improved message delivery: You will no longer experience delays in receiving your messages.*
- *Multiple telephone number: Now you may assign more than one number to a single voice mail box. This will improve your efficiency when checking your messages.*
- *Phone Central: Check your voice mail messages from your PC.*
- *E-Forward: Access your voice messages from your e-mail account.*
- *Find me service: Specify up to (6) telephone numbers where you can be contacted, in addition to your voice mail box and not just your local telephone number.*

Be sure to read our next newsletter issue for specific instructions for setting up your new unified voice messaging features.





Money-saving Internet Packages Wow Bloomer Customers!

Since we introduced our high-speed Internet packages last fall, more than 30% of Bloomer customers have made the switch. If you haven't already done so, now's the time to enjoy the value and convenience of high-speed Internet.

We're putting the world at your fingertips with these money-saving packages. And just in time for the new school year when high-speed Internet can be a great learning tool for your children. What's more, now you can increase your download speeds by 3 or 6 Meg for just \$3 or \$10 dollars more each month respectively. That makes sharing files, photos, research or downloading music or streaming video even more convenient.

ALL-IN-ONE LOCAL, LONG DISTANCE, AND HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

- ✓ Unlimited local service
- ✓ Caller ID with name & number
- ✓ 2 Hours of FREE ECC/LD calls
- ✓ Long distance included at 9¢ per minute
- ✓ DSL Service 1 MB
- Email, Postini Spam, and Parental controls*
- ✓ Voice mail
- ✓ Call waiting
- ✓ Automatic recall *69
- ✓ Teen service
- ✓ 3-way calling

\$59.95

Call us today to put all of your communications needs together in a money-saving package. It's easy and you'll get one easy-to-read monthly bill.

LOCAL AND LONG DISTANCE SERVICE

- ✓ Unlimited local service
- ✓ Caller ID with name & number
- ✓ Voice mail
- ✓ Call waiting
- ✓ Automatic recall *69
- ✓ Teen service
- ✓ 3-way calling
- ✓ 2 Hours of FREE ECC/LD calls
- ✓ Long distance included at 9¢ per minute

\$32.95

LOCAL SERVICE PLUS HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

- ✓ Unlimited local service
- ✓ Caller ID with name & number
- ✓ Voice mail
- ✓ Call waiting
- ✓ Automatic recall *69
- ✓ Teen service
- ✓ 3-way calling
- ✓ DSL Service 1 MB
- Email, Postini Spam, and Parental Controls*

\$48.95

New School Year - New Courses Here's our Bloomer Quick Course: Blogging 101

If you don't know what a blog is, don't feel alone. Simply, a blog is an online diary that has the following snazzy features:

- **You don't have to know any program to set up or use a blog.** The technology behind blogs is simple and allows anyone to set up one. It's quick and easy.
- **It's easy for others to comment on your blog.** This feature means that blogs are inspiring unprecedented interactivity between writers and readers.
- **Blogging is considered to be quick and informal.** That means that they can cut through a lot of unnecessary steps and really reach people.
- **Blogs are easily linked to other blogs and sites, etc.** This means that lots of information can be shared quickly.

You can set up your own personal blog for free by going to Web sites such as Blogger.com.



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Is Your Account Information Updated?

It is becoming increasingly important to have current and inclusive customer account information. We cannot give out account information or change customer services for anyone except the person(s) listed on the account including roommates or spouses.

Please call our office to update your account information and verify the people in your household authorized to discuss/make changes to your account.

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The economic development possibilities that this multi-million dollar project will mean for Bloomer are exciting and boundless. Moreover, it will put our customers on the cutting edge of telecommunications technology now and in the future for the transmission of voice and high-speed data. One benefit right out of the gate is that Internet speeds can be 100 times faster than they are now.

We look forward to meeting with you about this project as it prepares Bloomer for a brighter and more productive future. Should you have any questions in the meantime about the conversion to all fiber cable, please don't hesitate to contact us at (715) 568-4830 or email: blmrtelec@bloomer.net.

All of us at Bloomer Telephone thank you in advance for your support and patience.

Regards,
Jim Smart, General Manager

Give us your feedback; Win a FREE \$50 Gas Gift Card

Bloomer Telephone wants to hear from you about the premiere issue of The Talk of Bloomer. Simply complete the questionnaire below and send it to us to be entered in a drawing for a \$50 gift card at a local gas station. Send your completed form to us with your bill, or drop it by our office. The drawing will take place November 1st. You must be a current Bloomer Telephone customer to win. Please answer all questions to be entered into our drawing.

Which article was most interesting to you? _____

What topics would you like to see covered in the future? _____

Do you currently use one of our new packages? Which one? _____

What additional services would you like to see offered by Bloomer Telephone? _____