



April 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

Legislative & Industry Report
Membership News
Scholarship Foundation
Upcoming Events
Association "Stuff"

Connections

INSIGHT INTO **YOUR** BROADBAND ASSOCIATION

2025 Legislative Session: Q1 Recap

As we wrap up the first quarter, the Oregon legislature is in full swing. The OBA Legislative Committee has been reviewing and discussing several bills that we have been actively tracking. The association has scored some significant wins on bills that our members would have major challenges with, had they passed. Here is a quick recap on a few:

- **House Bill (HB) 2370** – increases the fee paid by utilities to the OPUC. OBA confirmed that the bill does not apply to our members and monitored to ensure that language adding us was not adopted.
- **HB 3865** – adds text messaging to existing language forbidding unwanted calls. OBA was contacted by the bill sponsor for input and our position on the matter. We had no issues with adding text messages to the law. Since our members are not required to enforce any do not call laws, we adopted a neutral position.
- **Senate Bill (SB) 4** – would require our members to give bill credits for any internet service outage lasting more than one hour, without exception for weather or natural disaster, traffic accident, etc. While we were able to defeat this measure before it even really got started, it had been quite a while since we'd seen legislation like this being introduced. It's crucial for OBA to remain engaged with the bill sponsor since these kinds of things can have a long shelf life.
- **SB 330** – would force any new or replacement electric service lines underground, both transmission and distribution. While this does not impact our members who own poles, this is an extremely expensive notion and those costs would have to be shared among pole occupants. OBA met with the bill sponsors and worked with our energy friends to pull this back from an already scheduled hearing, no small feat. Similar to SB 4, this idea will be back, we have been told as much. The association will remain engaged to make every attempt to limit damage.

These are just a few of the key issues we've been tracking. We're also working on advancing other issues that matter to our members, and those efforts are ongoing.

Overall, this legislative session has been quieter compared to the past few years of hyper focus on broadband and the services we provide. Having said that, there were some really bad ideas floated. Additionally, with a focus on wildfires and wildfire prevention, our industry has been inadvertently swept up into bills targeting "utilities". We spent the first few weeks explaining that there are different types of utilities and clarifying that our members shouldn't be included in such far-reaching legislation.

I am really grateful for our Legislative Committee. Members of the committee respond quickly with input on any questions posed about support or opposition to certain issues and the help is much appreciated. If you are interested in serving on the committee, please reach out to Mandy or contact me directly. Thank you for your continued support.

-Brant Wolf

Association Management Software & New Website

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, we are doubling down on our ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our association. We are excited to announce that we are nearly through implementing an association management platform (AMS). This project is aimed at how we manage our contacts, streamline the annual renewal process (at least for associate members), and enhance communication with our members. As an added bonus, this AMS also includes a website management platform and we continue to rebuild a simple, modern website that we will showcase to our members here very soon. Your patience is appreciated as we navigate the nuances of well, something new. It's a large undertaking for our small two-person organization!

We will provide additional information once we are ready to launch. And we are hoping to do so in May! In the meantime, we are still doing our thing at the old ota-telecom.org site (with an auto-redirect, if you should use our new "oba" moniker).

HAPPENINGS >>>

Membership News

Membership Announcements & News

→ We want to recognize our **2025 PREMIER ASSOCIATE MEMBERS!** Thank you for your elevated level of support of the Oregon Broadband Association!



→ In addition, we'd like to welcome our **new members:** ADP Resources, Charles Industries, DISH Network, DJ's Electrical, Finley Engineering, K&B Technical Solutions, LaPorte Insurance, Lynn, Old Castle Infrastructure and Wesco! Welcome to the community!

→ We See You! A quick shoutout to **MINET Fiber** who was recently presented with the Monmouth-Independence Chamber Choice Award from the local Chamber of Commerce. This award reflects MINET's commitment to providing reliable, high speed fiber internet and serving their community with excellence! So... What do you call a high five over the internet? WI-FIVE, MINET! WI-FIVE!

→ **Attention, Associate Members!** Your voice matters! Vote in the Associate Member Board Director election. We are excited to introduce two solid candidates for the Associate Member director position on the OBA Board of Directors, and we encourage you to participate in the upcoming vote. Meet the nominees!



Pictured is MINET general manager, PJ Armstrong with members of his team accepting the Monmouth-Independence Chamber Choice Award.

Incumbent, Shaun Plummer | Core Telecom Systems

Incumbent nominee, Shaun Plummer, has been a key figure in the industry and a long-time supporter of the ITA/OBA in the Northwest for 25 years. For the past 11 years, Shaun has been with Core Telecom Systems. Over the course of his industry involvement, he has actively contributed to both the OBA CO-IT and Outside Plant committees, playing a pivotal role in shaping the educational seminars. Shaun has served as the Associate Member Director on the board for the past 3 years.

Throughout his tenure, Shaun has worked closely with the majority of companies and management on the OBA Board, representing our Associate Member companies and ensuring effective communication regarding their needs and concerns. Shaun shares, "I'm eager to continue my involvement on the board for the upcoming term as the association evolves and adapts to the ongoing changes in our industry."

