

PIONEER CONNECTION

Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association



ITPA

The ITPA is a volunteer organization created by and for the independent telecommunications industry.

Dedicated to community service, ITPA members have been serving the public on behalf of telecommunications companies since 1920.

November 2025

Issue 25-04



2025 ITPA Assembly: A Memorable Gathering in Darien, Georgia

Submitted by Cindy Downing

A small group of pioneers gathered in Darien, Georgia, this fall for the 2025 ITPA Assembly, hosted at the charming Oaks on the River venue. The weekend was filled with fellowship, fun activities, and moments of reflection, making it a truly memorable experience for all who attended.

A Warm Welcome at Mrs. Forsyth's Home

The assembly kicked off on Friday evening with a warm and welcoming shrimp boil hosted by Mrs. Mary Lou Forsyth, the owner of Darien Telephone. Held at her beautiful home, the event brought together attendees for an evening of delicious food and lively conversation. The intimate setting allowed for meaningful connections among the participants, setting the tone for a weekend of camaraderie and community.

A Relaxed Morning of Games and Free Time

With such a small gathering, the usual formal business meeting was not held on Saturday morning. Instead, attendees enjoyed a morning of fun games and activities, which offered a lighthearted start to the day. Afterward, a box lunch was provided, followed by some free time for participants to explore and relax before the much-anticipated boat tour of the river.

A Scenic Cruise with George Tidewater Outfitters

One of the highlights of the weekend was the two-hour boat tour with George Tidewater Outfitters. The leisurely cruise provided a fascinating glimpse into the history of the river and its surrounding landscape.

Along the way, attendees were treated to sightings of local wildlife, including alligators and bald eagles, and learned about the area's rich ecological and cultural heritage. As the boat returned to the dock, the group was gifted with a stunning sunset over the water, adding a perfect touch to an already memorable day.

A Beautiful Sunday Service and Recognition of Achievements

Sunday morning began with a beautiful service and songs led by Janet Cashwell, setting a peaceful and reflective tone for the day. Afterward, a few more games were played, followed by the presentation of awards and certificates. These awards celebrated the efforts and achievements of clubs and chapters, highlighting the outstanding projects and contributions of ITPA members.

Honoring Glenn Post with the Hall of Fame Luncheon

The final event of the assembly was the Hall of Fame luncheon, where the story of the latest inductee, Glenn Post, was shared with the group. This ceremony recognized Glenn's significant contributions to the industry and the community, providing a fitting conclusion to a weekend focused on honoring tradition and collaboration.

A Perfect Venue at Oaks on the River

Throughout the weekend, Oaks on the River proved to be an exceptional venue, offering both natural beauty and a serene atmosphere that enhanced the entire experience. The venue's peaceful riverside location provided a perfect backdrop for the gathering, making it one of the most memorable settings for an ITPA Assembly in recent years.

Overall, the 2025 ITPA Assembly in Darien was a weekend of connection, celebration, and reflection, showcasing the strength and spirit of the ITPA community. With its blend of fun, relaxation, and meaningful recognition, this year's assembly was a true success.



2025 ITPA ASSEMBLY: A MEMORABLE GATHERING IN DARIEN, GEORGIA (CONT'D)





2025 ITPA ASSEMBLY: A MEMORABLE GATHERING IN DARIEN, GEORGIA (CONT'D)



CONGRATULATIONS TO 2025 TELEPHONE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE GLEN POST



Glen F. Post III, born in October 1952 in El Dorado, Arkansas, joined CenturyTel, headquartered in Monroe, Louisiana as an accountant in 1976. CenturyTel, which began as a privately held family company, went public in 1971, shortly before Post joined the company after receiving his MBA from Louisiana Tech.

A high-profile assignment to consolidate the financials of all the growing company's subsidiaries placed Post on the executive team's radar, and he rose quickly through the ranks. In 1982 he was named vice president. He was promoted to senior vice president and treasurer in 1984 and was appointed to the board of directors in 1985.

In 1986 he became senior vice president and chief financial officer. In 1988, Post was named executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Post was appointed president and chief operating officer of CenturyTel in 1990. In 1992, Post was named vice chairman of the board, president, and chief executive officer, at which time the company was generating \$270 million in annual revenue.

Under his leadership and direction, CenturyTel acquired numerous independent telcos, baby Bells and other telecommunications providers. Those acquisitions helped transform his company from a small-town telephone company into a global telecommunications provider. During Post's tenure, CenturyTel was included on Forbes magazine's list of the "400 Best Big Companies in America," and by 2007 had been listed as one of the best of the largest publicly traded companies in America, eight times.

In 2002 Post was appointed Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of CenturyTel. Post continued serving as CEO through several acquisitions, including the acquisition of Qwest, a former Bell company. He retired in June 2018 but remained on the company's board of directors until 2020.

The year prior to Post's retirement, the company generated \$24 billion in revenue, had operations in sixty countries, and employed more than 50,000 employees. Over the four decades Post led his company, he built it into one of America's largest ILECs and one of the largest broadband internet service providers.



TELEPHONE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE GLEN POST (CONT'D)

Throughout his telephony career, Post worked with numerous state and federal regulatory agencies, and he served a two-year term as Chairman of the FCC's Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council.

After Post's retirement from the traditional ILEC industry, he formed a new venture he called Technology for Rural America with some former colleagues and acquaintances. His vision was to bring high speed internet service to underserved areas in Louisiana and beyond. Initially, the venture provided consulting services to parishes and cities across North Louisiana, helping them understand funding programs available to them and connecting them with providers that best suited their communications needs. For example, Post's team helped one city put out an RFP for a provider to bring fiber to homes and businesses in that city that did not at the time have a fiber connection. That city has now signed an agreement with AT&T to be the first 100% fiber city in North Louisiana. They also assisted cities with implementing public WIFI service in city-owned facilities and public areas.

