

The Communicator

SUMMER 2017

TECH MEETS TREK

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT:
MCKENZIE
ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE

HOW TO TREAT
FACEBOOK
FATIGUE

JAMALL WOLD
NAMED RTC
EXCEPTIONAL
EMPLOYEE



RTC

SUBMIT YOUR 2018 CALENDAR PHOTOS!



Email your high resolution photos to: RTCteam@restel.com
Deadline: August 1st, 2017 • Limit of 10 entries per person

Submit your favorite photos you've captured from your region for a chance to be included in RTC's 2018 calendar! We are looking for photos that portray North Dakota and the RTC service area. Some ideas for pictures could be: landscape, farming, wildlife, holiday fun, or any of North Dakota's four seasons.

How to Submit: Email your high-resolution photos to RTCteam@restel.com with your name, RTC phone number and photo(s). Photos that contain a watermark will not be eligible.

Winner's photos will be published in the 2018 calendar and awarded a \$20 bill credit! Good luck! We look forward to seeing how you've captured North Dakota's beauty!

Submissions will be open now until August 1st 2017.

FOLLOW RTC ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Follow us on social media and receive company news, alerts on outages, employee spotlight profiles, and contests!

 www.facebook.com/RTC.coop

 [@RTC.coop](https://www.instagram.com/RTC.coop)

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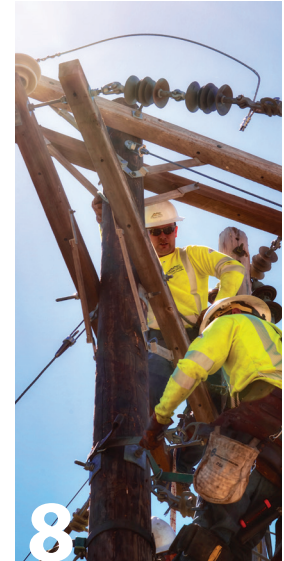
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TECH MEETS TREK

Our obsession with technology is blending with our love for the great outdoors

If you think about it, technology has been a part of outdoor adventures for decades. Advances in clothing, gear, and vehicles have improved experiences for campers, hikers, climbers, bikers, kayakers, surfers, skiers, and others. For example, a sturdier pair of pants that also protects your skin from UV rays was a welcome invention, as was a gas stove that weighs only ounces yet can cook your food for a week.

More recently, electronic technology has brought even greater possibilities for convenience and safety. A tablet can provide entertainment for the kids when you want to relax by a campfire. A global positioning system (GPS) can help you get home if you lose your way in the wilderness. Of course, there are potential pitfalls as well: Your devices are subject to loss of battery power and could get lost or damaged. Or you may depend on them too much, which can actually make you less safe. But the good news is, there are many options

for making electronics a beneficial part of your outdoor experience.

In the next few pages, we explore how technology can contribute to your adventures. You'll find a description of Google Maps' offshoot called Google Maps Treks, the best websites for

planning your next trip, and essential gadgets to pack in your duffle bag. Plus, you'll learn how getting WiFi while camping might be easier than you think.

We hope you'll discover some great ways to make the great outdoors even greater.



FAST FACT: The number of people hiking on the Pacific Crest Trail has increased dramatically since the release of the book and movie, *Wild*.

Source: <http://mashable.com/2015/05/17/pacific-crest-trail-wild-effect/>

How Much is Too Much Wilderness Technology?

Anyone who's spent time in the wilderness understands its uniquely special qualities: the sight of wildlife going about their business, the calming effect of being amidst acres of pine trees, and the complete quiet broken only by sounds of wind, a crackling campfire, or a softly babbling stream. So, does it make sense to bring elements of our everyday technology into that environment? Some places already encourage you to do so, such as campgrounds and national parks. But opponents say the more technology we bring into the wilderness, the less special it becomes.

Pros and Cons

A national park app could explain about wildlife, poisonous plants to avoid, and hiking trail locations. But some believe this type of engagement detracts from direct experience and leads to "connectivity creep." This means you use the app and decide as long as you're on your phone, you might as well check Facebook; pretty

soon you're writing emails, setting up meetings, and moving money between bank accounts. All these things can be done at home, so why come to the outdoors at all?

