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Legislative Update

This is the final edition of our newsletter for 2012 and as the year closes the OTA is busy with all things Oregon Universal Service Fund (OUSF).

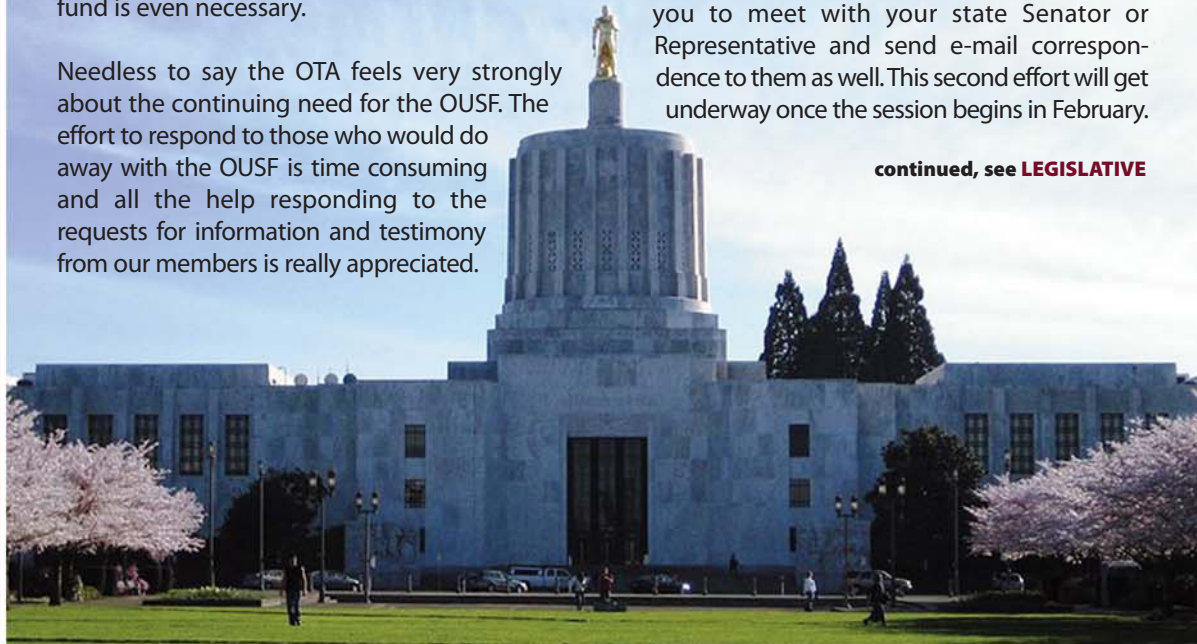
We have been very busy with the UM 1481 docket at the OPUC. This is the regulatory proceeding dealing with the OUSF. Thanks to our good friends at the Oregon Cable Telecommunications Association (OCTA), Comcast and Verizon, we are providing answers to the various questions being raised about the need for the fund, how you all utilize the funds received and whether or not the fund is even necessary.

Needless to say the OTA feels very strongly about the continuing need for the OUSF. The effort to respond to those who would do away with the OUSF is time consuming and all the help responding to the requests for information and testimony from our members is really appreciated.

Unfortunately, it doesn't end with the OPUC. There will be a bill introduced in the Oregon Senate in 2013 that would place a cap of eight million dollars on the fund. This legislation comes courtesy of the OCTA as well. No rationale is given for that amount and there is no detail about how that would be allocated. Obviously, this is a bill the OTA will vigorously oppose.

We knew this bill might be coming and our work to oppose this effort started a few months ago. We have been visiting legislators and whenever possible visited with them at our member company offices. Now that we have an actual copy of the legislation we can respond more specifically and will probably be in touch with a few more of you to meet with your state Senator or Representative and send e-mail correspondence to them as well. This second effort will get underway once the session begins in February.

continued, see LEGISLATIVE



Get informed 24/7/365

Go to www.ota-telecom.org

- up-to-date industry news
- event calendar
- seminar information
- member directory
- legislative updates

Show off your stuff...

Are you a new member? Would you like your fellow OTA members to notice your company and products? If so, this quarterly online newsletter is a great way to be seen and make new contacts!

Contact the OTA office today!

