



CAROTEL CLUB/TAR HEEL CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

DATE AND LOCATION CHANGE FOR FAYETTEVILLE AREA RETIREE LUNCHEON

All CT&T retirees, employees and their guests to attend the upcoming Fayetteville Area Retiree Luncheon on May 16th at Paradise Acres in Hope Mills, NC. Please note, this date and location are different than previously publicized. The organizers of the event are expecting more guests than the originally advertised location will accommodate, which means there will be plenty of room for YOU!

If you have attended this luncheon in the past, you should have received group text messages from Doug Sibbett providing details on how much and where to send your advance payment for the cost of the lunch (\$18 per person). In that case, you will be contacted by Doug with details for the upcoming luncheon.

If you have not previously attended the luncheon, please call or text Doug Sibbett now and provide a cell phone number to be added to the group text that will let you know where to mail your advance payment for the luncheon.

Thanks for letting Doug know as soon as possible after you receive a text notification from him if you plan to attend the event, so that he and the other event organizers can better anticipate the count that must be provided to the caterer in advance.

SAVE THE DATES



**Last Tuesday of each Month
Wake Forest Retiree Breakfast**
Briggs Restaurant, Wake Forest, NC

March 5, 2026
Williamston/Ahoskie Area Retiree Luncheon
Shamrock Cafe (back room)
Williamston, NC
Noon

May 16, 2026
CT&T Fayetteville Area Retiree Luncheon
Paradise Acres, 1965 John McMillan Rd
Hope Mills, NC 28348
Noon-3PM
First time attendees call or text Doug
Sibbett at 910-818-9346

August 21-22, 2026
Tar Heel Chapter Annual Assembly
Aberdeen, NC

September 12, 2026
CT&T Fayetteville Area Retiree Luncheon
Paradise Acres of Grays Creek
Hope Mills, NC

October 9-10, 2026
Carotel Convention
Crystal Coast Ocean Front Hotel
Pine Knoll Shores, NC

October 16 - 18, 2026
Buckeye State Chapter Get-Together
Dutch Host Inn, Sugarcreek, OH

CT&T RETIREE GATHERINGS

CT&T retirees from the Williamston and Ahoskie areas met in December at the Shamrock Cafe in Williamson. This luncheon is held every three months on the first Thursday of the Month. The next gathering is scheduled for Thursday, March 5th at the Shamrock Cafe. Anyone interested in catching up with former co-workers and friends, whether you live in the Williamston/Ahoskie region or not, is welcome to attend!



Thirty-four Ahoskie area CT&T retirees and guests met at Otto's BBQ and Grill for lunch on Saturday, February 21st. Many Carotel Pioneers were in attendance. The well attended event was enjoyed by all, and the group visited, reminisced about old times, shared memories and laughed together from 11:30AM until 2PM.



CT&T RETIREE GATHERINGS (CONT'D)

CT&T retirees, spouses and guests convened in Rose Hill recently for their bi-annual lunch gathering. The group included folks from several departments, including central office, cable, engineering, business office and others. Retirees from Fayetteville, Warsaw, Newton Grove, and Jacksonville, among other locations were present, most representing what was once known as the “Clinton District.”

The Rose Hill gathering is held every spring and fall, and the group has met in Rose Hill just off I40 for several years. Regardless of where you worked, all CT&T retirees and guests are welcome to attend this event. The fall date and details will be announced later this year.



AUGUST IS PAR-TEE TIME IN ABERDEEN



You are invited to attend the Tar Heel Chapter's 2026 Tee-rific Golf-Themed annual assembly on August 21-22, 2026. All Carotel Pioneer Club members, spouses and guests are welcome. The Tar Heel Chapter Pioneers meet every August in North Carolina's historic Sandhills region at the Hampton Inn & Suites located at 200 Columbus Drive, Aberdeen, NC 28315.

With nearly 40 golf courses within a 15-mile radius, including the host sites of the 2024 U.S. Open and 2022 U.S. Women's Open, the Aberdeen/Pinehurst/Southern Pines area is celebrated as the Home of American Golf. Adding to that legacy, the USGA chose Pinehurst for its second headquarters, complete with an equipment-testing facility, innovation hub, museum and visitor center, and new offices.