There's something to be said for unplugging entirely—and the wilderness is a great place to do it—but not everyone is ready for that level of disengagement. Ask yourself if a tech-free trip is worth the price of not being able to post a photo from the top of a mountain in real time.

The Bottom Line

Fortunately, connection in the wilderness doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing choice. You can use the aspects of it that work best for you. Bring your phone with you, for instance, but put it on airplane mode and use it only for photos. The deciding factor should be whether your devices enhance or detract from your enjoyment of an outdoor adventure.



FAST FACT: The Wilderness Act of 1964 created a definition for "wilderness" and protected 9.1 million acres of federal land.



Explore the World from Home with Google Maps Treks

Google has taken Street View one step further to map remote areas of the world. Using a device called the Trekker, Google collects imagery of some of the most famous places on Earth as well as lesser-known sites. Toward these ends, Google partners with organizations like the Charles Darwin Foundation, the Jane Goodall Institute, and the Apa Sherpa Foundation.

Treks use Street View supplemented with still images, video, text, and HTML5 to create a more immersive experience. Users can take self-guided journeys to places they hope to visit or those to which they may never go. People who want to get more involved can volunteer to add imagery to Google Maps through the Trekker Loan Program.





These Sites Can Help You Plan the Site of Your Next Adventure

Looking for an outdoor adventure, but not sure where to start? Visit these wilderness trip-planning sites for location ideas, descriptions, tips, and more.

Find a National Park

nps.gov

U.S. national parks are a treasure, and they offer a wide variety of places to explore. The National Park Service website offers detailed information about all national parks including things to do, programs and events, and trip-planning tips.

Hit the Trail

trails.com

Trails.com allows you to search your area—or one you want to visit—to find nearby hiking trails. Check out the “travel” section to read about best times to visit, RV parks, and more. Or, use the “browse by activity” section for expert advice about skiing, camping, birding, and cycling.

Topo Maps

natgeomaps.com

A good topographic map should be at the top of your “what to pack for an outdoor adventure” list, and National Geographic has them for both urban and remote areas all across the globe. Visit this site to find maps for areas you’ll be visiting, especially if you plan to return.

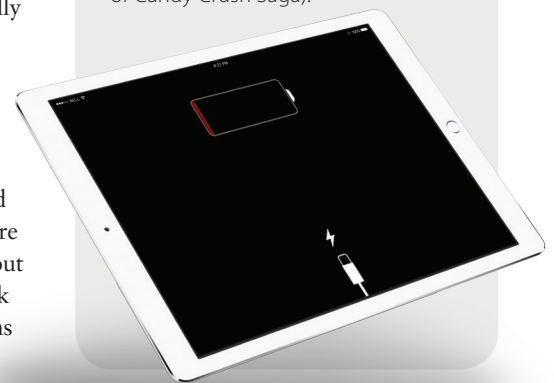
International Adventures

backpacker.com/trips/international

The U.S. has plenty to offer in terms of great locations for camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities. But when you’re ready to expand your horizons, check out this section of the Backpacker site. Click on an interactive map to get descriptions of global backpacking destinations.

Charging Your Devices Without an Outlet

Need a way to charge your phone or tablet with no outlet in sight? Try a hand-cranked charger. These chargers are small, relatively inexpensive, and compatible with most devices. They work like a miniature wind turbine, but instead of wind, a little “elbow grease” will get your device back up to 100 percent. Keep one in your backpack for emergencies (or for when you’ve been hiking all day and want to reward yourself with a round of Candy Crush Saga).



How to Watch TV Outside

Getting away from it all is great, but after hours of hiking, gathering firewood, and securing your food out of the reach of bears, you might be ready to kick back with a little living-room-style entertainment. In an RV, you may be able to get a TV signal using satellite, cable, or antenna options. If you’re in a campground with Wi-Fi, you can simply stream video from a service like Netflix or use watchTVeverywhere to access channels from your home’s TV lineup. For instructions on how to sign up for **watchTVeverywhere**, go to rtc.coop/tv and click on **watchTVeverywhere**.

