

# IN THE LOOP

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023



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## Watch Jingle Bells Live

The Jingle Bells Telethon will be held on Saturday, December 9th at 5:00 PM at Alexandria Area High School. We're excited to be a part of televising the event once again! Watch the telethon live or record it on Stream TV channel 4.

Visit [www.jinglebellsalexandria.org](http://www.jinglebellsalexandria.org) to watch, donate and find other ways to get involved.



## Christmas Open House

**WEDNESDAY, DEC 6**  
**10 AM - 12 PM**

Stop in to our office in Brandon for coffee, a cookie, and enter to win a door prize! We'd love to see you there!

800 Central Ave N, Brandon, MN  
410 30th Ave E 106, Alexandria MN  
Office: (320) 834-5151  
Toll Free: (888) 236-3574  
Help Desk: (320) 834-5155  
Fax: (320) 524-2785  
Email: [hello@gardonville.net](mailto:hello@gardonville.net)  
Hours: Monday-Friday  
8:00 am-4:30 pm

[www.gctel.com](http://www.gctel.com)



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# Business Profile

## CREATIVE TOUCH BOUTIQUE

Winner of Best of the Lakes Area Reader's Choice Award for Best Gift Shop and Boutique for the sixth year in a row, Creative Touch Boutique is a must stop in downtown Alexandria. To fully appreciate CTB's story, let's go back and learn how this family owned small business has evolved.



Twenty-two years ago, Pam and Dan Botker started a home decor business by traveling to craft shows and then opened a brick and mortar store on Broadway Street in Alexandria. Their daughter, Amy, spent much of her childhood alongside her parents learning the business. Amy went on to attend college where she earned her degree in nursing. She never dreamed her career would bring her back to her roots and she joined her parents as a business partner in 2016.



With the addition of their daughter to the team, the trio did a full re-brand of the store. They created a new logo, brought in clothing, revamped their home decor style and launched a website. This

growth also expanded their target market to include a younger generation of women.

Just as they were finding their groove with these new changes and growth, COVID hit, forcing them to yet again evolve. The team quickly pivoted to curbside pickup and grew their social media marketing. As if a world-wide pandemic wasn't bad enough for business, smoke from a large fire just a few doors down from CTB damaged everything in the store. Their faith and their family got them through this challenging season. They rolled up their sleeves and got back to work, this time with a plan to completely gut the store and start from scratch.

With their great risk, came great reward. It didn't take long for Amy and her parents to quickly outgrow their existing space, which lead to their largest expansion yet. In July of 2023, they opened their doors at their new location on Broadway. Ironically, it's where the fire happened that had shut them down in the first place. The new, gorgeous building is three stories tall, with the boutique located on the main level, inventory and shipping on the second and eight office spaces available for rent on the third. They are currently looking for a few tenants!

If you haven't been to Creative Touch Boutique before, it's an experience that you're sure to enjoy. They offer trendy, comfortable and affordable styles helping women look and feel their best. From dresses to basics and athleisure, including curvy styles, shoes and accessories, they provide women a one-stop shop to complete their outfit from head-to-toe. Items from their collections are unique and limited so don't wait or it will sell out!

While you're there, check out the girls and baby section and ever changing home decor items. They also carry several local bath and body brands including RAW and Little House on the Homestead.

Shop CTB online at <https://creativetouchboutique.com> and give them a follow on Facebook and Instagram to learn about special events, sales and new collection drops!



# Chili and Rock n Roll

Competition was fierce at the 2023 United Way Chili Cook-off. 24 teams joined the cook-off on Tuesday, October 3rd at Broadway Ballroom to help the United Way raise funds to support the health, education and financial stability in our community. The event was themed "Famous Groups and Duos". Gardonville's team was all in with their KISS theme.

They were voted second place for Judge's Choice, second place for People's Choice and third place for Best Display!