Post currently serves on the board of directors for Ardent Financial Group, headquartered in Ruston, Louisiana. Ardent is a leading, independent, fiduciary wealth management firm responsible for more than \$35 billion in client assets.

Even though Post has dedicated much of his life to serving the ILEC industry and providing reliable telephone and internet service to customers served by the companies he has led, he has made significant philanthropic contributions and continues doing so currently.

Post and his wife Cynthia established the Glen and Cynthia Post Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals and communities in need. Established in 2004, the foundation funds scholarships and provides other unrestricted financial assistance. Through his foundation, Post created a community partnership called Brokers of Hope. That group partners with the Center for Children and Families to help families break generational cycles of poverty.

Interestingly, one of the ILEC acquisitions under Post's leadership was Coastal Utilities, Inc., a small Georgia ILEC, serving the Hinesville, Richmond Hill, Midway, and Fort Stewart areas. That company, which had previously undergone ownership and name changes, has strong ties to the ITPA's national office and museum, which occupies the former home of Glenn and Trudie Bryant. Glenn Bryant purchased Hinesville Telephone Company in 1946 and later changed its name to Coastal Utilities Incorporated.

TELEPHONE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE GLEN POST (CONT'D)

Suzie Phan, who worked in the telecommunications industry from 1977 to 2018, recalls below her tenure under the leadership of Glen Post.

I first met Glen Post in 1978. He was working for Century Telephone in Marion, Louisiana, and I was working for Communication Consultants in Monroe. Fast forward to 2005 when I began working for CenturyTel where I found my niche in the company's tariff department. When I met Mr. Post for the second time, he was then the President of CenturyTel.

Mr. Post always took the time to greet everyone with a smile, asking how their day was going, and really caring about their answer. Through his conduct and caring, he instilled in his employees pride in our work.

Under his leadership, we had secure jobs and safe work environments. I was honored to work under Mr. Post's leadership to see him steer the CenturyTel ship to become an industry leader in the telecommunications field. For these and many other reasons, Mr. Post is very deserving of being inducted into the ITPA's Telephone Hall of Fame.



Darlene Terry, ITPA Pioneer, nominated Glen Post to the ITPA Telephone Hall of Fame, and worked under Post's leadership for a number of years. Her recollections of Post are as follows:

If there was only one word to describe Glen Post, that word would be humility. From my perspective as an employee who worked under his leadership, Mr. Post remained true to his roots throughout his career. He was a genuinely caring leader. Not one to put on airs, he was friendly and unassuming. Under his leadership, a small rural company grew into an international telecommunications provider. The substantial growth and influence of the company under his leadership can not be denied.

Telecommunications for him wasn't just about business and profits. He genuinely wanted to provide the best telephone service and even more importantly in today's environment, he wanted to ensure people in rural areas have quality access to internet service, so much so that rather than retiring to a life of ease when he left the telephony world, he founded a company to help rural communities obtain quality internet access.

The honor of being the 2025 ITPA Hall of Fame Inductee is well deserved.

Congratulations!



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS

Buckeye State Chapter (OH)

Fall Gathering October 3–4, 2025

Reported by Darlene Roll, Buckeye State Chapter Treasurer

As usual, the 2025 Buckeye State Chapter fall gathering was a huge success! Not only were there Pioneers, family and friends from around Ohio also attended, and several came from out-of-state to enjoy some Buckeye State Chapter hospitality. Non-Ohio guests were from Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Our youngest attendee was nearly 6 months old; her great-grandmother, Ethel Mason, was one of the older attendees. About 30 people were in attendance. We were missing some who were dealing with health issues and unable to attend.

Friday evening has traditionally become “carry-in dinner” night, with Ohio Pioneers providing most items, but out-of-state attendees also brought some food items. Especially popular “Ohio” items – shredded chicken sandwiches and bologna salad sandwiches (kind of like chicken salad but using bologna), along with stuffed pepper casserole, and cookies, cakes, vegetable trays, fruit trays, snack items, and beverages provided plenty of food for the evening and Saturday lunch. It is a time of making new friends and spending time catching up with others. There is usually at least one game played to get everyone laughing.

Saturday started with the annual Buckeye State Chapter business meeting. After that, some attendees had leftovers for lunch and watched football games or sat around and talked. Others headed off to find interesting places and shopping in Ohio’s Amish Country. Everyone convened for the evening meal at the Dutch Valley Restaurant in Sugarcreek. It’s a buffet type meal and no one walks away hungry.

After the meal, attendees returned to the Dutch Host Inn conference room for award presentations (national awards were presented to Buckeye State Chapter and Sally Stone received the John Knox Johnston regional award). 50/50 raffles were held with funds going to the Alig family to help with bills associated with their premature baby’s birth. More than two hundred onesies and two-way zip sleepers were donated by attendees and will be delivered to the Nationwide Children’s Hospital in Columbus. The Buckeye State Chapter will have the same officers and directors for the coming year. Bingo was played, thanks to Ronnie Cashwell of North Carolina providing the game and serving as caller.

Hunny Bunny was there! See photos on Page 26.

The event is always a relaxing weekend! Mark your calendars for October 16–18, 2026, to enjoy Buckeye Chapter hospitality at the Dutch Host Inn in Sugarcreek, Ohio!

CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

Carotel Pioneers (NC) Boot Scootin' Boogie Convention

Carotel Club Pioneers welcomed members and guests at their annual fall convention. This year's themed "Boot Scootin' Boogie" was a big hit with the cowboys and cowgirls who attended!



Carotel Pioneer Club members thanks ITPA National President Leon Yard for attending this year's convention and for helping out with whatever he saw that needed to be done!



*ITPA President Leon Yard and
Carotel Pioneer Club Member Jean Outlaw*



Telco Credit Union, headquartered in Tarboro, NC sponsored a breakfast in honor of Carotel's Veterans. Pictured above are veterans who attended this year's convention.

Front row left to right: Ronnie Cashwell, Richard Swann, George Mills, and Hal Mills

Back row left to right: Doug Sibbett, Kenneth Conley, Bernie Carpenter, Bob Byrd, Andy Davis, Mike Rosenkoetter, Larry Hill and R. L. Rice.

Carotel Pioneer Club Pioneers brought nearly 200 pounds of non-perishable food items to the 2025 Carotel Convention, to support Martha's Mission Cupboard, a local emergency food bank, along with a \$100 monetary donation. The club also raised money to fund the annual scholarship and to assist with continued relief efforts in western North Carolina.



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

Empire State Chapter (NY)

During the 104th Annual New York State Telecommunications Association, Inc. (NYSTA) Convention, Empire State Chapter Pioneers presented four scholarships. Amounts awarded to recipients were matched by member companies. The scholarships were awarded to:

Camden Brayton, son of Bryan Brayton of Champlain Telephone. Camden majors in Robotics Engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Brody Becker, son of Jason Becker of Middleburgh Telephone. Brody is majoring in Business and Physics at St. John Fisher University.

Cadence Cole, son of Shelly Cole of Citizens Telephone. Cadence attends Rochester Institute of Technology.

Jacob Becker, son of Jim Becker of Middleburgh Telephone, attends Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Jacob is majoring in Astrophysics and Space Engineering.

The chapter conducts fundraising activities (silent auction, 50/50 raffle, golf challenge) and accepts donations to fund its annual scholarship program.

Palmetto Chapter (SC)

Palmetto Chapter Pioneers donated more than 150 items for their Chapter project in Florence, SC where 104 veterans live at the Veteran Village State Veterans Home. This is a beautiful complex of private rooms, Chapel, meeting rooms, game rooms, dining halls and more that accommodates veterans from every branch of service. The veterans were excited to have visitors, and they were anxious to win at Bingo and collect one of the many prizes. Palmetto Pioneers were honored to contribute in a small way to a group of our nation's heroes.

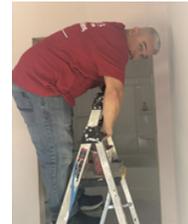


CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

Comporium Pioneers (SC)

In September, Comporium Pioneers rallied together with Comporium employees for the company's annual "Habitat for Humanity Day" to participate in a new build for a deserving York County family. Comporium has enjoyed a long partnership with Habitat for Humanity of York County.

Comporium Pioneer President Brittany Murphy chose as her President's Project "The Miracle League of Rock Hill Meet the Team Party." The Miracle League program. This program provides opportunities for children and adults with disabilities to play Miracle League baseball, regardless of their abilities. Players are paired with a volunteer "Buddy" who assists, protects, and encourages the player throughout the game. Pioneers baked cookies a few days before the event at Comporium and held a fundraiser while baking which provided enough funds to pay for the cookies that were bagged and used at the event. The base-ball themed event featured hot dogs, coleslaw, chips, cookies, and drinks that were served to the 300 guests attending. Each player received Comporium-branded sunglasses and stickers and their uniform t-shirts. A complimentary popcorn station with a variety of toppings was popular with the players.



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

COMPORIUM PIONEERS (CONT'D)

The club's September lunch 'n learn program featured York County Probate Judge Carolyn Woodruff and Associate Judge Anna Miller who spoke to the group about the functions of the Court and Guardianship and Conservatorship.

In October, Comporium Pioneers served a Baked Potato Bar Dinner to men served by Bethel Shelters in October. The shelter provides year-round assistance to individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness and provides workforce skills, education opportunities, and resources.

The Pioneers also participated in two blood drives hosted by OneBlood and helped children enjoy Halloween by participating in the annual BooHaHa in Old Town Rock Hill, SC. This is South Carolina's largest free halloween event.



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

Tar Heel Chapter (NC)



ITPA National Mascot Hunny Bunny, attended the 2025 Tar Heel Chapter's Annual Assembly at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Aberdeen, NC. The Tar Heel Chapter gathering was also attended by special guests from South Carolina, Tennessee, and Ohio.

Attendees brought well over 300 pounds of non-perishable foods that were donated to Salem Methodist Church in memory of Mike Outlaw. Mike was a long-time member of Salem Methodist Church. The food donated in his memory was used by the church to help needy families in the community where Mike's wife, Jean, still resides.



Assembly attendees also donated more than 200 toiletry and personal items that were delivered to The Life Center of Davidson County. This organization provides high-quality daytime care to older and impaired adults and helps improve the quality of life for those individuals and their caregivers by offering support, relief, respite, and counsel.

The casino themed event included games and prizes. Of all the scratch-off lottery tickets that were awarded to our "Cash or Craps" winners, there were no big winners. However, five lucky Bingo players won \$25 gift cards!

The Chapter's 2024-25 officers and directors met on Friday, and on Saturday the Chapter's annual general membership business meeting was held, during which 2025-26 officers and directors were elected.