Gadgets You'll Be Glad You Packed

While these gadgets aren't necessarily essential, they can add a great deal of comfort and convenience to your outdoor adventures:

A Specially Designed Camera. Look for a camera that's ruggedly built for outdoor use with sturdy exteriors that are dustproof and waterproof. It could be invaluable when trying to take photos under challenging conditions.

Drone. Capture bird's-eye-view photos of mountains, oceans, deserts, and forests to share with your friends.

Waterproof case. Remember that when you're on an adventure, so are your devices. Keep them safe and dry with a protective cover.

Charging backpack. Every mobile device needs to be charged, but it's not always easy in the wilderness.

Try a backpack with a built-in solar panel to replenish that "juice" while you're hiking.

Portable floor. Yes, you're camping, and it's supposed to be rugged. But why bother with sticks and dirt stuck to your clothes when you don't have to?

✓ **FAST FACT:** Over 325 million people visited national parks in 2016 — 18 million more than in 2015.
Source: <http://www.cntraveler.com/story/us-national-parks-attendance-hit-record-high-in-2016>



How to Get WiFi When Camping

If you like to camp in remote areas, you may be out of luck when it comes to WiFi service. However, many campgrounds are offering it as part of their service. Online lists like the one at wififreespot.com/rv.php can help you locate hotspots in areas where you'll be traveling. Another option is to use your cell phone or a MiFi (portable wireless router) to serve as a mobile WiFi hotspot.



Outstanding Apps for Outdoor Enthusiasts

One benefit of using your favorite mobile device outdoors is you can take advantage of helpful apps. Here are a few to get you started:

Cairn

cairnme.com

Enter the details of your hike to update your friends and family members as to your status.

Fresh Air

freshairweather.io

The weather can make all the difference between a wonderful trip and a miserable one. Stay informed about current conditions with this app.

Peak Scanner

peakscanner.com

People for whom the destination is what matters can use this app to see how far off that mountaintop is.

Leafsnap

leafsnap.com

Part of the fun of going outside is learning about all the plants around you. Use this app to snap a photo of a leaf and learn details about the plant it came from.

GoSkyWatch

gosoftworks.com/GoSkyWatch/GoSkyWatch.html

The number of stars you can see from remote areas is astounding. Use this app to identify them.



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

McKenzie Electric Cooperative

Its new facility has eco-friendly features and efficiency-boosting RTC services

On January 24, 2017, McKenzie Electric Cooperative moved into a new headquarters at 3817 23rd Ave. NE in Watford City that includes administration, vehicle storage, and warehouse buildings totaling about 8,000 square feet. In addition to providing more space, it's designed to use less energy.

Smart Choices and Local Flair

The facility is an eco-friendly showpiece with features including:

- **All LED Lights** – The lighting system includes smart lights, which automatically brighten and dim according to the current lighting needs, and sensors that shut off lights when someone leaves an area.
- **In-Floor Heating in Concrete Slabs** – This is one of the most efficient ways to heat a building.
- **Glass Office Fronts** – Glass lets in the maximum amount of natural light from outside.
- **Valuable Landscaping** – The grass seed chosen for the property will not grow above a certain height and is drought resistant, enabling McKenzie Electric Cooperative to eliminate mowing and reduce water usage. By planting 30 trees, there will be shade in the summer to help reduce energy usage as well.

John Carns, Special Projects Coordinator for McKenzie Electric Cooperative, says, “The eco-friendly features aren’t the only distinctive things about our new facility. The exterior brick is striped to mimic the coloring of the Badlands rock

formations. Plus we’ve continued this local focus with the artwork we selected to display inside, done mostly by local artists.”

Seven Counties, Thousands of Members, Dozens of Employees

Plenty of work takes place within these walls to keep electricity flowing. McKenzie Electric Cooperative’s service area includes all or part of five counties in North Dakota (McKenzie, Dunn, Billings, Golden Valley, and Mercer) and two counties in Montana (Richland and Wibaux). It began doing business in 1945 and currently serves 4,023

members by providing electrical service to more than 12,217 meters. About 70 percent of the meters belong to residential and/or seasonal members, and the rest belong to commercial and industrial accounts. McKenzie Electric Cooperative currently employs 56 full-time employees in Watford City and its outpost in Killdeer.