503.581.7430

Thanks to all our members who have contributed to the OTA political action committee so far. Those contributions to the PAC allow us to participate at fundraising events and support those who support the efforts you make to serve your customers.

Of course along with all the attention focused on the OUSF we have also been busy with other regulatory issues and planning for our joint OTA-WITA Annual Meeting which will be in Sunriver this year. It will be another active year in 2013 and as always, if you have any questions or comments about what we are doing please give us a call or send along an e-mail.

Mt. Angel Developmental Services Receives \$5,000 Grant

Mt. Angel Telephone and CoBank are pleased to announce a \$5,000 grant has been awarded to Mt. Angel Developmental Services.

The grant will be used to purchase iPads to assist individuals with autism. CoBank is a national cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America.



CoBank's "Sharing Success" program established a matching grant program to support worthy organizations and causes in rural communities. Mt. Angel Telephone partnered with CoBank to assist Mt. Angel Developmental Services for Practical Approaches to Autism (PAA) for adolescents and young adults.

"Most of the people we serve are locked inside themselves. As they have no appropriate way to communicate fear, anger, or physical pain, they often rely on self-injury and aggression to express negative emotion. The people we serve are also of very modest means. We seek support to help them reach their full potential," says Jenny Barischoff, Program Director for Mt. Angel Developmental Services.

"For many of the people we serve, computers have been a life changing device, capitalizing on strengths and compensating for weaknesses. The iPad, like other computers, is an effective tool for many on the autism spectrum. The iPad's flexibility and portability offer some additional advantages over laptops or PCs. The touch screen and layout make the iPad more accessible for people with coordination or learning difficulties; these people may find sliding and tapping easier than either typing or writing. Moreover, the iPad is easily carried and has proven helpful for calming and focusing the people we serve when they are on the go."

The iPads will also be used in music therapy. The music therapy on the iPad encourages social interaction and the development of skills necessary for community based integration and employment. "Mt. Angel Telephone and CoBank are proud to sponsor this innovative program," said Maureen Ernst of Mt. Angel Telephone.

OTA COMMITTEE MEETINGS CALENDAR

Please keep in mind the possibility that these dates could change, so be sure to watch your email for meeting confirmation and details that are sent to all committee members the week prior to the scheduled meeting date.

FEBRUARY 2013

- 8th** Annual Meeting Committee
Friday – 10:30 a.m. via conference call
- 13th** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. at the Garfield School Building
CenturyLink Office, 528 Cottage Street NE, Salem
- 27th** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. via conference call

MARCH 2013

- 6th** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. at the OTA Office in Salem
- 20th** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. via conference call
- 21st** Board of Director's & Small Company Committee Meeting
Thursday – 10:00 a.m. at the OTA Office in Salem

APRIL 2013

- 3rd** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. at the OTA Office in Salem
- 17th** Legislative Committee Meeting
Wednesday – 9:00 a.m. via conference call



2012 Accounting Seminar Recap

The 2012 Accounting Seminar was a joint venture between OTA and WITA and proved to be a huge success! The committees from both State Associations worked diligently to plan and organize this 1 ½ day event held October 23 – 24 at the Red Lion Hotel on the River, Jantzen Beach in Portland, OR.

A consultant panel opened the seminar with “All Things Reform” moderated by **Ryan Johnson, AKT LLP**. Panelists included **Scott Daniels, AKT LLP; RJ DelMese, Moss Adams LLP; Doug Neff, Johnson, Stone & Pagano; and Jim Rennard, GVNW Consulting, Inc.** This panel of distinguished experts in the area of telecommunications finance discussed the impact of the USF/ICC Order, how this broad-reaching development affects, (and will continue to affect) our professional lives and what we need to do moving forward.

Jon Cray, OTAP Manager, Oregon Public Utility Commission provided an overview of the FCC Lifeline and Link Up Reform Order that was released in early 2012. He addressed the effect the Order has on the dual roles that OTAP and the Eligible Telecommunications Carriers have in the administration of Lifeline. He also discussed how the OTAP has implemented the requirements of the Order to minimize the impact to ETCs and their respective lifeline customers.

Betty Buckley, Executive Director of WITA addressed the issue of Lifeline from the Washington perspective, discussing the latest progress made with both the FCC and WTAP on coordinating those two programs. Betty discussed questions around how to certify customers, what information can be used that will ensure successful audits, and what process is the easiest to manage.