Pinehurst No. 2 will proudly host five U.S. Open Championships by 2047, further cementing the region's place in golf history.

It's only fitting that the theme for our 2026 assembly will celebrate the rich golfing history of the area. Join us for an unforgettable weekend of fun, laughter, and all things golf—without ever swinging a club! Whether you're a golf enthusiast or just in it for the good times, this event is the perfect way to celebrate the game in a unique and exciting way.

We're planning a weekend filled with whimsical golf-inspired decor, delicious food and drinks, and plenty of entertainment—all without the need for clubs or tees. This event promises to be a hole-in-one. Dress in your best golf attire and prepare for a weekend of laughs and memories. We can't wait to see you there!



I think your "towards" is off! (Phrase frequently used by Mike Outlaw to encourage fellow golfers)



You've got to hit the ball Alice!! (Another Mike Outlaw phrase often heard on the golf course.)

ANNOUNCING 2026 CAROTEL CONVENTION - IT'S A SOCK HOP!



Step back in time and experience the charm of a 1950's style sock hop! Dust off your poodle skirts and leather jackets, and get ready to twist and shout the night away. This nostalgic event promises a delightful blend of classic rock 'n' roll tunes, lively dance contests, and vintage soda shop treats that will transport you to an era of fun and innocence. Whether you're a seasoned jiver or a curious newcomer, there's something for everyone. It's a fantastic opportunity to reconnect with old friends, relive the golden days, or simply enjoy a unique outing with fellow Pioneers. So put on your best dance shoes and , bring your energy, and let's rock around the clock in true 50's fashion!



Our 2026 entertainment chairman Ronnie Cashwell is already busy negotiating great deals and delicious meals for the weekend.

Our 2026 photography committee (Darlene Mills, Edie Willis, Brenda Smith and Barbara Smithson) have already committed to capturing those kodak moments.

We've been tipped off that there may even be special performance by the all-female group, Darlene and the Doo-Wop Dames and by the extraordinarily talented male Doo-Woppers Ronnie and the Rumlbers!

Mark your calendars now for October 9-10, 2026. A special group rate of \$131.00 (plus tax) is available to Carotel guests with no parking or resort fees. Final details will be provided closer to the date of the event, but we wanted to invite you early so that you have time to find the perfect poodle skirt!

Or...just come as you are and enjoy the fun!



Did you know...

The term "sock hop" came about because in the 1950's when social dances were held in the school gymnasiums. The dancers danced in their socks because street shoes were forbidden on the gymnasium floors. Even tennis shoes were not allowed at the dances because someone invariably would sneak in wearing conventional shoes and scratch the hardwood floor. Chaperones were often the worst culprits of all, so even they were required to wear socks unless they observed from the bleachers.

2025 CAROTEL ANNUAL SERVICE PROJECT UPDATE

Donations from the club's annual live and silent auctions, along with raffle ticket proceeds, were delayed pending changes in the club's accounts due to the passing of long-time treasurer Carol Harrell. At the recommendation of our Carotel board, our membership voted at the annual meeting in October to donate proceeds from those fund-raisers to Samaritan's Purse for ongoing work in western North Carolina and the *Elizabeth Bland Memorial Scholarship* fund, which is awarded annually. Of the \$1,718 raised through auctions and raffles, \$859 was donated to Samaritan's Purse and \$859 was designated for the club's scholarship fund.

Appreciation is extended to everyone who donated items for the auctions, and to those who purchased auction items and raffle tickets. Every dollar counts and helps our club contribute in meaningful ways to our communities.

In October, during our annual Carotel Convention, Carotel Pioneers donated nearly 200 pounds of non-perishable foods to Martha's Mission Cupboard, a local emergency food bank and in addition presented a \$100 donation to the organization. Martha's Mission Cupboard provides emergency food assistance to individuals and families in crisis, serving more than 300 families every month who are referred by state or federal agencies and churches. More than 200 personal toiletry items were also donated in October to the Salvation Army for use by families utilizing their assistance programs.

HELP KEEP OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUNDED!

