

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

CONNECTION

Shining the spotlight

Dawson-Boyd Arts
Association

LIVING
EMPOWERED

LESSONS FROM
THE ROAD

Are you ready for the high-tech fast lane in 2022?

We're here to help you navigate the upcoming year

Happy new year! From everyone at Acira, we hope 2022 is off to a great start. After a season of celebration, the new year gives us a welcome break from weeks of holiday hustle and bustle. It also is a good time to pause and contemplate what's ahead, whether that's an upcoming vacation, a new job or major milestones like graduations or weddings.



KEVIN BEYER
Chief Executive Officer

All that potential can be a little daunting. When looking forward, I often find it helpful to look back and appreciate the road that brought us where we are today, whether it's my own personal journey or the rapid evolution of the communications industry.

Consider the internet. Fifty years ago, only researchers had the first inkling of what was to come. In 1972, "All in the Family" was the top-rated TV show in the country. Roberta Flack's "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" was at the top of the music charts. And researcher Ray Tomlinson had recently sent the world's first email to himself using ARPANET, a network of computers linked by phone lines to help Pentagon-funded research stations communicate.

Just a decade later, companies like Apple and Microsoft were already leading the personal computer revolution that put desktops in homes and offices. By 1992, people were receiving the first of many AOL software CDs. The squawk of computer modems soon filled homes as people used dial-up internet to connect to email and online message boards.

Nineteen years ago, the internet became even more of a social space with the launch of Friendster, a precursor to Facebook. Social networks wouldn't become fixtures on phones and mobile devices until the arrival of the iPhone in 2007 and the iPad three years later. Even then, the ability to bring medical expertise home with telehealth, take college-level classes from your couch or stream high-quality movies, music and TV shows — things we can take for granted today — would have seemed far-fetched.

In just five decades, we have seen online technology grow from computers that could only send a few characters of text into being the center of a deeply interconnected world. At Farmers Mutual and Federated Telephone, we're proud to be a part of that story, because we have seen firsthand how the service we provide benefits lives and connects communities.

So, as you look ahead to the many possibilities a new year brings, take a moment to consider how far we've come. From staying connected with distant friends on social media to planning your next big adventure, how many of your goals wouldn't even be possible without fast, reliable internet service?

And, just as importantly, what innovation will be the next to transform our lives? I don't expect the pace of innovation to slow down, which is why we'll be here to make sure the services, tools and connections you need are always up to speed.

Here's to a wonderful 2022 as we all keep our eyes on the road ahead. [📞](#)

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On the Cover:



Performing Arts Director Luanne Fondell of the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association provides quality arts events at Memorial Auditorium. See story Page 9.

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FRS YOUTH TOUR

Farmers Mutual Telephone and Federated Telephone annually partner with the Foundation for Rural Service to provide an opportunity for two students — one from each cooperative — to tour Washington, D.C., on June 1-5, 2022.

Eligibility:

- ▶ Student must be age 16 or 17 years old at the time of the Youth Tour.
- ▶ All students and chaperones of the 2022 FRS Youth Tour will be required to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination.
- ▶ Students must have at least one parent who is a Member of Farmers Mutual or Federated Telephone Cooperative at the time they submit their application and at the time of the trip.

Selection Process:

Each student is required to submit an essay of 500 words or less explaining why they would like to attend the Youth Tour and why they are interested in learning more about Rural Broadband.

The essay must include the student's name, a parent's name and telephone number, and it must be received at Farmers Mutual or Federated Telephone by February 18, 2022.

Don't miss out!



APPLY TODAY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS!

2022 FRS SCHOLARSHIP

The Foundation for Rural Service, through its partnership with the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, promotes, educates and advocates on rural telecommunications issues in order to sustain and enhance the rural way of life throughout America. Through its various programs, the foundation strongly supports the continuing education of rural youth.

The \$2,500 scholarships are available for high school seniors! FRS will award more than 30 national scholarships in the amount of \$2,000. Should a student from Farmers Mutual or Federated Telephone's service area be selected, Farmers Mutual or Federated will supply an additional \$500, bringing the total scholarship award to \$2,500.

Eligible students must have at least one parent who is a member of Farmers Mutual or Federated Telephone Cooperative at the time they submit their applications and at the time they attend college.

Full application requirements are available online at www.frs.org/programs.

The deadline for seniors to apply is February 25, 2022.

MTA SCHOLARSHIP

The MTA Foundation awards six \$2,000 scholarships to high school seniors graduating in 2022. Applicants must attend postsecondary education at either a university, college or technical college.

They must be a Minnesota resident, and the applicant's family must subscribe to at least one service from either Farmers Mutual Telephone or Federated Telephone.

The panel will review the applications and score them based on grades, academic achievements and extracurricular activities. The scholarships are awarded after the students' successful completion of the first year of college or technical school.

Download an application at www.mnta.org or see your school guidance counselor. Must be returned to Farmers Mutual or Federated Telephone's office by February 18, 2022 to obtain General Manager's signature.