Brant Wolf, OTA Executive Vice President and **Betty Buckley, WITA's Executive Director** teamed up to provide a session to update the group on legislative matters and regulatory activities as they affect the telecommunications industries in both Oregon and Washington. Regulatory issues on the Federal level were also discussed.

Dale Merten, Chief Operations Officer at The Toledo Telephone Company, Inc. provided the audience an overview of Over the Top (OTT) Technologies and discussed how Local Exchange Carriers can utilize the technology.

Kathy Cuhna, Consultant, AKT LLP focused her “Thinking Like a Crook --- Fraud Prevention and Detection” session on changing how you view internal controls to help keep your assets safe.

Craig Phillips, Administrator, Oregon and Washington Exchange Carriers Association (OECA/WECA) delivered a presentation entitled “OECA/WECA --- Structure, Function and the Current and Future Status of the Pooling Process.” Craig described the OECA/WECA structure and functions as well as the current pooling process and reporting, and how to file the new tariff rates.

Closing out the seminar, **Jason Beyrouty, Principal, AKT Benefit Advisors LP** discussed the status of the health care reform process and the implications for our companies. He touched on the Oregon Health Insurance Exchange, and whether or not that would serve as a viable alternative to sponsoring your own plan.

**A Special Thank You to the Sponsor's
of This Year's Event!!**

AKT LLP
GVNW Consulting, Inc.
Moss Adams LLP
Western Independent Networks

Thank you and we'll see you at next year's event!



American Power Systems Account Manager, Mark Benson's presenting, "Safety Issues: DC Power and Battery Systems."

2012 Safety Seminar Recap

The 2012 Safety Seminar took place on November 13th at the Monarch Hotel & Conference Center in Clackamas, OR.

Kicking off the seminar was **Buck Spears, President of S&S Solutions** with a presentation on "Fiber Optic Safety." Buck addressed concerns of technicians installing and maintaining fiber optic cables and focused on taking the necessary precautions to avoid the hazards associated with fiber optics such as eye protection, fiber fragment control and the safe use of chemicals.

Michael Mock, Loss Prevention Consultant, Great American Insurance Company provided a session on "Fleet Safety Management," discussing fleet safety policies, safety leadership and safety organization. Regulatory compliance, including DOT overviews, vehicle maintenance, accident investigation and non-owned auto exposures were addressed as well.

Candice Knoll of CenturyLink receives 2012 Safety Employee of the Year Award from Scott Hallock, Canby Telcom, Safety Committee Chair.



The **2012 Safety Employee of the Year Award** was presented to **Candice Knoll of CenturyLink**. Candice is a Network Technician in Independence, Oregon. Adam Kohler, CenturyLink Area Operations Manager, tells us that she is very safety conscious and passionate about identifying and reporting safety concerns in order to make the job as safe as possible for each and every CenturyLink employee. Her attention to detail has made her one of the go-to people for identifying whether or not a situation is a true safety issue. She is very adept at seeing work activities that have become commonplace and identifying where and how these procedures are unsafe. In addition to Candice's attention to detail, she also displays a determination for following through on implementing safety issues to their

completion, showing a tireless resolve to follow through on issues that many people would be more than happy to see simply go away without having to address! Candice currently serves on two individual Safety Committees for CenturyLink, and through her education and experiences with these safety committees, Candice has accomplished actions that are exemplary from a safety recognition perspective. Please join the OTA in congratulating Candice for being recognized for her outstanding efforts within our industry regarding the importance of work safety!

The OTA was happy to recognize **John Mitchell of The Toledo Telephone Company** for his many years of dedication to the safety field of the telecommunications industry. John has been involved with both the Oregon and Washington Telecommunications Associations and has held the position of Safety Officer at The Toledo Telephone Company for over two decades. John is retiring in the spring of 2013. We will truly miss his strong support of the Safety Programs. Congratulations on a job done well John, and best wishes for a long and healthy retirement!

"Safety Issues: DC Power and Battery Systems" was the topic of a presentation by **Mark Benson, Account Manager, American Power Systems**. Mark discussed the hazards associated with untrained persons working on batteries and DC power systems and how the disregard for proper training and lack of qualifications can create substantial safety risks.