*Ties collected from Pioneers friends of Pioneers friends were used to create this beautiful quilt that is being raffled by Carotel Pioneer Club. 100% of the proceeds from ticket sales will fund the **Elizabeth Bland Scholarship Fund,**" which is awarded annually.*

Raffle tickets are \$20 each and are available through October 10, 2026. The drawing for the quilt will be held at the 2026 Carotel Convention.

You do not have to be present to win. To purchase a raffle ticket or to obtain raffle tickets to sell in support of this fund-raiser, please contact Janet Cashwell by email at jrhc1313@gmail.com.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Curty and Prince- A Telco Duo

Curtis (Curty) Lancaster and his best friend Prince were recently featured in the "Member Spotlight" section of the National ITPA's Pioneer Connection. Curty currently serves as Vice President of the Tar Heel Chapter and will assume the role of President at the upcoming Tar Heel assembly in August.

Curty grew up in the independent telecommunications industry and in the ITPA. His mom, Hannah Lancaster began working at Chesnee Telephone Company, which was owned by her family, in 1957, and she served as president of Chesnee Telephone Company from 1992 until they sold the company in 2017. Curty's dad worked right along beside Mrs. Hannah.

We asked Curty to tell us about growing up in the telephone business and to introduce his family and his canine companion, although many in our ITPA family have already met "Prince" at various ITPA events. Here's what Curty had to say.

Born into the telephone industry on March 9, 1974. I started young, going out with my dad and a few of the guys, running troubles, robbing pay stations, and doing installs, etc. When I was twelve and was out of school for the summer dad told me that I was going with him to the office. He sent me out with Pete Hipp on the plow crew to learn from the ground up. I stayed primarily with the plow crew every summer until I started full time on January 23rd, 1995. I worked multiple positions throughout my tenure at Chesnee from plow crew to splicer (copper, coax, and fiber) and system/network tech on the CATV side to eventually engineering.

In 2003 I married my wife, Lisa, where we have five kids in total, and that many fur babies now.



After 2006 I became more serious and passionate about the company and the industry, and in 2008 I decided to go back to school (a major accomplishment for someone that detested school and vowed to never go back), where I received my Associates Degree in Drafting, and at the same time doubled up and earned my FTTx (Fiber to the X) certification through Corning, as well as two project management classes through Clemson (online).



Curty's wife Lisa (center) with Lauren and Austin.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (CONT'D)

In 2012 I left the company and started at Clearfield as a field engineer, where I had the opportunity to travel to other companies in North America, Central America, and the Caribbean. Through my travels I was given the chance to work with some wonderful folks in the telecom/communications industry in forty-three states (43), three (3) providences of Canada, Panama (Central America), Mexico, and the Bahamas. In 2014 I changed positions at Clearfield from a Field Engineer to an Applications Engineer, where my role and responsibilities changed from repairing and installing products to helping customers and consulting with best practices, placement of products in network, trade show and product trailer support, and product training. Even while traveling and working for Clearfield I stayed active at Chesnee.



Even while traveling and working for Clearfield I stayed active at Chesnee. When I wasn't traveling or out of town, I was helping dad with some design work, helping install CO equipment and even getting back to my roots by plowing cable. I kept this pace up until we sold the company in 2017.

As if I didn't stay busy enough, in 2020, I signed up to coach soccer for AYSO (American Youth Soccer Organization) where I coached and refereed for three years (six seasons), while still covering the mid-Atlantic territory for Clearfield. During this time I had the privilege to coach both of my kids (Austin and Lauren) together and then on opposing teams, which made those seasons "interesting"



Lauren and Austin' celebrate winning a summer league championship in their divisions.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (CONT'D)



Above: Lauren deflects a penalty kick, allowing her team to claim the win.

Below: Austin warms up for a match..



Above: Austin in action for Boiling Springs High school.



Right: Lauren is the goalie at a club match coached by Curty.

Now starting my 13th year with Clearfield, I cover seven states in the Southeast and Gulf coast regions primarily and support my counterpart with five of the mid-Atlantic states. Along with my daily Clearfield duties, I help another friend of mine do electrical work at The Lighting Company in Chesnee where we do sports lighting when I'm home. I have had the chance to combine my expertise of the fiber optic world with the sports lighting world at Airport High School in West Columbia, SC and Belton Honea Path high school in Belton SC, where there had to be fiber fed communications between the press box and the control cabinet to operate show lights (those that change colors and "dance").