We were honored to have seven past national ITPA presidents attend our gathering. These distinguished individuals, pictured below left to right are:

Daniel Barnhardt (SC),
Hannah Lancaster (SC),
Ronnie Cashwell (NC),
Nancy Hyatt (TN),
Harold Hayes (OH),
Jim Jolly (NC) and
Darlene Roll (OH).



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

Wade H. Creekmore Club (MS)

The Wade H. Creekmore Club Pioneers host an annual golf tournament every October to fund various projects throughout the year. Through fund-raising efforts and donations this year, the club donated \$11,000 to the Mid-South Chapter's Scholarship Program.

Throughout the year, the Wade H. Creekmore Club Pioneers help individuals in need. This past year, they provided financial assistance to individuals in need of help after home fires and a tornado and to an individual with overwhelming medical expenses during recovery from a major surgery.



Sooner Chapter (OK)

Sooner Chapter Pioneers held their 9th annual silent auction during the OTA/ATA Summer Conference at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs, CO. The auction was a great success raising more than \$4,500 that the club will use to fund various projects and events. The OTA/ATA Summer Conference is a significant event in the rural broadband industry, offering valuable resources and educational opportunities for telecommunications professionals.



CLUB AND CHAPTER NEWS (CONT'D)

IMPORTANT DATES

December 9, 2025

Otto Wettstein, Jr Pioneer Club 46th Annual Christmas Luncheon
Venetian Center, Leesburg Florida



February 6-8, 2026

Tar Heel Chapter Mid-Winter Gathering, Monterey Bay Suites, Myrtle Beach, SC

March 10, 2026

National Landline Telephone Day - In commemoration of March 10, 1876, when Alexander Graham Bell made history with his first call to Thomas Watson.

April 25, 2026

National Telephone Day - Commemorating the invention of the telephone, this day serves to appreciate the impact of the telephone on communications and society.

August 14-15, 2026

Tar Heel Chapter Annual Assembly, Aberdeen, 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

Last Wed. of Every Month—NEAREA Telecom Pioneers gather for breakfast (Dutch treat) from 8:30 am-10 am at Lakeside Skillet, Harvey's Lake, PA. Come for breakfast or just to visit.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Curty and Prince- A Telco Duo

Curty (Curtis) Lancaster 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 9th, 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 ready for his next road trip!
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.



CLUBS

IN CASE YOU'RE PUZZLED

CHAPTERS

As member organizations of the Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association (ITPA), Pioneer clubs and chapters across the nation are all pieces of a large puzzle.

Several Pioneers have asked exactly how they fit into that puzzle with regard to their club or chapter and the national ITPA. The ITPA Charitable Foundation, Historical Foundation, and Telephone Museum and Hall of Fame are also important pieces of this puzzle. Just how all these pieces fit together may not be crystal clear. This article will hopefully provide clarity on each piece of the puzzle.

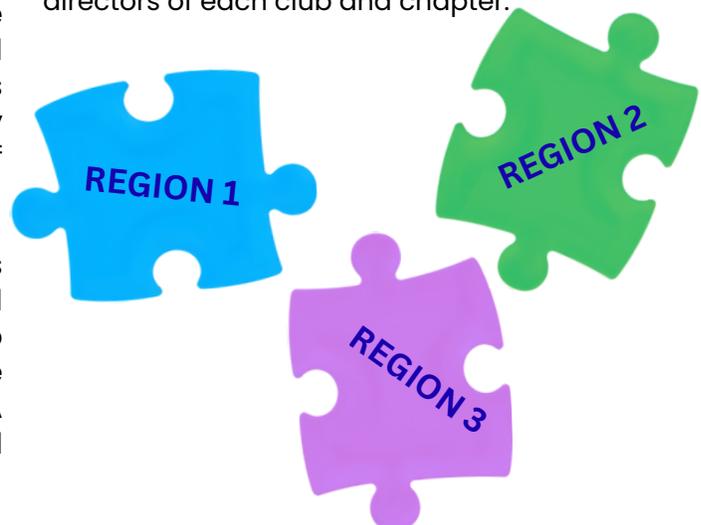
Our Pioneering organizations have a long history. The national ITPA was created by and for independent telephone companies in 1920 as a national volunteer organization. Over the next several decades, clubs and chapters were formed all over the United States, and through national and localized efforts the ITPA family has been serving the public continuously for 105 years on behalf of telecommunications companies.

Verizon (GTE) Pioneer organizations were once affiliated with our national ITPA, and although that branch split to form their own group, some of those Pioneers opted to retain their ITPA membership and they remained affiliated with ITPA at the national level.

At its peak, the ITPA consisted of hundreds of clubs with well over 10,000 members. To best serve its members and their communities, the ITPA's organizational structure was divided into regions. State chapters were established within each region, and local clubs were assigned to their appropriate chapter and region.

Clubs were typically formed by employees of an independent telephone company such as Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company (Carotel Pioneer Club,) and membership in that club generally consisted of employees and retirees who worked for that telco.

Regional Vice Presidents, known as RVPs, report directly to the national ITPA President, and they assist the chapters and clubs they support with a number of issues. They also share information from clubs and chapters with the national ITPA board of directors and likewise, share information from the national level with the board of directors of each club and chapter.





IN CASE YOU'RE PUZZLED (CONT'D)

Each club has its own slate of directors and officers, and is required to submit the required annual documentation to the IRS and the national ITPA to retain non-profit status. Likewise, the officers and directors of each chapter are required to submit their own annual reports to the IRS and to the national ITPA.

At the end of this issue, you'll find a list of the regions, clubs, and chapters currently affiliated with the national ITPA.

