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independent telecommunications pioneer association

## Start Planning Now for the 30th Annual Assembly in Washington, DC

### Save the date:

**What: 30th Annual ITPA Assembly**  
**When: April 22-24, 2022**  
**Where: Crown Plaza Greenbelt- Washington D.C. 6400 Ivy Lane Greenbelt, MD 20770**



Room Rates: \$125 per night includes breakfast for 2 per night.  
\*Each additional and three dates after assembly.

Mark your calendars and make plans to attend the Annual Assembly in Greenbelt, Maryland on April 22-24, 2022. Greenbelt is a suburb of Washington D.C., located in Prince George's County. Greenbelt is located 13 miles from Washington D.C.

Washington D.C., the capital city of the United States is located along the Potomac River on the East Coast, and is home to 17 Smithsonian Museums, galleries, the National zoo and the National Mall. D.C. is an extraordinary city, one with multiple personalities: a working federal city, an international metropolis including 176 foreign embassies, a picturesque tourist destination, and a treasury of the country's most valued history and artifacts. The city is full of landmarks including the Washington Monument, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial. The best time to visit D.C. is from mid-March to mid-April, when the cherry blossoms are in bloom. During this time, a meandering stretch of the Potomac River appears to grace the city wearing an endless pink and white garland.

The Crown Plaza is ready to take your reservations, so contact them at 1-833-681-4979 and mention code MKL to get the reduced rate of \$125.00 per night (plus 13% taxes). Breakfast for two is included at the in house restaurant Tugwell's Public House. Rates are good for three days prior and three days after assembly.

The Crown Plaza offers free parking and a free shuttle to Metro Station- Greenbelt which is conveniently located within three blocks of the hotel. Metro is available from Union Station for Amtrak and from Reagan National Airport.

Three airports serve the greater D.C. area:  
Dulles International (IAD)  
Reagan National (DCA)  
Marshall Airport (BWI)



At this time, we have not finalized all of the information needed for registration, but we encourage you to go ahead and make your reservation at the hotel. Rest assured the assembly planning committee is looking forward to offering pioneers a schedule that will be fun and full of opportunities to grow as pioneers.



## President's Corner



**H**ello Members,

Quick update from the National office— It's been wonderful this past

month having the opportunity to travel around the country and participate in events, fundraisers, and fellowship with the chapters and groups. Keep the notifications and updates coming in.

### NEAREA Annual Banquet



### 9/11 Ride with Comporium



It's truly amazing to see the charitable and community support efforts that are taking place regardless of the situations that are happening worldwide. We all know that issues like homelessness, hunger, suicide, drug abuse, and other pressing issues that affect our communities don't go away because of Covid, or other happenings. Thank you for continuing to work so hard and volunteer your time, and your family's time supporting the communities you live and work in.

We've been busy at the home office rapping up ITPA business for the year and continuing to work through remote sessions while adapting to not being able to meet as we normally would. Our fall board meeting is coming up next month and we are excited to keep moving forward with the planning for the upcoming assembly, working on new membership ideas, and National fundraising projects.

Looking forward to hearing about your chapters and groups projects as we finish out the year. Please reach out to the National office if there is anything we can help with, we're here to help.

Best regards,

—Gregg Klatsky  
President ITPA



Independent Telecommunications  
Pioneer Association National Office

**The Pioneer Magazine**  
The official publication of the  
Independent Telecommunications  
Pioneer Association

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Please send stories about your club or chapter to ITPA at the contact information above.

The Pioneer Magazine is developed by the ITPA Public Relations Committee and is published three times a year by the Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association.



# Historical Foundation — ITPA Museum Update

The ITPA Museum reopened on June 4, 2021 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony supported by the Hinesville Area Chamber of Commerce. Several ITPA members were present as well as approximately 40 guests. We directed several tours that afternoon and had great media coverage. We hope that in the near future there is less COVID and a lot more visitors touring our museum.

After the ribbon cutting, we showed recently completed upgrades in the main meeting room. Through a grant and other funding, we were able to replace the existing wooden display shelves with glass and add glass doors with locks. Also LED lights with dimmers were added to make the display of antique phones and other shelf items much more professional looking. These changes will give visitors a much better view of telephony history that we are working to preserve in order to share with the public. Last, this renovation gives the museum much needed display space. Alissa worked hard during the closure to ensure the display was set in its new space for the reopening.