“A lot of our data is stored off site, so the increased speed and reliability of RTC’s Gig Internet helps us manage this data more efficiently.”

— JOHN CARNS, SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

To help these employees work most efficiently and to maintain communications with members, McKenzie Electric Cooperative counts on RTC. The move to the new facility provided an opportunity for RTC to upgrade the phone and internet services.

RTC Provides Gig Internet and VoIP Phones

Carns says, “The phone system at our previous facility wasn’t fully meeting our needs. In our new facility, RTC installed a VoIP system with more phone lines.”

RTC also connected McKenzie Electric Cooperative to Gig Internet via our fiber network. “A lot of our data is stored off site, so the increased speed and reliability of RTC’s Gig Internet helps us manage this data more efficiently. It also makes it possible for us to offer an electronic payment kiosk for members to drive through and pay their bills,” Carns notes. RTC has been focused on building out our fiber infrastructure in recent years, and members like McKenzie Electric Cooperative are seeing these benefits.

He adds, “We appreciate the excellent support we get from RTC employees. For example, when we first moved into the new facility, an RTC technician was on-site to troubleshoot any issue that might come up. When we needed some help with the phone system, he worked directly with us until the issue was solved.”

Cooperatives Stick Together

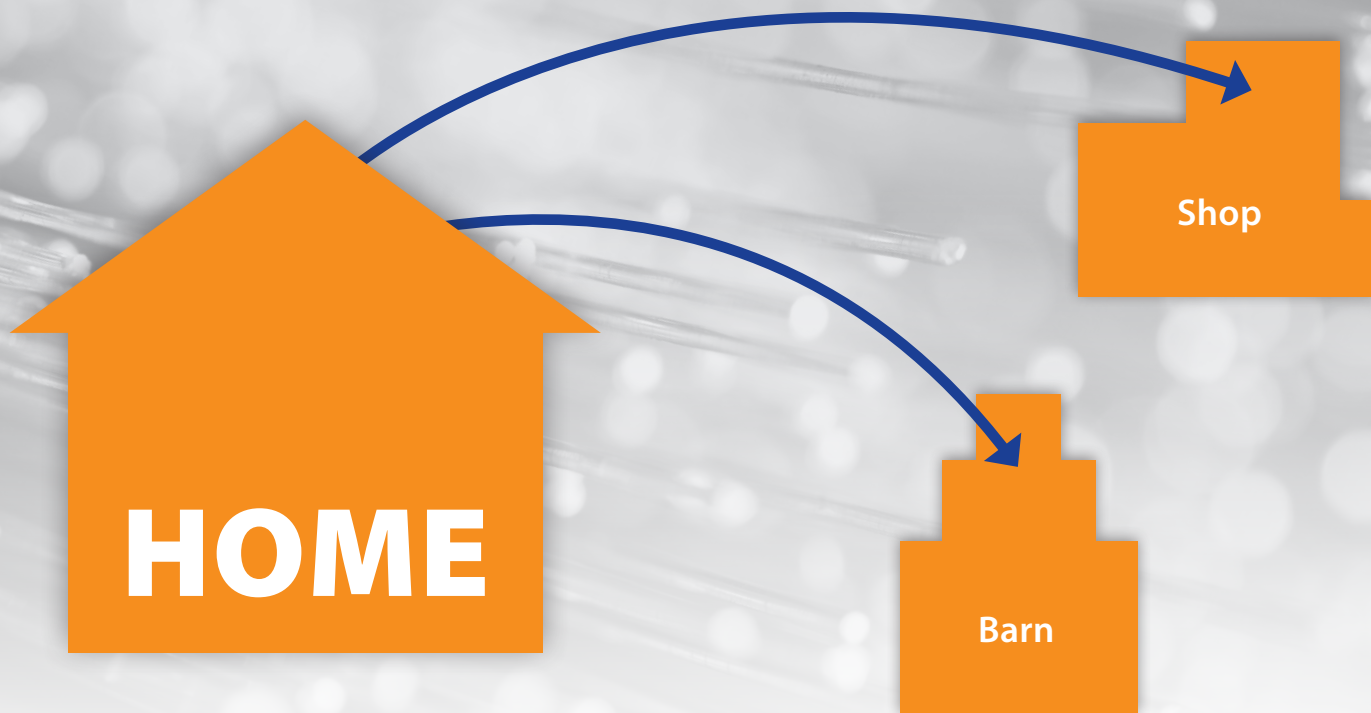
As two cooperatives, McKenzie Electric Cooperative and RTC have much in common. Both serve rural communities and are focused on providing value to their members. And both are guided by the seven cooperative principles, which include “Cooperation Among Cooperatives.”