Learn how you can get involved with the United Way at: [uwdp.org](http://uwdp.org)

## Career Fair for Area 9th Graders

Emmitt and Toni had a great time at the Alexandria Public Schools Career Expo with hundreds of 9th graders from surrounding schools. They taught the students about the many career opportunities in telecommunications and how to make Cat6 cables!



## Welcome to the Team



We'd like to give a warm welcome to Alice! She is the newest member of our customer care team.

# Stream TV

Download the App.  
We'll Deliver the Fun.

**INTRODUCTORY  
RATE FOR NEW  
TV CUSTOMERS!**

**\$10 OFF**  
ANY PACKAGE  
FOR 6 MONTHS

*For a limited time only. Offer ends 12/31/23. Customer must keep service for six months.*

## Office Closed

Friday, November 10th  
Thursday, November 23rd  
Friday, December 22nd at Noon  
Monday, December 25th  
Monday, January 1st

## Try our eBill Mobile App!



We've got an app for online bill pay! Plus it has other slick features like: view your service and usage, opt-in to auto pay, and create or view a trouble ticket.

### Getting started is easy:

1) Go to the app store on your smart phone and download the eBill Mobile app

2) Log in using your eBill username and password

Don't have an eBill account? Scan the QR Code to get started.



## Brain Buster

What can be driven although it doesn't have wheels, sliced but stays whole?

Answer

Name - Please Print

### Sept/Oct Brain Buster

What is it called when an impersonator sends an email pretending to be a reputable company to trick people into revealing personal information like passwords and credit card numbers?

Phishing

Last month's winner is Donna Wells. Stop in at either our Alexandria or Brandon office to get your goody bag, Donna!

# Bill Charges Explained

**Access Recovery Charge (ARC):** This is a FCC governed monthly charge to help telephone companies recover some of the costs incurred in the provision and maintenance of telephone services.

**Telecommunications Access MN (TAM):** TAM is a fee that is charged on each line you have. It is used to help provide telephone service to people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

**FCC Network Access:** This is a federally mandated and regulated fee that all telephone users pay, also known as a Subscriber Line Charge. This nationally pooled money is used to subsidize areas of the country where it costs more to provide phone service, similar to the areas we live.

**911 Fee:** Local telephone companies are obligated to route emergency calls from customers to the proper Public Safety answering center. Costs associated with the 911 systems are determined by your local government. The local telephone company collects those charges through your monthly telephone bill and then pays those amounts to the provider of 911 service in your area.

**Federal Universal Service Charge (FUSC):** Because telephone communication provides a vital link to emergency services, government services and to surrounding communities, the Universal Service Fund helps make phone service affordable and available to all

Americans. This includes consumers with low incomes, those living in areas where the costs of providing telephone service is high, schools, libraries and rural health care providers.

**Telecommunications Assistance Program (TAP):** TAP is a state mandated fee charged on each telephone line you have (not including cellular phones). It is used to help provide telephone service to Minnesota's low-income residents.

**Optional Local Services Charges:** These are charges for added services picked by the customer such as inside wire maintenance, voicemail and caller ID.

**Minnesota State Tax:** This is a 6.875% charge imposed by the state of Minnesota, and local and municipal government, on goods and services.

**Universal Service Fund (USF):** This fund was created by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

**Federal Tax:** The Federal Government imposes a 3% tax on local access charges.

**Transit Sales and Use Tax:** This is a charge that is imposed by the state of Minnesota.

**Network Access Charge:** The FCC allows local telephone companies to bill customers for a portion of the costs of providing access.

# Consumer Rights Notice

The staff at Gardonville have a basic responsibility to answer your questions and resolve your problems. If you are not satisfied, feel free to ask for a supervisor or manager. If you are still not satisfied, you have the right to file a formal or informal complaint with the appropriate public commission.

### MN Public Utilities Commission

160 East Kellogg Rd  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
800-657-3782

### Federal Communications Commission

1919 M St NW  
Washington, DC 20554  
888-225-5322