Daniel Nelson lives on a farm outside of Morris, Minnesota, with his wife, Michelle, their three kids, cattle, chickens and the occasional pig. Growing up outside of Alberta and remaining local was always a dream of Dan's. The small town feel and community has been home to him. He enjoys hunting, fishing and playing guitar.



A JOB WELL DONE!

Congratulations to our team member Jackie Jessen. She is retiring after 18 years of dedicated service.



Hi! I'M JADE GEHRKE.

With this column, we're going to explore the digital world, specifically how you can get the most out of everything from computers and mobile devices to online services and apps. The possibilities are endless, and I'm here to help.

DEVICE OF THE MONTH



Fitbit Inspire 2

Are you planning a fresh workout regimen for the new year? Consider a little technological boost with the Fitbit Inspire 2, the most affordable smartwatch offered by Fitbit. It will track your heart rate, the number of minutes you're active and much more. It's slim and available in multiple styles. And, yes, it even tells time. Price: About \$100 from a range of online stores.

Power it UP

Solve the puzzle of your phone charger

Does your phone power charger ever seem like a mystery to you? Beyond the kind of connections used — generally USB for an Android device and Lightning for iPhones — not all chargers are the same, and the way you properly charge a phone can be counterintuitive.

So, what's the fastest way to juice up your device, and how do you keep your phone powered up for longer? Charge ahead for those answers and more.

FROM FAST TO FASTEST

Who has the time for slow? If you need a quick boost, you can get it via fast charging. Depending on the type of connection, some phones allow for far more power to come into your device. USB-A tops out at 12 watts for an iPhone, as well as for many Android phones. But, USB-C can have phones drawing power at 15, 18 or 20 watts.

Don't worry. You can't overcharge your phone. It will only draw as much power as it can handle. So, don't pay extra for a 45-watt charger.

WIRELESS CONVENIENCE

With a wireless charger, you can pick up your phone, do a quick check of email or Facebook, and then set it back down to charge — no cable needed.

While wireless charging can be a little faster than 5-watt charging, it's still slower than wired connections. However, you trade speed for convenience.

BEDSIDE MANNER

Phone batteries degrade over time, with a lifespan of between three and five years. To slow deterioration, avoid a common mistake — don't leave your phone charging overnight.

Ideally, you want to keep your phone's charge between 30% and 90% throughout the day. Pushing a lithium-ion battery to its full charge causes it to age faster, but so does allowing it to drop too far in the opposite direction. If the battery does fall below 20%, be sure to enable any power saving features. Some phones, including the iPhone with iOS 13 and later, can also help you with optimal charging, including alerting when your battery is powered past 80%. [📧](#)

On with the show

A community collaboration for performance art

Story By ANNE BRALY

Before the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association formed, anyone in the small communities of Dawson and Boyd who wanted to attend a quality musical or play had to pack up and make the long trip to Minneapolis or other large cities around the Midwest. Now, though, music and theater lovers in the two communities, which have a combined population of about 1,700, can enjoy world-class performances without having to leave the area.

“Each performing arts season provides an opportunity for residents of rural Minnesota to experience professional artists in their community versus traveling two to three hours to larger cities,” says Luanne Fondell, performing arts director for the association.

For the past 20 years, the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association has welcomed nationally known groups such as the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra and well-known Canadian jazz musician Maynard Ferguson, who perform primarily at Dawson-Boyd High School’s Memorial Auditorium.



Luanne Fondell is the head of the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association.



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“The association’s focus is on the performing arts,” Luanne says. “But it has hosted visual art exhibits in the auditorium’s lobby during performances, too.”

EARLY EXPOSURE TO LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The students in the Dawson-Boyd School District frequently attend mini-concerts during the day with the artists who arrive to perform in the evenings. In addition, every year, students from other school districts in the area attend a children’s theater presented by a New-York based company. “That’s my favorite day of the year — to hear the laughter and applause of an auditorium full of children who are our future audience members,” Luanne says.

Many forms of art have made their way to the Dawson-Boyd stage. In addition to concerts, there have been ballet performances, master storytellers, children’s theater, taiko drumming (an ancient Japanese art) and original musical theater productions. Tribute shows for celebrated musicians and groups such as The Beatles,

Country Classics with the Traveling Opry Show featuring Becky Schlegel performs in October as a part of the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association.

Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, The Eagles and Chicago are also well attended, Luanne says.

For years, the Dawson-Boyd Arts Association depended on printed ads in newspapers, flyers and posters to get the word out about upcoming events. Times have changed, though, and the association is placing increased emphasis on keeping its website content current and using social media to promote performances. “We have found that despite the changes in getting the word out about performances, the strongest method is still word of mouth,” Luanne says.

Some things never change — among them, the simple appeal of getting together with friends and going to a show. And the arts organization has kept ticket prices for its events affordable through funding from grants, as well as corporate sponsorships and membership dues. 🗨️

► For a list of upcoming performances, visit www.dawsonboydarts.org.



Cate Schultz is the owner-operator of CrossFit ELC Fitness 24/7 and CrossFit ELC.