The only requirement to be a "member" of a state chapter is to pay dues into a club that tiers to that chapter or to join the chapter directly and pay membership dues without a club affiliation. Over the years, as some clubs and chapters have disbanded due to declining membership, Pioneers who were members of those clubs have transferred their membership to their affiliated chapter or remained a member at the national level in order to remain active with the ITPA.

For example, all Ohio clubs which were once active in the Buckeye State Chapter have now disbanded and the Pioneers formerly affiliated with those Ohio Clubs are now members of the Buckeye State Chapter. The Buckeye Pioneers remain active around the state sponsoring and supporting various community and charity events. They also convene regularly to stay connected to one another.

Pioneers who are active at the state and national levels enjoy working together with Pioneers from other clubs and chapters to serve people throughout the United States. In doing so, great Pioneer friendships have formed and have grown stronger throughout the years.

Our annual Pioneer membership dues help the national and local branches of the ITPA as we continue making a difference in our communities and across the nation. Twenty percent of the \$30 annual membership fee is sent to the club/chapter of dues paying members, conditional upon the club/chapter having submitted the required IRS 990 reports each year and filing an annual report with the ITPA. Annual reports are due every fall and are submitted to the appropriate Regional Vice President (RVP). Once the RVP approves of the annual reports and forwards them to the National Office, a portion of the membership fees are allocated to the club/chapter - also known as "Dues Refunds".

The portion of our membership dues that are retained at the national level contributes to, but does not fully cover, our national operating expenses. Member attrition over the years, combined with a decline in corporate sponsorships, means that membership fees and donations to our foundations, are more critical than ever before for us to continue operating at a local and national level in order to make a difference across the nation.

IN CASE YOU'RE PUZZLED (CONT'D)



Now that you know all about how our local clubs and state chapter puzzle pieces fit together, let's discuss how the Charitable Foundation and Historical Foundation fit into our Pioneer Puzzle.

Keep in mind that the Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association Inc. is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(10) tax exempt organization.

The Charitable Foundation and the Historical Foundation are registered separately with the IRS. They operate independent of the national ITPA, although Pioneers who are affiliated with clubs and chapters across the nation serve as officers and directors of those organizations.

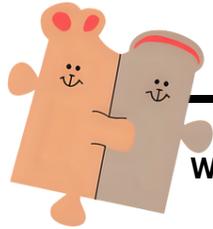
The Charitable Foundation is registered as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. This organization accepts donations that are then distributed to various 501c3 non-profit organizations. The Charitable Foundation collects and distributes tax-deductible donations to charitable causes and works with the ITPA to support the volunteer efforts of local phone companies on a national level.

Since its inception, the Charitable Foundation has supported many programs, such as Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, Children's Shriners Hospitals, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the American Red Cross, and the American Health Assistance Foundation. Through donations made by ITPA members, the Charitable Foundation donates annually to a program that supports our heroes injured in battle, and to the Alzheimer's Association, hoping to one day find a cure for this disease that affects more than six-million Americans. The Charitable Foundation also provides emergency disaster relief grants to clubs, chapters, and organizations to assist victims of natural disasters.

The Historical Foundation is registered as "Independent Telephone Historical Museum and Hall of Fame Foundation Inc." with the IRS as an exempt 501(c)(3) private foundation. The ITPA's Historical Foundation is the vehicle through which the ITPA preserves the telecom industry's rich history at the Telephone Museum in Hinesville, Georgia and through which telecommunications Pioneers are inducted into the ITPA Telephone Hall of Fame. To learn more about the Historical Foundation, visit:

<https://www.nationalitpa.com/kiosk/home.html>.





IN CASE YOU'RE PUZZLED (CONT'D)

What's the mascot all about?

The ITPA Mascot represents a long-standing ITPA tradition. Every year during the annual spring assembly when the incoming president takes office, the newly elected president introduces a new mascot. No sooner than the new mascot is presented, someone kidnaps the mascot, and the new president won't see his or her mascot until the following year's annual assembly.



Above: Minutes after ITPA President Leon Yard introduced Hunny Bunny during the 2024 annual spring assembly, the new mascot was abducted by Elmer Fudd.

During the year, the mascot travels all over the country with various Pioneers, attending club and chapter events and even vacationing with Pioneers. When the incoming president announces the new mascot, they also announce their charity of choice for the coming year. At the end of the year, at the next assembly, the kidnapped mascot is reunited with the president, but only after the president begs for money from the convention attendees to meet a ransom demand. The ransom amount is generally set by the next incoming president. Most often, there are strings attached to the money that assembly attendees are willing to donate towards the ransom.

Conditions such as doing push-ups, skipping rope, dancing, singing, or any number of silly challenges must be undertaken before the money is handed over to the president.



Myrtle the Turtle at the Otto Wettstein, Jr. Pioneer Club's Annual Christmas Luncheon

When all is said and done, the money collected for the mascot's ransom is donated to the president's charity of choice and the outgoing president is temporarily reunited with their mascot. The union is temporary because the mascot will ultimately find a home at the ITPA Telephone Museum where a number of mascots are on display at any given time.



Lilly the Lobster gets acquainted with Rocky the Squirrel before giving up her title as mascot in 2022.

A LOOK AT MA BELL'S TRIALS AT SPEED DIALING

By Dr. William Granger

Rotary dialing is slow, and businesses that made a lot of phone calls lost a lot of time and productivity making a rotary dial phone call. The Magicall dialer was produced to help businesses with this problem. The Magicall Autodialer was simply this: an electromechanical auto-dialer of stored pulse-dialed numbers. I only saw one actual unit in use and that was at an auto repair business. Customers' phone numbers were programmed into the unit and when they needed to call the customer, they quickly located the number on the Rolodex-style number file, then push a button. However, this device was almost a dinosaur when it came out - touchtone dialing and other simpler means soon made this machine obsolete: speed dialing from the telephone company, WE's punch card dialer phone, and then the Touch-a-matic to name a few.