Nominee, Brian Burnett | ePlus Technology

Brian shares that he has worked with independent telephone companies and with OBA member companies for 30+ years and has been in the telecom space for 40. He believes in the mission of Oregon Broadband Association and especially the scholarship foundation. In 2009, his daughter was awarded a scholarship from the OTA for her under-grad education after high school and he believes this program has very positive impacts on our youth seeking higher education or trade schools. Brian shares, "I believe I will bring a wealth of technical knowledge and industry experience to the OBA board as an Associate Member Director."

Both nominees bring valuable expertise, vision, and commitment to supporting the mission of our organization. Your vote will help ensure we have the right leadership in place to guide us toward continued success. Each associate member company was emailed a link to the electronic voting form. Please reach out to Mandy if you did not see that email. And remember, only associate members are voting this time for their class representative.

ASSOCIATION, BOARD, COMMITTEE & INDUSTRY INFO >>>

Scholarship Foundation Update & Save the Dates

Scholarship Foundation Update & 2025-2026 Cycle Closed

With the application deadline behind us, the Scholarship Foundation Board will work diligently to review the applications that have been submitted. Individuals will receive a response in May and award recipients will be announced at the awards banquet during the Annual Conference on June 3.

As a reminder! The Foundation holds the annual silent auction and raffle to raise funds to support this valuable program that invests in the future of our members and their families. **We are actively seeking donations of the following types: tax deductible straight donations for scholarship funding, gift baskets and items to auction and raffle off or monetary contributions to allow us to purchase items for the fundraising efforts at the Annual Conference event.** Need ideas? We've got them! Popular items include coffee baskets, wine or liquor baskets, gourmet food baskets, anything grilling, home goods, home improvement! Maybe large hanging baskets from your favorite nursery or the latest camping gear? Reach out to us if you need more ideas, have questions on a donation or would like assistance with pick up or purchasing items. Checks and auction items may be sent directly to: OBA Scholarship Foundation - Attention: Mandy Jundt - 1149 Court Street NE, Salem, OR 97301. Thank you so much for your support!



Save the Dates & Register Now!



2025
Outside Plant
Seminar

Topics in the works include: Fiber Cleaning/Scoping, Splicing, Safety & Situational Awareness, Microtrenching, MDU Installs, Emergency Preparedness and more!

May 15-16, 2025*
Best Western | Hood River Inn

*Plan your arrival for Wednesday, May 14; our seminar will start early on Thursday morning!




2025
Central Office & Information Technologies
Seminar

November 13-14, 2025*
Best Western | Hood River Inn

*Plan your arrival for Wednesday, November 12; our seminar will start early on Thursday morning!




2025
Annual Conference

Join Us!

- +NETWORKING GOLF ACTIVITY
- +MEETING OF MEMBERS
- +SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION & RAFFLE
- +AWARDS BANQUET
- +EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

June 3-4, 2025*
Salishan Coastal Lodge | Gleneden Beach, OR

*Plan your arrival for Monday, June 2; our group activity will start early on Tuesday morning!



Keynote Speaker, Steve Brown



HAPPENINGS >>>

Association "Stuff"

Quick Reminders

- **We are still accepting nominations for the 2025 Outside Plant Employee of the Year award!** If you know of or work with any outstanding Outside Plant employees, please nominate them today! Submissions are due by end of day on Friday, April 24!
- **Associate members are encouraged to vote for their next delegate Board Director!** We'll be accepting electronic votes through May 28, but will also be collecting votes in person at the Annual Meeting of Members on June 3 during the Annual Conference.
- **We are seeking subject matter experts to educate our attendees at the Annual Conference** in June during the afternoon breakout sessions! Is this you? Are you the SME we are looking for?! Submit a speaking proposal here!

Are you looking to expand your reach and connect with our service provider members? Place your message banner in one of our newsletters or on our (coming soon) website to capture the attention of potential customers. Whether you're launching a new product, promoting a special offer, or building brand awareness, our advertising spaces are designed to promote awareness and engagement. Contact us today to find out more about our advertising opportunities and how we can help elevate your business presence.

 Let us CROW about you! We want to highlight more noteworthy information, awards, and events of our members! Or maybe you are a hobby photographer with some amazing images to share? Reach out to us, if we can feature you! 



Photos depict winter at 9000 feet for Eagle Telephone Systems!

OBA Staff

Brant Wolf

Executive Vice-President

bwolf@oba-telecom.org

Mandy Jundt

Office Manager & Member Services Coordinator

mjundt@oba-telecom.org

Officers & Board of Directors

Jessica Epley, **President-Chair** (Zipty Fiber)

Paul Hauer, **Vice-Chair (President-Elect)** (Beaver Creek Cooperative Telephone)

Rusti Lattin, **Secretary** (Eagle Telephone Systems, Inc.)

Garrin Bott, Director (Rally Networks)

Geri Fraijo, Director (Monitor Cooperative Telephone)

Erik Hoefler, Director (SCTC)

James Rennard, Director (Pioneer Connect)

Jared Wiener, Director (Lumen Technologies)

Brooke Wheeler, Director (Cascade Utilities | Reliance Connects)

Shaun Plummer, Associate Member Delegate (Core Telecom)

Heads up, folks! We're busy cooking up a shiny new website, so stay tuned!

Until then, we're still doing our thing at www.ota-telecom.org.

Keep your browsers warm! We hope to unveil the new site at the Annual Conference!