



CONNECTIONS

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LET'S HEAR IT FOR INDEPENDENCE

National Independent Retailer Month, celebrated annually in July, encourages all of us to shop locally and support small independent businesses whenever possible. Doing so helps to keep more of our dollars here at home to bolster the strength of our local economy.

While we're on the topic of independence, OmniTel Communications wishes you and your family a happy Independence Day!



Nora Springs Location

608 E Congress St.
641-749-2531

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday
7:00 am to 6:00 pm

Rudd Location

510 Chickasaw St.
641-395-2531

Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday
7:00 am to 6:00 pm

Truro Location

105 N. West St.
641-765-4201

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday
7:00 am to 6:00 pm

Visit Us Online: www.omnitel.biz

Email: question@omnitel.biz

Fiber Registration: connect.omnitel.biz



Count on the area's

FASTEST AND MOST RELIABLE

fiber broadband
service



OmniTel Communications offers fiber broadband service to residential and business customers inside our fiber footprint, which covers most of our service area. We'll be 100 percent fiber by the end of 2021. No other internet infrastructure even comes close to fiber in terms of its speed and reliability.

Sign up for our fiber broadband service now to start enjoying:

- **ROBUST SPEEDS UP TO A GIG** – Get the upload/download bandwidth you need to work more efficiently and enhance your streaming experience.
- **CONTINUITY OF SERVICE** – Due to the high reliability of our fiber network, service issues are rare. Should a trouble occur, we'll work to resolve it the same day, based on your schedule.

Call 641-749-2531 or visit www.omnitel.biz to learn more about our fiber broadband service including available plans and pricing.

Speeds available may vary depending on location. Contact us for details.

TOP 3 ADVANTAGES OF STREAMING SERVICES

Compared to traditional TV plans like satellite or cable, streaming services offer many advantages including these:

- 1. Cost Savings** – Using streaming services usually ends up costing less than paying for satellite or cable TV. Hulu Plus, Netflix, and Amazon each cost only about \$10 a month, and many offer a free trial month so you can test out the service to see if it meets your needs.
- 2. Bigger Variety of Content** – Streaming services maintain huge libraries of TV shows and movies you can enjoy whenever you want. Binge-watch shows, pick any movie of your choice, or spend an entire weekend watching documentaries if you want.
- 3. Less Mindless TV Viewing** – Instead of turning on the TV to watch whatever is on or engage in aimless channel surfing, users of streaming service tend to turn it on to intentionally watch a specific show or movie. This can lead to less time being a couch potato and more time being active.

An essential companion to streaming services is a fast and reliable internet connection. For the latest on our internet speeds and pricing, call 641-749-2531.



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT SOUTH SQUARE

South Square is literally “old school.” The 32,000-square-foot brick building in St. Ansgar, Iowa was built in 1928 and served as St. Ansgar School for nearly 90 years. In 2017, it began a new life as a community center.

Ashley DeMaris leads the five-member board of directors for South Square and has been instrumental in the project since its inception. “The idea got started when the new school in St. Ansgar was being built. There was no clear plan for the old school. Some people wanted it to become a community center and others thought it should be torn down and houses built. Other citizens and I went door to door to generate support for keeping the building. We also consulted a structural engineer to see if the building was worth saving,” DeMaris recalled.

Their efforts were successful. Today South Square is a lively hub for community entertainment, engagement, and learning. It’s run entirely by volunteers and funded by rental fees, foundation grants, and support from generous donors.

The former classrooms and gym now provide a home for a wide variety of activities and events. For example, South Square is the location for Just For Kix youth dance, youth wrestling, and taekwondo classes as well as Girls Scouts meetings, ISU Extension classes, and STEAM after school programs. Residents can also rent spaces for wedding receptions, baby/bridal showers, reunions, and birthday or anniversary parties.



What else will visitors find at South Square? DeMaris replied, “The St. Ansgar Heritage Museum hosts a rotating exhibit and people can walk through the South Square Creative Arts Gallery. During summer months, South Square is home to Cedar Summerstock Theater. Visitors can also enjoy refreshments at South Square Coffee.”