Western Electric/ DASA Magicall dialer in green. Power supply on left, programming dial in middle, and Rolodex-style dialer on right. Manufactured in 1971.



The card dialers shown above are both 2662 A1 telephones. The small button version on the left is obviously a little older than the large button on the right. What is really interesting with these two phones is that the insides are totally different – the 2662 must have undergone a total internal redesign.

Unfortunately, these phones were fairly short-lived as well. The new push-button dialing already had sped up the dialing process and with the 2662, one had to look up the proper card, insert the card, and then push the dial button on the phone. This took as long as manually dialing the number itself. There was a small speed advantage with the older rotary dial 662 though, but both TT and rotary versions had problems with the cards hanging up in the reader and the plastic card was fairly short-lived and became brittle with age.

MA BELL'S TRIALS AT SPEED DIALING (CONT'D)

The next incarnation of speed dialing was the Touch-a-Matic system. This was a purely electronic system which offered one touch dialing of a pre-programmed set of numbers, and it came in several iterations: It could be part of a larger 1A2 key system, a single line phone or as my photo below shows, an auxiliary dialer. These had fairly wide usage until the ESS (electronic switching systems) came into play and made even the Touch-a-Matic obsolete.

Different subsequent phone manufacturers often had one touch speed dialing built into their phones. Speed dialing as offered by the Bell System was not free, but when combined with other perks such as 3-way calling and caller ID, were not terribly expensive either.



Touch-a-Matic auxiliary dialer

About the Author:

Dr. William Granger is a member of the Antique Telephone Collectors Association and is passionate about the preservation of telephone instruments in memory of what he says was once "the greatest telephone company in the world."



Dr. Granger's interest in telephones began at a young age with the old oak wall telephone in his grandmother's farmhouse, which he still has. He started earnestly collecting phones at the turn of the millennium and he says he didn't know when to stop. It was probably his interest in model railroading that led him to become interested in telephones again. He began with using a switch box for switching the locomotives and went from there. His personal interests also include vintage cars, hunting dogs, and shooting sports and he enjoys restoring old gas pumps as well as old telephones.

Dr. Granger graduated cum laude from Centenary College of Louisiana with a double major in Biology and Chemistry, after which he received his M.D. from LSU School of Medicine. He completed his Residency in Anesthesiology at the University of Alabama Medical Center and completed a Fellowship in Pediatric Anesthesiology at the Children's Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, OH. Dr. Granger's medical career as anesthesiologist spanned several decades, during which he authored and co-authored numerous medical publications.

HUNNY BUNNY'S TRAVEL ADVENTURES

*Hunny Bunny
Attends the Tar Heel
Chapter Assembly on
August 22-23, 2025*



HUNNY BUNNY'S TRAVEL ADVENTURES (CONT'D)

Honey Bunny Attends Buckeye State Chapter Fall Gathering Oct. 3-5



On the road with a friend.



Not sure what that Buckeye crew got me into!



Spending time with friends



Sightseeing with Buckeye Pioneer Pat Whalen

HUNNY BUNNY'S TRAVEL ADVENTURES (CONT'D)

Honey Bunny Attends Carotel's 'Boot Scootin Boogie' Convention Oct. 10-11



Playing Bingo with my new friend.



I'm a cowgirl!



Bill Joiner is nicer than he looks..



Visiting with Carotel Pioneers Bob and Carol Byrd



Decorating for the Breakfast in Honor of Veterans.



I had breakfast with Carotel veteran George Mills

SALLY STONE RECEIVES JOHN KNOX JOHNSTON AWARD

Congratulations to Buckeye State Chapter Pioneer **Sally Stone**, who was recently awarded the John Knox Johnston Award. This award is the highest honor the Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association can bestow to an individual in a region. The recipient must be or have been a pioneer member who consistently, over a period of years, made significant contributions to his or her community through the pioneers' activities and its goals. The John Knox Johnston Award is awarded to the recipient by the Region Vice President.

Sally was presented with the John Knox Johnston Award by Region VP Darlene Roll during the Buckeye State Chapter annual gathering in October.

Sally is a long-time member of the Mid-Ohio Pioneer Club and is an active Buckeye State Chapter member, participating in many chapter events. She served the Mid-Ohio Club as secretary/treasurer and has served on the board for Buckeye State Chapter for several years.

Sally supports Region 2 activities by attending various events and keeping in contact with several clubs and members in the region. Sally has also attended numerous Spring Assembly events and helped where needed at those events.

Sally looks for ways to help the local club, state chapter, and national organization. She is not always able to help with projects in-person but willingly purchases items needed and makes financial donations.



John Knox Johnston Award recipient Sally Stone (center) with RVP Darlene Roll (left) and national Treasurer Daniel Barnhardt (right)

She has also supported national projects, including the Alzheimer's Association and troop/veteran activities.

Sally's willingness to help extends beyond the ITPA. When the Pioneers partnered with Lions' clubs to provide food pantry items, Sally generously donated items. She even helps with food pantries in friends' areas by donating needed items. She has a generous heart and loves helping others.

Sally is a big-hearted participant in "Tiny Hugs and Stitches," creating items for babies in NICU environments. She even gets her Pioneer friends to donate items.

Sally is an encouragement to her fellow Pioneers, urging others to engage in activities to help others in the community, whether at the local community, state, region, or national level. Sally is a team player and the Buckeye State Chapter team is proud to call her a fellow Pioneer.

FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND FELLOWSHIP



Thanksgiving is celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada, and is centered around expressing gratitude and celebrating the harvest. In the U.S., it is observed on the fourth Thursday of November, while Canadians celebrate it on the second Monday of October. The holiday's origins trace back to the early 17th century, when Pilgrims and Native Americans shared a feast to celebrate a successful harvest in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Today, Thanksgiving is marked by family gatherings, festive meals featuring traditional dishes like turkey, stuffing, and pumpkin pie, and a focus on thankfulness for the blessings of the past year. It often includes parades, football games, and volunteering to help those in need, reinforcing the spirit of community and generosity.

Christmas is celebrated by billions of people around the world, primarily on December 25th, to commemorate the birth of Jesus. Christmas has evolved into a cultural and social celebration characterized by traditions such as gift-giving, decorating Christmas trees, and sharing meals with family and friends. It is a time marked by themes of generosity, goodwill, and joy, often symbolized by festive decorations, carols, and, of course, Santa Claus. The holiday encourages reflection on compassion, kindness, and the spirit of giving.

Holiday gatherings with friends and family offer a multitude of benefits beyond the simple joy of togetherness. These gatherings provide an opportunity to strengthen bonds and deepen relationships, as shared experiences and conversations help create lasting memories. Social connections are crucial for emotional well-being, and spending time with loved ones can reduce stress, alleviate loneliness, and enhance overall happiness. Holiday gatherings often involve shared meals and traditions, which can foster a sense of belonging and cultural continuity. Engaging in these communal activities can promote gratitude and mindfulness, encouraging individuals to reflect on the positive aspects of their lives. Intergenerational interactions during family gatherings can be particularly enriching, allowing for the exchange of stories, wisdom, and values between older and younger family members. These gatherings are a celebration of human connection, offering a reprieve from the hustle and bustle of daily life and providing a foundation for emotional and psychological health.

Although navigating the holidays alone can be challenging, it is possible to create meaningful experiences on your own terms. You might start by focusing on self-care, dedicating time to activities that bring you joy, such as reading a good book, watching your favorite movies, or exploring a new hobby. Consider volunteering in your community; helping others can provide a sense of purpose and connection. Alternatively, you could reach out to local groups or online communities with similar interests for virtual gatherings or events. Don't forget to treat yourself—prepare a special meal or indulge in a small gift for yourself. Lastly, reflect on the year and set intentions for the future, embracing the holiday season as a time for personal growth and renewal.

LOOKING BACK – TELEPHONE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Frank Henry Woods was posthumously inducted into the Telephone Hall of Fame in 1965. Born near Belvidere, IL in 1868, Woods graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1890 with a bachelor of law and bachelor of literature degree. He obtained a Juris Doctor (JD) at Columbia University after which he joined the law firm of Harwood, Pimes and Kelly in 1892. From 1904 to 1910 he was a partner in the law firm of Woods, Hall and Pound. He then became the head of the law firm of Woods, Woods and Pitken.

In 1903 he founded the Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph Company and served as president and chairman of the board from 1904 to 1946. He continued serving as chairman until his death in 1952. Woods acquired Addressograph International Corp. in 1929, serving as its chairman and following a merger, he served as chairman of Addressograph-Multigraph Corp. until his death.

Woods pioneered the use of the dial telephone and his company was the first large company to use it. He was chairman of the National Telephone Association and in that capacity served as chairman of the "Committee of Seven" that negotiated the Kingsbury Agreement with Bell. This agreement provided unified, consolidated telephone service for the whole nation and resulted in marked improvement in service to the public and in establishing the Independent industry on a sound financial basis.

Mayme Workman was posthumously inducted into the Telephone Hall of Fame in 1965. She was born in Springfield, IL in 1892. Ms. Workman began her telecommunications



career with Interstate Telephone Company in 1907. In 1909, she joined Central Union Telephone Company (Bell) and in 1929 she accepted a position as traffic supervisor with Illinois Telephone Association. She served as Executive Secretary and Treasurer of the ITPA in Springfield, IL from 1947 to to 1961.

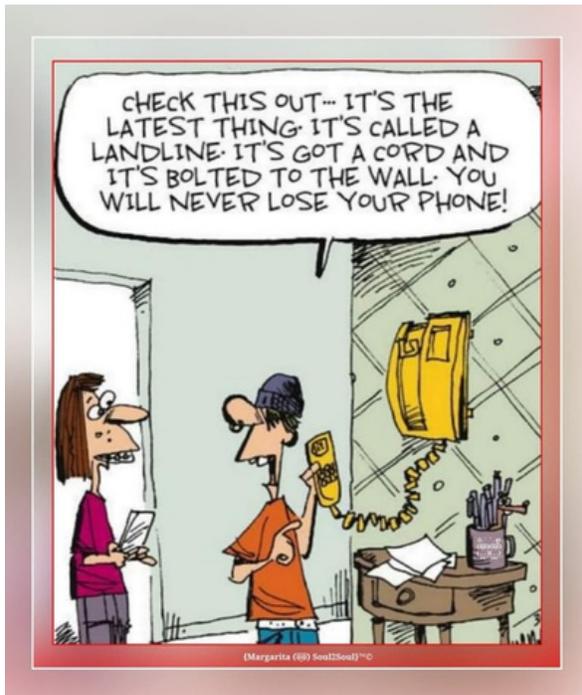
During her career as ITPA Executive Secretary and Treasurer, Ms. Workman wrote and had published more than 800 technical and inspirational articles. She served as traffic editor for the trade journal for 29 years and she made presentations at national conventions for 33 years.