On August 18, Alissa was contacted by Donna Barfield, coordinator of the TPA Museum in Macon, GA. Donna is president of the TPA Dixie Chapter and an AT&T retiree. The Macon TPA Museum was being dismantled and she was in search of other museums that might be interested in the collection. Once Alissa received the call, plans were made to visit Macon on Monday, August 23. Alissa, Chris, Ronnie and Janet met at the location to pull items for Hinesville. Even though other museums had already been to Macon and made selections for their respective collections, 146 items were selected for the ITPA museum. The day was spent pulling, logging, and packing the items—everything from a lead melting pot (for repairing outside lead cable) to a military Signal Corp Magneto Switchboard to a cable buggy—filling every inch of a 12-foot U-Haul trailer. The legal transfer of the items has now been made to the Historical Foundation. We may still have the opportunity to pick up a few more things. We were like kids at Christmas looking at Santa's full sleigh.

Another addition to our museum is a new volunteer, a young man named Jack Reosti. He and his family have just moved back "home" to the Hinesville area where Jack was born and where his dad started—and will now finish out—his military career at Fort Stewart. Jack and his mom came to visit the museum and Jack was so overwhelmed with the old technology that he immediately wanted to be involved with the museum. He is intrigued with the workings of the old phone equipment. Currently, he is helping Alissa research and identify the items that came from Macon. He loves working on old phones and restoring them to working condition. He is an amazing 14-year-old. In his own words, "I enjoy volunteering at the museum because in maintaining these pieces of history, I get a view of how things used to be. I am grateful for this opportunity to grow more knowledgeable in the development of the telephone."



The historical foundation would like to thank everyone for all their support. Continued support—and particularly donations to the foundation—will allow the preservation of the heritage and legacy of the telephone industry for future generations like Jack's and beyond.

## Club Corner

**To** Members of the **Florida Pioneer Clubs (Big Bend, Galloway, Otto Wettstein, Jr)**: On Monday, December 13th, 2021, there will be Florida Chapter Board Meeting in which officers will be elected. Members of the 3 clubs are invited to attend the meeting.

The meeting will be held at the Venetian Center located at 1 Dozier Court, Leesburg, FL. The meeting will start at approximately 1:30 pm, after the Otto Wettstein, Jr Pioneer Retiree Christmas Luncheon. If you have any questions, please email JoAnn Esposito at [espogirl56@yahoo.com](mailto:espogirl56@yahoo.com).

Thank you,  
JoAnn

In August **The North Star Chapter** donated \$1,000.00 to the Pioneer Museum in Heritage Village, Mountain Lake, Minnesota. Pictured below are Karol Nielsen, Secretary/Treasurer, Mary Meuwissen, Ralph Meuwissen, president, Barb Crawford, Heritage Museum secretary, John Bergmann, director and his wife Karen and Dave Flies, director. This donation will assist in the upkeep of the museum.

The museum did a wonderful job rearranging the displays.



The **ITPA Sooner Chapter** and the **Oklahoma Telephone Association** held their annual meetings at Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, June 6th-9th. During the meeting, the membership elected Dr. Kay Mount as the 2021-2022 President along with four board members. The Sooner Chapter also conducted a silent auction on June 9th in conjunction with OTA's Banquet. The 42 donated items raised over \$6,800. The funds will be given to the OTA Foundation to provide nine scholarships to high school seniors from local OTA member communities across the state.

This year's fundraiser was the largest and will greatly impact those students attending college and trade schools. The Sooner Chapter continues to grow its membership with new interest from younger generations.



### NEAREA Telecom. Pioneer Club

Reservations were made for the 24 members/guests to attend NEAREA Telecom. Pioneer Clubs 50th Annual Banquet at The Inn of the Abingtons, North Abington Twp., PA on October 2, 2021. Social time was 1:00 p.m., with Buffet Dinner at 1:30p.m. "Thinking of you" cards were passed around for those present to sign and/or write a note, to be sent to several of our pioneers who were unable to attend this year.

Two hand crocheted afghans and 2 raffle baskets were on hand for a Chinese Auction. 27 Blind Auction items were available for those present to bid on.

Hand crocheted lap robes were on display for all to see. These, along with hand crocheted shawls are made for members of Nursing Homes and/or friends in need.



# Club Corner

...NEAREA continued from p. 4

Pictures:

#1 Our Special Guests left to right: Daniel Barnhardt, ITPA 1st Vice President; Bill Barber, ITPA Region 1 VP; and Gregg Klatsky, ITPA President.



#2 NEAREA Life Members left to right: Pete McClure, Tanya Christ, Howard Selleck, Marlene Sample, Sabie Naro, Bill Barber, and Ray Wandel.



