



Back to School!

Alpine Communications recently donated 100 flash drives to the Clayton County Back To School Shop held at Shepherd of the Hills in St. Olaf. Over 300 families benefited from the school supply drive. (426-5537)

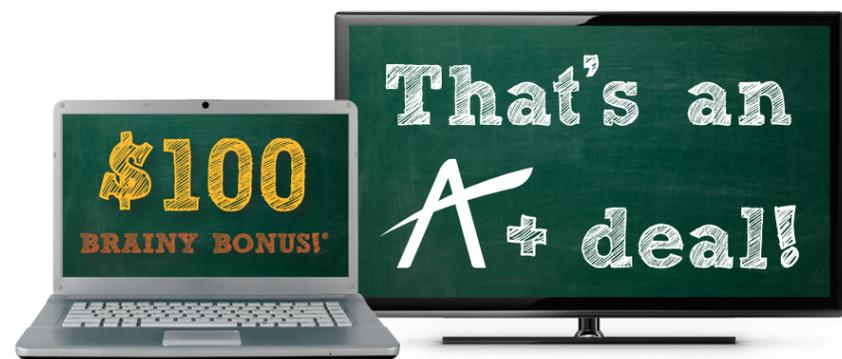
◀ Pictured are Ruth Hilgerson, Shepherd of the Hills; Sara Hertrampf, Alpine; and Kari Harbaugh, Family Resource Center

Adding Alpine is a NO-BRAINER!

Sign up for Internet and/or Fusion TV today and enjoy the benefits:

- **Get \$100 CASH** — not credit — for EACH new package, just for signing up!*
- Better picture quality
- Ultra-fast Internet speeds
- Plus, get FREE professional installation, 6 months of HD, and 6 months of Whole-Home DVR FREE.

Why wait? Take advantage of this limited-time offer, and let Alpine Communications improve your life!



*Offer valid through 10/15/13. \$100 Bonus for Gold or Platinum Internet and Essentials or Premier FusionTV subscribers only. Offer valid for new Alpine High-Speed Internet and FusionTV customers. A 24-month agreement is required to receive \$100 and free installation. \$100 Bonus will be mailed in the form of a check. Customer must fill out bonus request form in order to receive the check. Early termination fees apply. If customer had service in the past, the account must be terminated for at least 90 days before they qualify for this offer. Call for complete details.



Where to find us:
923 Humphrey Street
PO Box 1008
Elkader, Iowa 52043
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

Contact Us
By telephone:
(563) 245-4000 or (800) 635-1059
Online: www.alpinecom.net



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Real Access. Real Value. Real People.

ALPINE COMMUNIQUÉ

Real Access. Real Value. Real People.



September | October 2013

Alpine Offers Unlimited Internet!

You could be paying for Internet data usage fees from other providers.

When you use the Internet, you are uploading and downloading data. The three main factors affecting your data usage are the number of devices accessing the Internet, amount of time spent using the Internet, and what type of online activities you do.

Some online activities use more data than others. For example, video streaming takes up much more data than browsing a simple webpage. To get an idea of the varying amounts of broadband usage for different online activities, take a look at the list below. Each example requires about one GB:

- 68 YouTube videos
- 293 digital songs (mp3 files)
- 512 digital photos
- 1 hour of standard definition TV
- 7 minutes of high definition TV
- 1 hour of a movie



As you may have heard, an increasing number of Internet providers are now metering broadband services and imposing data caps on their Internet plans. This means their subscribers are being charged overage fees when their broadband usage goes over a certain data limit. **THIS IS NOT THE CASE WITH ALPINE COMMUNICATIONS. WE PROVIDE UNLIMITED INTERNET PLANS.** Our plans enable your household to download to your heart's content without ever worrying about your broadband usage. (964-2101)

If your family streams many movies and TV programs each month, often uses several devices simultaneously, or enjoys online gaming, you'll especially appreciate the value of our unlimited Internet plans. Not only are they unlimited, they're also extremely fast; we offer plans with download speeds of up to 12Mbps. Call Tammy, Lanette or Carol today to ask about Alpine's high-speed Internet plans.

Register Today for Free Fall Internet Workshops

School is in session and Alpine Communications is offering new FREE technology workshops to help you maximize your @Alpinecom.net email, save money, learn about social media, and keep your kids safe online.

- **GOOGLE APPS FOR BEGINNERS** – Intro to Mail, Calendar, Drive, and Sites
Tuesday, September 24, 2013 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **SAVING MONEY ONLINE 101** – Online Couponing, Discount Codes, and Shopping
Tuesday, October 1, 2013 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BEGINNERS** – Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest
Thursday, October 12, 2013 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **PARENTS' GUIDE TO INTERNET SAFETY** – for Tweens and Teens
Monday, October 23, 2013 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Workshops are held at the Alpine Communications Business Office in Elkader and are free to all Alpine Internet customers. Class sizes are limited, so register today by calling (563) 245-4000.

If your phone number appears in parentheses (XXX-XXXX) in this edition of the Alpine Communiqué, please give us a call at 563-245-4000 by Oct. 31, 2013, and we'll apply a \$5 credit to your account!