On state convention and chapter presentations she made a presentation to practically every organization in existence at that time. She also made presentations at civic groups such as Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis.

Her "operator's corner" was considered "the bible" from 1932 to 1961. Her biography appeared in "Who is Who in the Midwest" and in the first edition of "Who's Who of American Women."

Mayme Workman pioneered in her day where others feared to tread. She was more than a personality, more than a person – she was an institution until her death in 1961.

THIS AND THAT



"Remember when you used to be able to call a person 57 times, and hang up, and they never knew it was you."



I've been to a lot of places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone, you have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito, either. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport, you have to be driven there. I have made several trips.

Do you remember life before the computer?

Back when...

- * Memory was something that you lost with age.
- * An application was for employment.
- * A program was a TV show.
- * A cursor used profanity.
- * A keyboard was a piano.
- * A web was a spider's home.
- * A virus was the flu.
- * A CD was a bank account.
- * A hard drive was a long trip on the road.
- * A mouse pad was where a mouse lived.

Do you remember?

WHAT'S COOKIN'?

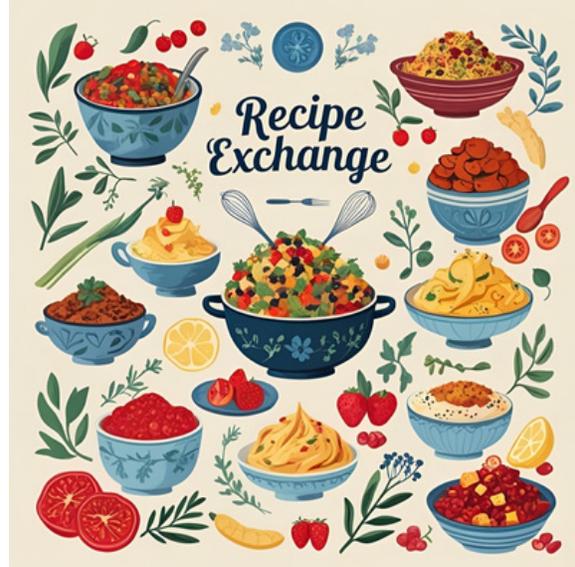
STUFFED PEPPER CASSEROLE

Submitted by Pat Whalen
ITPA Buckeye State Chapter/Mid-Ohio Club

The Buckeye State Chapter Pioneers recently enjoyed this tasty casserole at their annual get-together.

Ingredients:

- 2 boxes (6.8 oz) Rice-A-Roni Beef Flavored Rice
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 2 Tbsp. minced onion (or more)
- 2 cups chopped/diced green pepper (or a combination of green, red, yellow and orange peppers to make 2 cups)
- 24 oz. spaghetti sauce
- 28 oz. diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. pepper
- 2 cups shredded cheese (or more)



Directions: Preheat oven to 350°. Prepare both Rice-A-Roni packages as directed on the box. While Rice-A-Roni is cooking, brown the ground beef. Add onion and chopped peppers to the ground beef and allow onions and peppers to soften.

Stir in the spaghetti sauce and diced tomatoes. Then stir in the cooked Rice-A-Roni. Stir in the brown sugar and salt and pepper, fully combining all items.

Place in a 13x9x2 baking dish. Sprinkle shredded cheese over the top of the casserole, covering all of the top. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the cheese is melted. Enjoy!

To freeze this casserole: Bake casserole as instructed, omitting the cheese on top. After removing from oven, allow to fully cool and then wrap in aluminum foil and place in freezer. When ready to eat, remove from the freezer and bake at 350° for about 60 minutes, covered with aluminum foil. You may need to add a few extra minutes after you check the middle. Remove the foil, add the shredded cheese and bake for 10 more minutes.

About Us



2025-2026 Officers/Directors

President: Leon Yard

1st Vice President: Kyle Anderson

2nd Vice President: Vacant

Immediate Past President:
Jo Ann Esposito

Secretary: Cindy Downing

Treasurer: Daniel Barnhardt

Asst. Treasurer: James White

Executive Director: Andrea Wick

Directors: Hannah Lancaster,
Nancy Hyatt, Jo Myers

Region 1 VP: Gregg Klatsky

Region 2 VP: Darlene Roll

Region 3 VP: Nancy Schnitzer

Committee Chairs

Awards:
Ann Beck

Bylaws:
Ronnie Cashwell

Nominating:
Jo Ann Esposito

Investments:
James White

Hall of Fame:
Morrie Sachsenmaier

Leadership Development:
Nancy Schnitzer

Membership and Sponsor Companies:
Vacant

Public Relations:
Darlene Terry

Clubs and Chapters



Region 1:

Keystone-Garden State Chapter (PA)

Ben M. Witmer Club (PA)
Bunova Club (PA) Inactive
NEAREA Club (PA)
Tri-County Tel. Club (PA)

New England Chapter

Down East Club (ME)
Granite State Club (NH)

Empire State Chapter (NY)

Region 2:

Tar Heel Chapter (NC)

Carotel Club (NC)
Independent Members
(Lexington Tel)

Buckeye State Chapter (OH)

Mid-Ohio Club

Palmetto Chapter (SC)

Comporium Pioneer Club (SC)

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

CenturyLink
Pioneers of Georgia
(no Chapter Affiliation)

Region 3:

Florida St. Chapter (FL)

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

Tom Griffith Chapter (IA)

North Star Chapter (MN)

Mid-South Chapter (MS)

Wade H. Creekmore Club (MS)

CCCITPA (no Chapter Affiliation)
(CC Communications-NV)

Sooner Chapter (OK)