OmniTel provides 120 Mbps internet and phone services to South Square. The high-speed internet connection was chosen to accommodate the needs of the many learning events held there.

“We’re grateful to OmniTel, not only for our communications services, but also for the grants we’ve received from OmniTel’s Charity Grant Program,” she said.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

TRAINS AND THINGS

Trains and Things owner Larry Lisitza, now 70 years old, enjoyed model trains as a kid, but didn't return to them as a hobby until 2001. Along the way, his career track has included interesting turns. Lisitza started out in the corporate world of computers, raised Arabian horses with his wife Gigi and became a professional horse trainer, and then became a manager with the Lake Manawa Nissan dealership after his training days were over.

Initially, he and Gigi collected used train items and sold them on eBay. This progressed into their full-time eBay store starting in 2008. Trains and Things (www.ebay.com/usr/trains-and-things) now only sells new items from all the top brands in the industry, with an emphasis on scenic detail such as buildings and trees for model train layouts. They carry different scales because everyone has different tastes in modeling.

"We operate the business out of the farm in Henderson, Iowa. Shoppers can visit us in person, but we have very little foot traffic. Most of our sales (99.5%) are from our eBay store, and we have customers from all over the world. Trains and Things recently reached over 20,000 feedbacks on eBay, making us a Power Seller. And during the pandemic, we tripled our sales," said Lisitza.

He added, "This is a fun business. Model trains are a great hobby for people to get into at any level—from a beginner with one small table to a master craftsman with a layout that takes up the whole basement. Today's model trains are computer controlled with variable speeds, and they sound like real trains. It's possible to create extremely real-looking layouts."

Although their acreage is, in his words, in the "middle of nowhere" in farm country, it gets fiber internet and phone services from OmniTel.

Lisitza said, "When OmniTel first went to fiber, we signed up right away. We started with 10 Mbps internet and then jumped up to 50 Mbps. The one time we experienced an issue, we called OmniTel's tech support and they had a technician come out that day to fix the problem. We're very happy with OmniTel's service."



OMNITEL INTRODUCES OMNIFI PLATINUM WIFI 6 SERVICE

WiFi 6 is the next generation of WiFi, and we can all be grateful for its simple name. Until recently, WiFi generations were referred to by an arcane naming scheme that required you to understand whether 802.11n was faster than 802.11ac, and whether 802.11ac was faster than 802.11af. To fix that, the WiFi Alliance decided to rename WiFi generations with simple version numbers. The current generation of WiFi, 802.11ac, became WiFi 5. This new generation, previously called 802.11ax, is now WiFi 6.

WiFi 6 introduces technologies to help mitigate the issues that come with putting many WiFi devices on a single network. It lets routers communicate with more devices at once and send data to multiple devices in the same broadcast. This is an important improvement, since when WiFi 5 came out in 2015, the average U.S. household had about five devices connected to WiFi. Now the average is 9 devices, and that's predicted to rise to about 50 by 2025.



Call OmniTel Communications at 641-749-2531 to learn more or upgrade to the new OmniFi Platinum WiFi 6 service.