#3 Retirees left to right: Pete McClure, Joanne Depew, Howard Selleck, Gil Depew, Sabie Naro, and Ray Wandel



#4 Tanya Christ with her beautiful hand crocheted blankets/lap robes



## Buckeye State Chapter - Save the Date! October 29-31, 2021

Buckeye State Chapter Pioneers are hoping to host a Fall Get-Together at the Berlin Grande Hotel in Berlin, Ohio – in the heart of Ohio's Amish country - the weekend of October 29-31, 2021. Of course, as with all events, activities will be based on COVID requirements and restrictions in place at that time. Current plans are to "welcome" everyone of Friday evening. The chapter's business meeting will be held on Saturday morning, followed by free time to explore the Holmes County/Tuscarawas County area, and then return for an evening meal buffet at The Berlin Farmstead located next door to the hotel and fellowship time afterward. More information will be available after the chapter's mid-July meeting.

## Mid-South Chapter: 2021 Billy D. Young Scholarship Winners

The scholarship was established in Mr. Billy D. Young's memory to support fellow telecommunications workers that are employees of member companies of the Telecommunications Association of the Southeast (TELSE) or the **ITPA Mid-South Chapter** in educating their children. This scholarship is made available through the MidSouth Chapter and is supported by the individual Pioneer Clubs in the chapter. Consideration for the scholarship included academic information, community involvement, sports, clubs, employment, and other extracurricular activities. Additionally, each student submitted a 1,000 word essay. Each applicant excelled both inside and outside the classroom during their high school career and were much deserved of the award. The awards were presented by President Jay Vanlandingham at the 2021 TELSE Summer Symposium in Destin, FL. Congratulations to our 2021 awardees! We wish you all the best as you continue your education.

**\$5,000 - Laura Tyson Daffin, Hayneville Telephone Company (pictured right)**



**\$3,000 - Caleb Lee Meadows, Telapex, Inc.**

**\$3,000 - Benjamin Graham Stewart, NECA (pictured below)**



**\$1,000 - Conner Hazen Meadows, Telapex, Inc.**

**- Elena Jess Causey, Hayneville Telephone Company (pictured below)**



**- Abigail Lea Fahrubel, Farmers Telecommunications Coop.**

**- Clark David McGehee, Franklin Telephone Company**

**- Dawson Lee Woods, Franklin Telephone Company**

**- Ethan Jacob Hurt, Fulton Telephone Company**



# Club Corner

## Be Our Guest!

On August 20-21, 2021, the **Tar Heel Chapter** gathered in Aberdeen, NC to celebrate its 52nd Annual Assembly, long awaited since the 2020 meeting was canceled. Even though this year's attendance was smaller than usual with 23 members and guests, the convention was big on fellowship, fund-raising and fun. We were pleased to host the 2022 incoming president, Daniel Barnhardt and his wife Lu, as well as the National ITPA office executive director, Alissa Moss, Chris, Kassie, and Addie.

Following the board meeting on Friday, we gathered for a barbecue and chicken dinner. On Saturday afternoon, the "work/fun" began as we played a few rounds of bingo, tested our skills on the putting green, and perfected our pitching with cornhole challenges. As part of the afternoon festivities, we also celebrated a very important birthday as a surprise for Addie Moss who turned 14 that day. Rounding out the afternoon was the auction to raise funds for scholarships. This activity is one of several that funds the scholarships we give each year. We were privileged to award five scholarships this weekend to grandchildren of chapter members.

Our auctioneer this year was our very own "They call me the fireman" Mark Goss. He may have spent his career in firefighting but he has a new venue as an auctioneer if he ever chooses to do so. He had family members bidding against one another and best friends throwing each other under the bus to pay top dollar for the donated items. All totaled, the club raised nearly \$1000.00 for the scholarship fund, not bad for about an hour and a half's work. In addition, the attendees also pooled a sizeable non-perishable donation for the Aberdeen Area Food Bank and many toiletry items for The Life Center of Davidson County (Lexington, NC).

The evening started with the business meeting but followed with Mickey and Minnie and the Disney crew. All attendees were encouraged to dress as a favorite Disney character. Among the attendees were Cruella (Janet Goss) and her Dalmatian (Nat), Winnie the Pooh (Alissa Moss), Eeyore (Kassie), Piglet (Addie), the Queen of Hearts (Carolyn Thompson), Minnie (Janet Holliday Cashwell and Carol Harrell), and others who donned t-shirts with Goofy, Mickey, and other Disney friends. Photo ops included the Magic Kingdom and a film studio. We ended the evening with Phone Phamily Pheud, created and emceed by Mollie Goss. Questions ranged from characters in Disney films to film titles and locations. Mollie knew how to work that buzzer as some of those questions were real stumpers! The winning team took home Disney-themed prizes.