“Last year, McKenzie Electric Cooperative and RTC teamed up for the homecoming football game. We hosted a booth together and gave away popcorn. We often work together at community events. It’s a great way to give back,” Carns says.

What’s ahead for McKenzie Electric Cooperative? He replies, “We’re updating our outage management system. This system will allow us to better track electric outages as well as track the locations of service vehicles and predict an outage’s duration. We’ll be able to increase our efficiency and fix the issues more quickly.”

Electric outages are typically caused by wind, lightning, or ice storms—events when Mother Nature is not as friendly as this cooperative’s eco-friendly facility.





Need RTC Services at More Than One Location?

Our Secure Site2Site residential service adds security and efficiency

Let's say you have a home and a shop that both need phone, internet, TV, and surveillance camera services. This situation is a good fit for Secure Site2Site, which helps guard against the data security threats of the open internet and provides a reliable, high-speed connection. You also won't have to pay for multiple phone and internet lines.

Secure Site2Site residential service is available for \$7.50 per month per number of "ends" or buildings. Contact RTC for details.





Treat Facebook Fatigue by Operating on Your Feed

Take action to see more of what you like and less of what you don't

Facebook is constantly changing what types of information it presents to you in your news feed and in what order. This is important, since what you see there can have everything to do with how you experience Facebook and whether it energizes you or fatigues you. Fortunately, many news feed problems can be easily fixed. Read on for the most common complaints and the “cure” for them.

Persistent Posts

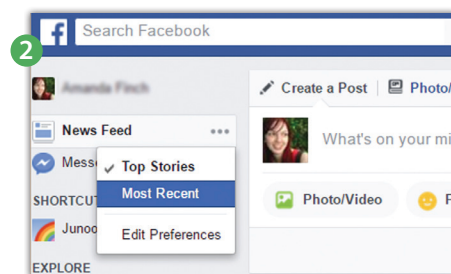
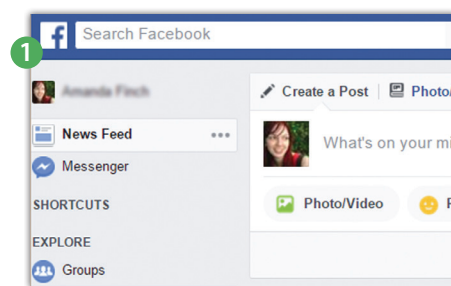
Here's the scenario: You log onto Facebook and see a post you saw yesterday too...and, now that you think about it, for the three days prior as well. You commented the first time you saw it and

read a few comments from other people, but you're not interested anymore.

The Fix

Facebook's algorithm prioritizes posts that get a lot of response. So if people are STILL commenting on your friend's engagement announcement after several days, you may still be seeing it well after you've already congratulated her. Here's what you can do:

1. From the home page, find News Feed at the top of the left column.
2. Click the three-dot icon and select Most Recent.
3. You'll now see most recent posts instead of what Facebook deems top stories.