OMNITEL COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS GRANTS

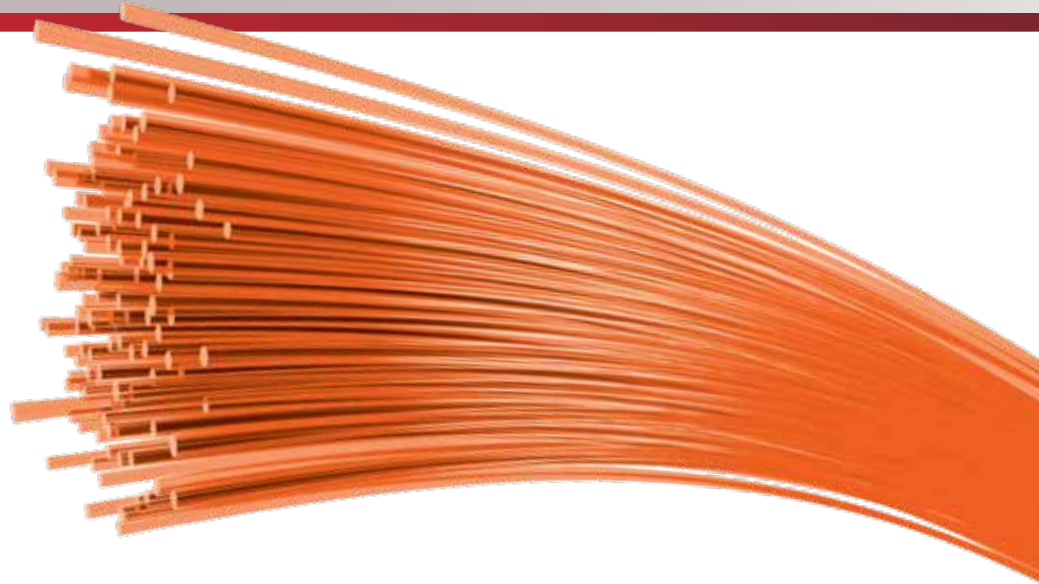
Giving back to others has always been an important part of who we are at OmniTel Communications. OmniTel's Charity Grant Program was established to positively impact the quality of life in the communities which we serve.

During the first quarter of 2021, the Board of Directors of OmniTel Communications awarded grants to the following organizations:

Carpenter Community Center, Cedar River Complex, Central Springs After Prom, City of Floyd, City of St Ansgar, Crusade for a Cure – AFTD, Floyd County Fair, Greene Jaycees, Marble Rock Park Board, McIntire Veterans Memorial, Nissen Public Library, Riceville Community School, Riceville Post Prom, Riceville RAP, Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock After Prom, St. Ansgar Fire Department, South Square, St Ansgar Girl Scout Troop 20238, St. Ansgar Rescue, City of Carson, Interstate-35 After Prom, Truro Public Library and Winterset Rotary.

We invite public and private nonprofit organizations to submit applications for funding to help with specific projects and events in your community. Greatest consideration is given to the projects and events that benefit the most people.

Grant applications can be found at www.omnitel.biz. All applications are reviewed at the first board meeting of each quarter. Completed applications may be submitted at any time during the year.



IN 2021, OMNITEL IS CONSTRUCTING FIBER TO THE HOME IN FOUR AREAS

OmniTel is in the process of constructing Fiber to the Home in the Stacyville, Greene, Randolph, and New Virginia areas. Here are some frequently asked questions about the projects:

What is Fiber to the Home?

Fiber to the Home (FTTH) refers to the installation and use of fiber-optic cables to carry digital information directly to homes and businesses. These cables are made up of many thin strands of pure glass about the diameter of a human hair. Fiber-optic cables carry voice and data signals by using laser-generated pulses of light to transmit them. They replace the traditional copper telephone wires used in the past.

What are the advantages of FTTH?

FTTH provides many benefits to customers including:

- **More Bandwidth** – Fiber has the capability to transport virtually unlimited bandwidth. This will accommodate today's demand for high-speed internet connectivity for downloading and uploading large amounts of data, allowing for multiple TVs with access to high definition programming, as well as enabling the advanced applications of tomorrow.
- **Great Reliability** – Fiber-optic cables are less susceptible to electrical interference and inclement weather than traditional copper wires.
- **Future Flexibility** – FTTH offers the flexibility to deliver additional services in the years to come. Once installed, fiber is usually upgraded by changing the electronics that create the light pulses and not by replacing the cable itself. That's why fiber networks are said to be "future proof."

How can I get fiber at my location?

Our construction projects are currently underway. Please register your home or business location for this year's fiber construction online at <https://connect.omnitel.biz/> or call the OmniTel office at 641-749-2531. Registering will ensure that a fiber connection will be constructed to your location.