Doug Anderson trains for a marathon in 2022.



Finding str

Embracing a fitness journey and a new way of life

Story By JOHN CLAYTON

Jayde Jallo never thought a fitness regimen — particularly one as demanding as CrossFit — was something she could maintain. Then, the Morris resident discovered CrossFit ELC.

“I was actually kind of scared to start, because I had never done anything fitness-related in a group,” Jayde says. “You go in thinking that you have to do exactly what everybody else does.” But that wasn’t the case at CrossFit ELC, which opened in 2016 and has since expanded with ELC Fitness 24/7 under the ELC Fitness umbrella.

“Some of the CrossFit athletes — and I do mean they’re athletes — have been doing it for years, and I thought I had to do the same thing that they did, but it was so much different,” she says. “Everybody has their own thing that they do, but you can modify everything, so the modifications change the more advanced you get.”

Making fitness opportunities of all types accessible to everyone at CrossFit ELC and ELC Fitness 24/7 is a motivating factor for the 5-year-old company, says

owner-operator Cate Schultz. The business’ acronym isn’t your typical, catchy, marketing ploy alluding to weights and muscles. ELC stands for “Empowered Living Company,” a nod to building more than strong bodies.

“The culture is very important to me and very protected,” Cate says. “It’s something that we do not waver from, and we make very hard decisions and have to have very hard conversations with our members and our staff to maintain that culture. That culture is all about building a strong community, and it’s about finding strengths in our coaches and giving ourselves an opportunity to grow as a team and then allowing that to ripple over into our members.”

PUTTING THE TLC IN ELC

The effort starts at the ELC Fitness facilities located a few doors down from one another on Atlantic Avenue in Morris. But it certainly doesn’t end there. Potluck dinners and other special events dot the calendar to keep the members of CrossFit ELC and the more recently opened ELC

Fitness 24/7 engaged with both the ELC facilities and one another.

Even during COVID-19 related shutdowns in 2020, staff at the facilities conducted Zoom calls to offer tips to members and keep them working out as best they could. CrossFit ELC also hosted its third ELC games, inviting CrossFit competitors from across the region. “What we’ve seen happen now is that our members are coming together outside the gym, and they’re good friends outside the gym,” Cate says. “Their kids are getting together outside of the gym, and that’s what it’s all about.

“I always tell people that no one goes to a gym because they like the burpees. They go to the gym because of the feelings they get within that space — whether it’s a connection they like, they get empowered by their coach or they feel those relationships and friendships. Then, that creates accountability, and for us, that’s also what it’s about.”

CrossFit ELC found a following after opening in Morris, so when the chance arose to take over the nearby Snap Fitness



Jayde Jallo performs a dumbbell overhead walking lunge at CrossFit ELC in Morris where she attends class regularly.



© Brooke Kern

ength

facility, a franchised 24/7 gym, the ELC owners made the decision to expand their footprint. ELC Fitness upgraded equipment and rebranded the 24-hour gym to make it a true sister company to CrossFit ELC down the street. ELC Fitness members are able to use both facilities.

“A lot of people are double-dipping right now,” Cate says. “Some people are going to spin class and to CrossFit class. Some go to CrossFit, and they use the 24-hour gym, and they’re feeling more comfortable about using both facilities. That’s been cool, too. I feel like people have been able to expand their horizons and try new things.”

Doug Anderson, a member of ELC Fitness 24/7, says having a 24-hour gym in Morris is beneficial for everyone. “They offer fitness classes and nutrition classes, not only to adults but to students,” he says. “Having a clean, safe place to work out 24/7, year-round is big. We’re mainly a manufacturing and agricultural community where schedules are very different for everyone. I’m a production manager of

over 100 employees, and I have guys who start at 6, some at 7 and some who start at 8 and 9 o’clock. So, having the opportunity to be able to go to a gym 24/7 is so huge.”

‘INVESTMENT IN YOURSELF’

Fitness has always been important to Doug, a 45-year-old U.S. military veteran with an eye set on the Surf the Murph marathon. “I just highly recommend ELC Fitness to anyone who is thinking about it,” he says. “It’s an investment in yourself, and you’ve got to know your worth, right?”

Jayde, a 31-year-old mother of one, is glad she made that investment after finally agreeing to try CrossFit at the behest of a friend who thought she would like it. Since starting at the beginning of 2021, she has rarely missed a day of CrossFit training. It’s become a way of life and sparked a once-hidden confidence in her.

“It’s completely changed,” Jayde says. “I used to hate taking pictures, especially full-body pictures of myself. I would take a selfie or whatever, but now I’m

like, ‘Yep, take that picture.’ It’s incredible how changed my confidence is, and I think everyone at the gym can tell. It changes you. It gives you a goal that you push for. Then there’s another, and you push for that. Then, the goal is to keep pushing yourself.”



LOCATIONS

CrossFit ELC
405 Atlantic Ave.
Morris, Minnesota
320-304-4559

ELC Fitness 24/7
719 Atlantic Ave.
Morris, Minnesota
320-585-6200

2022



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