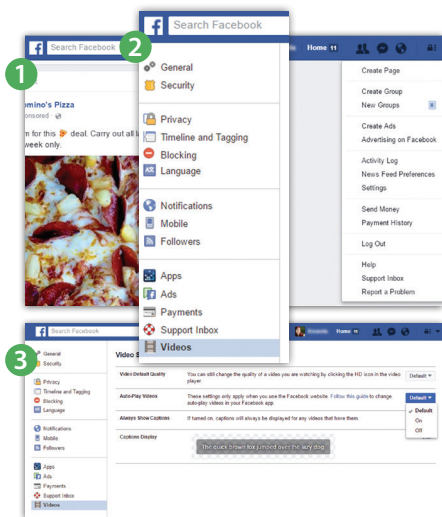
Video Madness

Videos are all the rage these days, and they can be a lot of fun. But maybe you've already seen that one with the baby rhino or aren't really interested in how to make a burrito casserole.

The Fix

If you'd rather pick and choose which videos start playing, use these steps to get them to stop playing automatically:

1. From your home page, click the down-arrow in the upper-right corner. Select **Settings**.
2. In the left column, select **Videos**.
3. From the drop-down list next to Auto-Play Videos, select **Off**.



You're Over That Company

Maybe you started following Build-A-Bear back in 2008 when your kids were little. It's still cute, but not something you want taking up valuable real estate in your news feed today.

The Fix

When you like a company or organization page, you automatically start seeing its posts in your feed. If it's too much, you can unfollow the company without unliking it. Here's how:

1. Go to the home page for the company or organization you want to unfollow.
2. Under the banner photo, click the **Following** button/down-arrow, and select **Unfollow** under **In Your News Feed**.
3. If you also don't want to receive notifications from the page, click the **Following** button/down-arrow again and click **All Off** under **Notifications**.



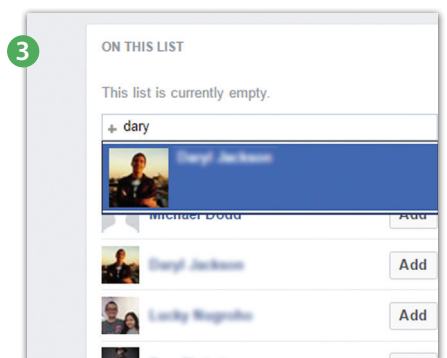
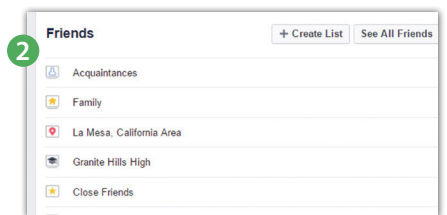
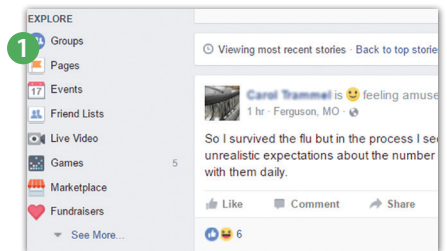
Disappearing Friends

On the other hand, sometimes the problem is that you're not seeing enough of certain Facebook friends. It's possible that Sally just isn't posting as much as she used to; it's also possible that Facebook is hiding her posts from you.

The Fix

Based on the number of friends you share, or the amount you interact with that person, Facebook's algorithm makes them less visible to you. Fix it by adding these people to your Close Friends list:

1. On your home page, click the **Friend Lists** item in the left-hand column.
2. On the next screen, click **Close Friends**.
3. On the Close Friends page, type the person's name to add them to the list.



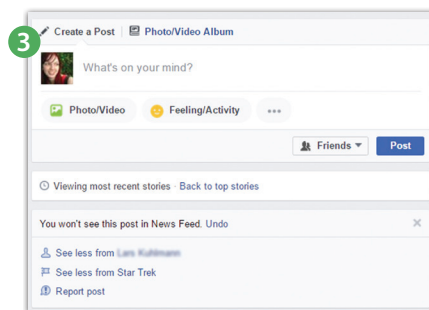
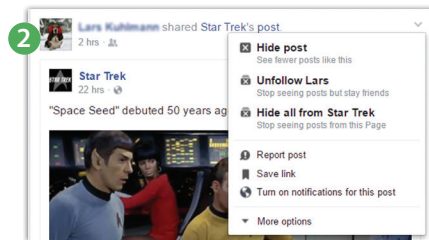
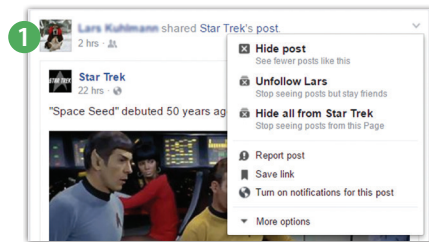
Posts You Don't Want