Dave McLaughlin, Industrial Hygienist/Technical Specialist for OR-OSHA closed the seminar with "The OSHA Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Hazardous Chemicals (GHS)." In this session Dave provided an overview of OSHA's new GHS system, and how it changes the current MSDS Hazard Communications Rule. Information was shared on compliance requirements and how those changes affect our organizations.

A Special Thank You to the Sponsor's of This Year's Event!!
Telcom Insurance Company
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The Consumer Services & Marketing Committee Meeting Recap

The Consumer Services & Marketing Committee planned this year's annual seminar to be held October 10 – 12 at the Best Western Ocean View Resort in Seaside, OR.



The event kicked off with **Anne-Louise Sterry**, a motivational speaker, humorist & presentation coach whose session “Re-wiring the Brain for Audacious Joy in the Workplace” was enjoyed by all. She addressed creativity in motivating your staff, how to reduce absenteeism, minimize stress, improve employee retention and enhance communication skills to improve employee morale.

The Oregon Department of Justice’s Assistant Attorney General, Fraud Division, Althea Cullen followed with a presentation on “Consumer Fraud in Oregon.” Althea explained how the department processes consumer complaints, offering tips on how to protect your credit and your money from unscrupulous people.

Gene de Vore, Technology Manager at Canby Telcom joined the roster with “You Can’t Sell What You Can’t Trust or Understand.” Gene discussed the history of technology and touched on the intangibility of the terminology and products that telcos are selling today.

Brant Wolf, OTA Executive Vice President was there to provide an overview of the legislative and regulatory issues of current interest to the telecommunications industry in Oregon.

Bert Holley from Comcast joined the group to talk about helping customers identify and meet their needs. He discussed how to build rapport and trust with customers, how to effectively transition from the sales process to providing high-quality customer service, and how to leverage that experience into long-term business relationships.

Back by popular demand was **Dale Merten, Chief Operations Officer at The Toledo Telephone Company, Inc.** with his presentation on “Over the Top (OTT) Technology: Why It’s Important.” Dale presented an overview of OTT technologies, discussing how Local Exchange Carriers can utilize the technology to expand their market and attract new customers.

Dave Nieuwstraten, Managing Principal at Pivot Group, LLC rounded out the seminar with his session “Telecommunications Industry Overview.” Dave shared his insights into recent developments and on-going trends in the rural telecom marketplace with an overview of how rural telecoms are responding to emerging challenges, and differentiating themselves from their competitors in the scope of their product offerings and the quality of their customer service.

Oregon Telecommunications Association
& Washington Independent Telecommunications Association

2013 Joint Annual Meeting
June 5th - 7th



2013 OTA EVENT CALENDAR

ITA Showcase March 6-7

Holiday Inn at the Portland Airport – Portland, OR

Outside Plant Seminar April 18-19

Best Western Agate Beach Inn – Newport, OR

OTA-WITA Joint Annual Meeting June 5-7

Sunriver Resort – Sunriver, OR

Central Office & Information Technologies Seminar September 19-20

Best Western Agate Beach Inn – Newport, OR

2014 OTA-WITA Joint Annual Meeting May 19-21, 2014

Skamania Lodge – Stevenson, WA

Notification of OTA President of Any Antitrust Concerns

OTA members, representatives and attendees should promptly bring any antitrust concerns to the attention of OTA President. Because antitrust law and policy is legally complex (especially in view of the heavily regulated nature of the telecommunications industry), all OTA members, representatives and attendees are expected and instructed to seek promptly the advice of counsel for OTA in the event that there is any question as to whether any contemplated action, activity, proposal, or other course of action may be in conflict with applicable law.

OTA members, representatives and attendees should terminate any discussion, seek legal counsel's advice, or, if necessary, leave any meeting or discussion where improper subjects are being discussed and explain the reasons for departure to those still in attendance.

For a copy of OTA's Antitrust Policy in its entirety, please contact the OTA office.

Oregon Telecommunications Association
& Washington Independent Telecommunications Association

2013 Joint Annual Meeting June 5th - 7th




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New Members

The OTA would like to welcome the following companies who have recently joined the association. For contact info and links to their websites, please visit the OTA website.

New Telephone Company Provider Member:

Minet

New Associate Member Company:

Consolidated Business Services

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