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (CONT'D)

One of my main responsibilities at Clearfield is to support my sales team when we have product trailer visits. Trailer visits are especially fun for me, because I not only get to visit customers and show new products and give them solutions to problems or hurdles they may be facing, but also on trailer visits, it gives me the chance to take my fur buddy with me, my Yorkie Poo, Prince. Prince is my four-year-old, Yorkie Poo, who has kept me company on quite a few trips, and have had a couple of customers that asked about him before saying they are glad to see me.



Above: Prince is ready for his next road trip!

Prince has been with me to Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia on Clearfield trips and has gone with me to the last two ITPA Tar Heel assemblies in Aberdeen, NC. Prince enjoys riding and going places no matter how far or close to home we are, he just wants to be with me wherever the road takes us.



Above: Prince is on the road again!!

Below: Curty and Prince enjoyed time with Tar Heel Chapter Pioneers in August. In October they spent time with Buckeye Pioneers in Ohio.



Left: Prince reads up on the ITPA Museum while attending the national meeting in Darien, GA recently.

CAROTEL & TAR HEEL CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE SOON!

College students who are related to a Carotel or Tar Heel Chapter Pioneer are invited to apply for scholarships to be awarded in July. (Applicants may apply for both scholarships if eligibility requirements for both are met, but separate scholarship applications must be submitted as instructed on each scholarship form.)

Carotel's "Elizabeth Bland Memorial Scholarship" was established in memory of Elizabeth "Libba" Bland in recognition of her years of dedication to the Carotel Pioneer club. The scholarship is awarded as a one-time grant of up to \$1,000 to a college-bound student who is related to an active Carotel Pioneer Club member. Carotel members who are pursuing a degree are also eligible. The actual amount of the scholarship may be dependent upon the number of recipients to whom the scholarship is awarded.

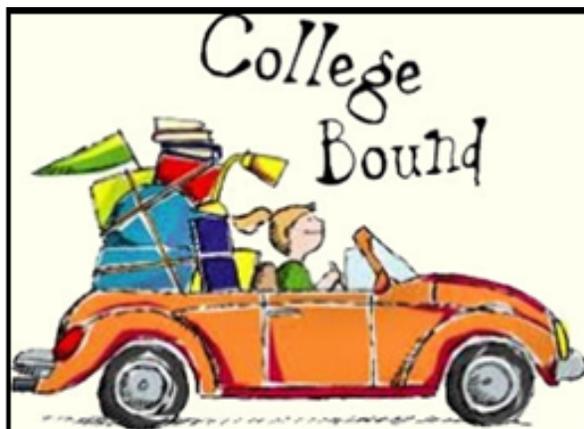
The Tar Heel Chapter of the ITPA has been awarding scholarships to college-bound students for more than 25 years. Tar Heel Chapter scholarships are available to family members of active chapter members who are residents of North Carolina. In earlier years, students received awards from separately funded Tar Heel Chapter scholarships, all of which were merged in recent years into the "Bill and Joe Lawrence Scholarship" fund. Bill and Joe both worked for Heins Telephone Company. (The family of Isabelle Heins Lawrence, Bill's wife, founded Heins Telephone Company.) Bill and Joe were dedicated Pioneers, and they established a fund that helps the Tar Heel Chapter continue awarding annual scholarships. The scholarship is awarded annually to a college-bound student who is related to an active Tar Heel Chapter Pioneer. Tar Heel Pioneers who are pursuing a degree are also eligible. Scholarship amounts will be determined based on the number of applicants to whom a scholarship is awarded.

The Carotel Club and Tar Heel Chapter award their scholarships independently. Both Pioneer organizations will issue scholarship checks directly to the college or university in which the recipient is enrolled.

Applications for each of the two scholarships are available at:

<https://www.nationalitpa.com/news>.

Scroll to the bottom right of that web page and click on the desired scholarship link to download. Please note in each scholarship application the date by which applications must be received or postmarked in order to be considered.