We would love to have anyone to join us at our annual convention. We always have a theme and as Mrs. Potts sang in Beauty and the Beast, Be our guest! Be our guest! Put our service to the test...Hope to see you in 2022!



## 9/11 Memorial Ride

### The Comporium Pioneers

wanted to do something special to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the attacks on our nation. Since we were unable to have our yearly fundraiser, the Firehouse Run due to Covid-19, it was decided that a Motorcycle Ride would be the perfect way to not only raise funds for the club but to take time to reflect on the lives lost that day. A commemorative T-shirt was designed and given to all those who registered. One hundred forty-nine



motorcycles were joined by Fire Trucks, pickup trucks and cars who gathered to reflect on the events at the precise time that the planes struck. After the ceremony, the riders mounted up and the vehicles started their engines to take a 58.5 miles ride to the York County Fire Training Center where a NYFD Firefighter and others spoke. Food Trucks were on site to offer refreshment. "Never Forget"





## Charitable Foundation

Last month, we focused on the Alzheimer's Association, one of our ITPA National Charitable Foundation activities. Their "Walks to Remember" are in September and October. Are you walking? We'd like to see photos or articles. This month, I'd like to ask for your support for Troop and Veteran projects. Since Veterans Day is observed in November, I felt like it was an appropriate time to start talking about these activities. Perhaps some of your clubs already support these types of projects. If you do, would you please send a short paragraph and/or a photo of a troops or veterans' type of project you do? Nationally, we support Alzheimer's Disease Research and Troop/Veteran projects. One Troop/Veteran project that we've supported in the Hinesville/Fort Stewart area is "Warrior Walk", where in December, wreaths are laid for those who have given their lives for our freedom. In some places, this activity is part of the "Wreaths Across America" events in mid-December. Won't you share your photos and stories with us? Please send information to Alissa at the National Office (Email: [itpa@telecom-pioneers.net](mailto:itpa@telecom-pioneers.net)). We'll feature these Alzheimer's and Troop/Veterans projects in an upcoming newsletter or magazine. Thank you for all you do to help others see a brighter future!

Pictured: ITPA Pioneer Darlene Roll, and friends from Ohio Lions District OH1 walking on September 25th to raise awareness about Pediatric Cancer.

—Submitted by  
Darlene Roll-  
ITPA Charitable  
Foundation  
President



## Meet Our National President and Vice President

### Daniel Barnhardt

Daniel is a husband and father of two, member and Past President of the Comporium Pioneer Club, Director at Large for the Palmetto Chapter of ITPA and 1st Vice President of the National (ITPA) Independent Telecommunications Pioneer Association. Daniel's work history started out in the grocery store where he worked while attending Western Carolina in Cullowhee NC. Daniel spent 20 years in managing grocery stores (Winn-Dixie). He moved to Fort Mill SC to manage a new store and in 1998 was offered a job with the local Cable/Telephone company which is Comporium Communications today. The past 23 years Daniel has been Technical Services Supervisor/Manager. With many changes through the years with cable/modem/cell service and of course local telephone, helping others was always the driving force. Daniel stated, "It just seemed normal to become a Pioneer."



glove service was an idea born of a simple conversation at a Pioneer Cookout for the ROC. Daniel's leadership, loving spirit and "let's make it even better" ideas, made this a project no one will forget. Over seventy-five people were treated to a sit down, cooked-to-order steak dinner with all the trimmings in a room set with white tablecloths, beautiful centerpieces, violin music, custom corsages, and a fun photo booth. Those who attended said it was one of the greatest evenings of their lives and something they will never forget

### Gregg Klatsky

Gregg is a husband and father of two, member and Board member of the New England Chapter, Vice President of the Down East Club, and President of the National ITPA. Gregg has worked at Amazon, Nintendo, Red Bull, was a child actor, and sold wine before landing in the telecom industry back in 2006 working for Mountain, LTD. Over the past 15 years Gregg has been and is currently still the safety manager, manager of social media, and the Vice president of sales and account management while reporting to the COO. Gregg became involved with the ITPA when he was introduced to several members while working with other local telecommunication organizations like TANE, TAM, and NYSTA.



Cindy Downing stated this about Daniel: When in need of someone to step up, Daniel is there. When driving the Comporium Pioneer truck in local parades, he takes care to make sure the truck is decorated, and music is blasting. And he spends hours cleaning and painting glass insulators for a project to raise money for our soldiers. As President of the Comporium Pioneer Club, Daniel wanted to do something special for our homeless population. A plan to feed the clients at Renew Our Community a steak dinner with white

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