Sometimes it's nothing against your friend and his dog, but you really don't need to see another "cute puppy" photo. Or perhaps another friend posts 20 times per day and it's just a bit too much.

The Fix

Let's face it, some people like to post on Facebook. A lot. If you're tired of certain friends, or certain types of posts, you have options for minimizing or even eliminating their posts from your news feed. Here's what to do:

1. In your news feed, click the **down-arrow** in the upper-right corner of the post you want to hide.
2. From the drop-down list, select the best option for what you want to do. If you **hide** the post, you won't see as much activity from that person. If you **unfollow**, you'll see no activity from that person.
3. On the next screen, select further options as needed.



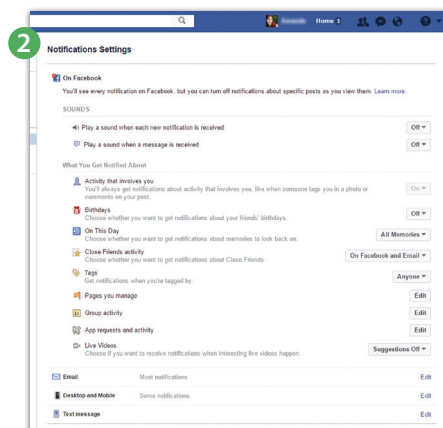
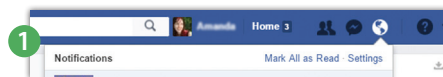
Too Many Notifications

Facebook has the capability of notifying you about a wide range of actions including someone tagging you in a post, someone commenting on your post, whenever someone posts in a group you're part of, and more. But how much of this do you really need to know?

The Fix

While not technically part of your feed, too many notifications can be just as annoying as too many posts. Here's how to adjust your notifications to only items you want:

1. From your home page, click the globe icon and select Settings.
2. On the Notifications Settings page, select the notifications settings you want.
3. Your notifications will immediately reflect these changes.



QUICK TIP: "Like" RTC on Facebook at www.facebook.com/rtc.coop to stay current with activities and special offers.

How to Manage Facebook Ads

While you can't eliminate Facebook ads entirely, you can change how they appear for you. In fact, Facebook has an entire settings section devoted to how you see ads. Here's a quick tour:

Ads section. To access it, click the **down-arrow** in the top-right corner of your Facebook home page. Select **Settings** from the drop-down list. On the next screen, pick **Ads** in the left column.

Ads based on my use of websites and apps. Pick "on" or "off" to allow or disallow Facebook to show you ads based on other websites you visit. If you pick "off," you'll still see ads but they'll be less targeted to your interests.

Ads on apps and websites off of the Facebook Companies. Here the options are "yes" or "no." Again, you'll see the same number of ads no matter what. If you pick "yes," they'll be more targeted to you.

Ads with my social actions. This selection determines whether anyone can see when you like a particular company or organization. The choices are "no one" or "only my friends."

Ads based on my preferences. Here you can fine-tune how Facebook determines what to show you. Click **Edit**, and then **Visit Ad Preferences** to see what types of ads you're being shown based on certain interests.

Jamall Wold Named RTC Exceptional Employee

Jamall Wold, Combination Tech, is the recipient of the RTC *Exceptional Employee Award* for the first quarter of 2017.

Jamall started working at RTC in June 2013 as a Combination Tech in Watford City. His duties are varied; he installs and maintains RTC's Fiber-to-the-Home network and services along with assisting in the Alexander and Arnegard exchanges. Jamall also installs and maintains wireless internet and wiring, and installs cable TV and high-speed internet.