Alpine's Personal Emergency Response System

Alpine provides Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) to offer you peace of mind. Our certified security specialists take special care when installing your new PERS unit ensuring you are comfortable with your new service. Alpine also participates in the Medicaid Elderly Waiver Program, which provides financial assistance for qualified customers. Contact Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging at 800-779-8707 for eligibility requirements or call Alpine.



Pictured are Marie Dickman and Mike Plumley

"I have Alpine's Lifeline PERS service and when my power went out, the system was reactivated right away! I'm thankful for their quick response and excellent customer service."

– Marie Dickman
Garnavillo PERS Customer

Prevent Hacker Breaches By Creating Strong Passwords

You want passwords you can remember so you don't get locked out of your own online information. However, those easy-to-remember passwords are the ones most likely to be discovered by hackers with less-than-benevolent intentions. What should you do?

- **Avoid the obvious or unoriginal.** The more unique a password is, the safer it is. Common passwords are the first options attempted by software program hackers used to break into accounts. At the top of the pile of bad passwords is the word "password" itself. Others sharing top billing are easy sequences of numbers (123456) or letters (qwerty and qazwsx) from the keyboard.
- **Go for character variety and length.** One of the best ways to ensure that you have a strong password is to include a variety of character types — lowercase letters, uppercase letters, numbers, and special characters such as "@" or "&". In addition to character variety, each added character in a password makes it more difficult for software to break, and the difficulty increases exponentially with every character added.
- **Use many different passwords.** It's important not to use the same password for multiple accounts. When you do, a breach in one place opens the door for hackers elsewhere. To keep your information safe, don't put all your password eggs into one cyber-basket.

To help you keep track of all your passwords, Alpine Communications offers **Password Genie** service. Password Genie lets you organize, categorize, and synchronize your personal information for secure access from work, home, or on the go. Call (563) 245-4000 for more details or to sign up.

Don't Let Vampire Electronics Drain Your Wallet

Save money on your energy bill by turning off vampire electronics in your home when not in use. Unlike the fanged, nocturnal creatures of horror films, vampire electronics are gadgets that consume standby power when they're not in use. In most homes, the computer workstation and home entertainment system are the biggest energy vampires but other culprits include small gadgets like phone chargers. (252-1168)

Nationwide, idle gadgets collectively consume more than 100 billion kilowatt hours of electricity each year. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, that adds up to an extra \$10 billion in energy costs.

The most obvious way to stop vampire electronics from using electricity is to unplug them when they aren't in use, but this strategy is not always practical. After all, who wants to spend 10 minutes every night unplugging gadgets and 10 minutes plugging everything back in the next morning? More convenient alternatives are available including socket adapters with built-in timers and "smart" power strips or surge suppressors. Visit the Alpine TEC Store in Elkader to shop our selection of money-saving gadgets before your electric bill gets too scary. You could save up to \$100 annually from your energy bill.



Businesses Work Smarter with Google Apps

Google Apps offers simple, powerful communication and collaboration tools for any size business — all hosted by Google to streamline setup, minimize maintenance, and reduce IT costs.

It's not just an email account. Google Apps is a complete set of collaboration tools including:

- **GMAIL:** Huge inbox with search: keep and find everything
- **TALK:** Business class IM and Video Chat as easy as email
- **CALENDAR:** Make sharing calendars and schedules easy
- **DOCS:** Make collaborating as easy as creating
- **SITES:** Allow users to manage their own sites
- **DRIVE:** Store, share, collaborate. Anywhere, from any device



Google's web-based messaging and collaboration apps require no hardware or software and need minimal administration, creating tremendous time and cost savings for businesses. A leading research firm found that Google Apps is as little as one third the total cost of competing solutions. Call Sara at 245-4000 and find out how Google Apps for Business can save time and IT expenses.

Phone and Internet Discounts for Low-Income Users

Many low-income families qualify for assistance with telephone charges or signing up for broadband Internet service but don't realize that this help is available to them. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, or have a friend or family member in this situation, Alpine Communications encourages you to look into these programs:

- **LIFELINE TELEPHONE** – This program provides qualified customers with a monthly discount on charges for their primary home phone line.
- **LIFELINE BROADBAND** – This program provides qualified customers with a monthly discount on broadband Internet service for first-time subscribers.

Eligibility guidelines vary throughout the country. Here in Iowa, you can save monthly, and may qualify if you participate in at least one of the following programs:

- Medicaid (e.g. Title XIX/Medical, State Supplemental Assistance)
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance Section 8
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program (NSL) Free Lunch Program

What If I Need a Computer? With the help of Connected Nation®, Alpine Communications will provide computer training and help you get a discounted computer for as little as \$189.00. To learn more about the Lifeline Telephone and Broadband programs, call Alpine at 245-4000 or visit our office at 923 Humphrey St. in Elkader. (245-2174)

Alpine's New SmartHub! Easy Account Management at Your Fingertips

SmartHub lets you manage all aspects of your Alpine account online or with your mobile device. Creating a SmartHub account takes less than three minutes. Enter your profile information and you're ready to begin. Manage payments, notify customer service of account and service issues, and receive special messaging from Alpine Communications all at the touch of a button. The SmartHub app is FREE and available on Android and iOS smartphones and tablets as well as on the Web.

- Bill reminders
- Bill payment
- Safe and Secure
- Contact customer service
- It's Free!