About Us



Carotel Pioneer Club is affiliated with the ITPA Tar Heel Chapter in Region 1. The National ITPA was founded in 1920 by members of the independent telecommunications industry as a way to serve the communities they lived and worked in. The Carotel Pioneer Club was formed on July 1, 1971 under the previously existing Tar Heel Chapter.

The Carotel Pioneer Club initially consisted of members who were employed by Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company and required 15 years of service as a condition of membership. Over the years, the club's by-laws were revised, as companies were merged and acquired, to welcome Sprint and Embarq telecommunications associates, and the required length of service was reduced. In recent years, a new membership category was adopted by the ITPA to allow "Friends of Pioneers" to become Pioneers. And we need new members! Invite someone today. The membership application can be found at: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nationalitpa.com%2Fuploads%2Fuseruploads%2Ffiles%2FITPA%2520New%2520Member%2520Application%2520Form.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

About Us



National ITPA

2025-2026

Officers/Directors

President: Leon Yard

1st Vice President: Ronnie
Cashwell

Immediate Past President:
JoAnn Esposito

Secretary: Cindy Downing

Treasurer: Daniel Barnhardt

Asst. Treasurer: James White

Executive Director: Andrea Wick

Directors: Hannah Lancaster,
Nancy Hyatt, Dennis Groh

Region 1 VP: Darlene Roll

Region 2 VP: Nancy Schnitzer

Committee Chairs

Awards:
Ann Beck

ByLaws:
Ronnie Cashwell

Nominating:
JoAnn Esposito

Investments:
James White

Hall of Fame:
Morrie Sachsenmaier

Leadership Development:
Nancy Schnitzer

Membership and Sponsor Companies:
Vacant

Public Relations:
Darlene Terry

About Us



ITPA Regions

Region 1:

Buckeye State Chapter (OH)

Palmetto Chapter (SC)
Comporium Pioneer Club (SC)

National Capital Chapter (VA, D.C. Area)

New England Chapter
Down East Club (ME)
Granite State Club (NH)

Tar Heel Chapter (NC)
Carotel Club (NC)
Independent Members
(former Lexington Tel Pioneers)

**CenturyLink
Pioneers of Georgia**
(no Chapter Affiliation)

Region 2:

Keystone-Garden State Chapter (PA)
Ben M. Witmer Club (PA)
NEAREA Club (PA)
Tri-County Tel. Club (PA)

Empire State Chapter (NY)

Florida St. Chapter (FL)
Carl Hill Galloway Club (FL)
Otto Wettstein Jr. Club (FL)
Florida's Big Bend Club (FL)

North Star Chapter (MN)

Sooner Chapter (OK)

Tom Griffith Chapter (IA)

Mid-South Chapter (MS)
Wade H. Creekmore Club (MS)

About Us

Tar Heel Chapter

2025-2026

Officers/Directors

President: Brenda Smith

Vice President: Curty Lancaster

Immediate Past President:

Darlene Terry

Secretary/Treasurer:

Janet Holliday-Cashwell

Auditor: Bill Twyman

Directors:

Janet Holliday-Cashwell,

Danny Dennis,

Jim Jolly, Vicky Jolly,

Hannah Lancaster,

Alissa Moss, Jean Outlaw

Director Emeritus: None

Committees:

Scholarships:

Vickie Jolly, Chair

Entertainment:

Ronnie Cashwell, Chair

Nominating:

Darlene Terry, Chair

Historical:

Carolyn Thompson

Publicity:

Darlene Terry

About Us



2025-2026 Carotel Officers/Directors

President: Darlene Terry

Vice President: Brenda Smith

Immediate Past President:

Larry Newsome

Treasurer: Ronnie Cashwell

Secretary: Mary McLamb

Directors: Ray Brock, Andy Davis,
Wendy Davis, Chester Harrell,
Darlene Mills, Judy Satterwhite,
Doug Sibbett, Barbara Smithson,
Edie Willis

Directors Emeritus: Ronnie Cashwell

Committees:

Scholarships:

Darlene Terry, Chair

Janet Holliday-Cashwell

Brenda Smith

By-Laws:

Ronnie Cashwell, Chair

Ray Brock, Doug Sibbett

Entertainment:

Ronnie Cashwell, Chair

Public Relations:

Darlene Terry, Chair

Nominating:

Larry Newsome, Chair