RTC's West Outside Plant Manager Cory Johnson says, "Jamall has really stepped into a leadership role. He is

always willing to take on the tough jobs and do whatever is asked of him. Congratulations on a much deserved award."

Jamall was born and raised in Arnegard. He attended Bismarck State College and received a degree in Process Power Plant. Jamall and his wife Teale live in Arnegard with their two fur babies, Oscar and Vern. When Jamall isn't working, he races cars in the IMCA modified racing circuit. He also enjoys golfing, curling, hanging out with family and friends, and building the wood projects that his wife finds on Pinterest.

The *Exceptional Employee Award* was developed to recognize RTC employees

who go above and beyond the call of duty. Nominations are made by fellow employees and it is awarded to a deserving RTC employee.



RTC Combination Tech Jamall Wold (left) receives the Exceptional Employee Award from CEO/General Manager Shane Hart.

Welcome to Our New Employees



Rodney Bennett
Cable Locator-Watford City



Will Thelen
Combination Tech



Craig Talbott
Part-time Combination Tech

Congratulations to RTC Employees in New Positions



James Vaagen
Combination Tech



Greg Korgel
Technology Specialist



RTC WILL BE CLOSED

Tuesday, July 4 – Independence Day
Monday, September 4 – Labor Day

New RTC Phone Listings

Alexander – 828

Agers, Michael	3717
Beall, Danielle	3067
Haugen, Austin & Tillie	3830
Lynn, Casey & Morgan	3510
Olson, Megan	3472

Arnegard – 586

Borchert, Heath	3567
Burke, Christopher	3576
Dwyer, R	3683
Dyer, Michael	3949
Merrill, Matthew	3912
Moen, Curtis & Pamela	3250
Ross, Kyle & Mickel	3831
Steenbeke, J	3350
Yancey, Scott & Beth	3849

Emmet – 337

Haugland, Greg & Joanne	2409
Iglehart, Allen M	5988
Seifert, Jared & Jenny	2754

Garrison – 463

Acosta, Maria	2708
Brunsell, Sylvin & Eden	2765
Carlson, Bill	2524
Cross, Thomas	2758
Gene-O's Septic Tank Service	2235
Kraatz, Kaly	2373
Krause, Jon & Lauren	2533
Krueger, Larry	2113
Liebelt, Merilynn	2120
Mabe, Kelli & Aaron	2702
Zamora, Jason & Folden, Ashley	2773

Keene – 675

Mitchell, Brianna	2659
Sorenson, Kasi	2606
Zimpel, Robert & Tera	2746

Kenmare – 385

Huffman, S	3626
Leier, Zach	3568
Norden, Troy & Katherine	4563
Peony Petals Floral & Gifts	4684
Ramsdell, Gene	3259
Sullivan, Dustin	3835

Mandaree – 759

Birdbear, Martha	3350
Hunts Along, Tateona	3321
Police Department - Fax	3236
TAT - Mandaree Transfer Station	3641
Turner, Lana - Fax	3110

New Town – 627

Bear, Jubal	5151
Chavez, Kobe	5345
Country, Michelle	4472
Craig, Kyle	3772
Davis, Laylla	2962
Heavyrunner, Raeanne	4618
Lawrence, Marilee	4932
Mandan, Davis Vicki	3879
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- Betty L. Johnson, Kenmare Exchange
- Wanda Krueger, Emmet Exchange
- Ralph Saylor, Garrison Exchange
- Dwight Lies, Douglas Exchange
- Patricia Wilson, Watford City Exchange

For your chance to be entered in the drawing to win a \$10 credit on your bill, correctly answer the questions at right and include with your RTC bill. Mail to RTC, PO Box 68, Parshall, ND, 58770. Or email the answers to RTCteam@restel.com.

NAME **PHONE**

1. The deadline for submitting photos to be considered for the RTC 2018 calendar is _____.
2. If you're in a campground with Wi-Fi, you can simply stream video from a service like Netflix or use _____ to access channels from your home's TV lineup.
3. _____ helps guard against the data security threats of the open internet and provides a reliable, high-speed connection.