

Sacred Wind broadband expanded

RESIDENTS HAVE MORE TELECOMMUNICATIONS OPTIONS

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CIBOLA COUNTY - More than 2,500 homes and businesses in northwestern New Mexico now have access to broadband Internet services.

Sacred Wind Communications, Inc., a telecommunications provider, recently completed network upgrades. These improvements provide high-speed Internet access to 97 percent of the company's current customers in addition to all new customers. Service is available to those on and off the Navajo reservation, according to Janice Badal of the company's human resources office.

Last month Sacred Wind completed its fixed wireless communications microwave tower infrastructure. The 15 telecommunication towers are connected to the central office, which beams a radio signal to a small receiving antenna on the customer's building.

Previously the company had purchased Qwest Telecommunications' coverage area for 21 chapters on the Navajo Nation. In the past four years Sacred Wind has developed technologies that are suited to remote rural areas such as the northwestern part of the state. In this region the distances between homes and communities has discouraged installation of landline systems. In the past installation and maintenance expenses discouraged customer interest and many rural homes on the Navajo reservation did not have basic telephone service or Internet access.

The company offers services to residents of To'hajiilee, Baca, Thoreau, Church Rock, Casamero Lake and others in this part of the state.

The Grants facility is located at 1139 East Santa Fe Ave. and the sign encourages customers to dial 287-2538 for information. Calls are immediately routed to customer service staff in Albuquerque. The local office is not available to the public and is used to accommodate the regional technician's equipment. Badal said part of Sacred Wind's future plans includes enlarging



Sacred Wind Communications, Inc. is located at 1139 East Santa Fe Ave. BEACON / BOYETT

the Grants office to become a payment center.

The recent upgrades have not affected customers' ability to contact the company. Telephone calls are answered at the Albuquerque headquarters and accounts may be paid at either the Yatahey or Bloomfield offices. For more information call the toll-free number 1-877-722-3393.

Sacred Wind art competition

Sacred Wind Communications, Inc., has organized an art contest for its customers' children. The company will award a new computer laptop to the 12 finalists.

Contest details include:

- Contestants must be 13 to 18 years of age.
- Entrants must be children of Sacred Wind customers.
- Drawings must reflect Navajo, tribal or southwestern culture.
- Artists may use any medium.
- Entries must be on 8 1/5" x 11" paper.
- Parent's permission statement must be included with submission.
- Entry deadline is Sept. 1.

Permission forms are available at any of Sacred Wind's offices.

Send entries to: Sacred Wind CRT, 5901-J Wyoming Blvd., NE, #266, Albuquerque, 87109.

Each of the 12 winners will be awarded a new computer. The finalists' works will be framed and displayed in one of Sacred Wind's offices. John Badal, CEO of the company, said that "encouraging technological opportunities for our children is important for their educational advancement and the next generation's economic opportunities. We are pleased to help support children's educational efforts in many ways: through college scholarships, computer training and gifting computers to students."