



This Week's Headlines

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June 6, 2008

MTA UPDATE

Japanese Researcher Visits Member Companies

Studying economic and community benefits from fiber networks

We keep hearing from broadband advocates that the US is falling behind in broadband deployment, ranking 15th or 17th behind other nations, including Japan, which consistently ranks in the top 5 for broadband deployment. All of that was refuted this week, at least as far as rural Minnesota is concerned. This week an information technology researcher from Japan has been visiting several MTA members to be able to advise rural communities in Japan on how to deploy broadband via fiber to the home and the economic development benefits that can result.

As a result of her research, Dr. Yoko Kawai Kurimoto, a principal of Penguin Environmental Design, found that rural Minnesota is well ahead of other states in fiber deployment. "We wondered why Minnesota is ahead," she said, "so we can bring this information and Minnesota's example to Japanese rural communities."

This week, Dr. Kawai visited Benton Cooperative Telephone Company in Rice, Consolidated Telecommunications Company in Brainerd, Federated Telephone in Chokio, Park Region Mutual Telephone Company in Underwood, and Paul Bunyan Rural Telephone Cooperative in Bemidji. As part of the research, she met with telephone company executives to discuss their decision that led to the deployment of fiber. She will also meet with city officials to discuss how the city is taking advantage of fiber optics in economic and community development. And, finally, she will meet with customers who are benefiting from the fiber network such as educators and health officials.

The visit was coordinated by the Minnesota Telecom Alliance. The academic research is funded by the Housing Research Foundation, a non-profit organization in Japan. The findings will help future planners better understand how fiber optic is woven into community development plans, such as economic development and land use plans.

The English version of Dr. Kawai's report will be finished by the end of the year. If her initial reaction to her visit is any indication, the report should be

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

Do you have an announcement for *People & Companies*? Send an e-mail (info@mnta.org) or fax (651-291-2795) to MTA.

Save The Date

MTA Fishing Day
June 10-11, 2008

MTA Golf Day
July 7, 2008

Stat of the Week

A new report from ABI Research finds more than half of all broadband users in the U.S. have some type of home network.

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Is there someone in your organization who you would like to add to the distribution list? Send their name, company, and e-mail address to info@mnta.org and we'll add them to the list.

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of great benefit to MTA as it works with the newly created Ultra-High Speed Broadband Task Force in setting state broadband policy. Rural Minnesota is not falling behind, but is leading the pack. We have a great story to tell.

Members Recommended for Broadband Task Force

The MTA has recommended two representatives for the Minnesota Ultra-High Speed Broadband Task Force that the governor will appoint. Cathy Clucas, Embarq, is the candidate recommended to represent mid-size telephone companies and Brent Christensen, Christensen Communications, is the choice for the small company representative.

Chapter 212 of the 2008 session laws included the creation of a high-speed broadband task force to examine this issue and report to the Legislature and the governor by November 2009.

Field Safety Observations Schedule Released

The MTA Safety Program has notified member companies of the summer schedule for field observation visits by the safety consultants. The visits are scheduled to run from June to August. Erik Monsos, director of safety, is urging members to identify specific areas of concerns ahead of the visits so the safety consultant can plan to cover those areas. The visits may cover a variety of safety areas, including mock OSHA inspections, ergonomic evaluations, noise monitoring, air sampling and spending time with construction crews. For more info, contact [Erik Monsos](#).

Date, Location Announced for Fall Conference

The MTA Fall Conference has been changed to October 9-10, 2008, at the Northland Inn, Brooklyn Park. The date reflects schedule changes related to MART-MTA merger. Mark your calendar and watch this publication for more details.

Deadline today for Hole Sponsorships

The MTA Golf Committee is once again offering telcos and associate members the opportunity to sponsor a hole for \$125.00. There are 36 sponsorships (tees and greens) available on a first-come first-serve basis. The **deadline for sponsorship of holes is today, Friday, June 6.**

The 35th annual event is Monday, July 7, 2008 at Crow River Country Club in Hutchinson. The \$135 fee includes golf, cart, club house facilities, hors d'oeuvres, dinner and prizes. For non-golfers, a \$40 dinner-only option is available. MTA's online registration process allows members to register, choose which players they want in their group and sponsor a hole. The entire process only takes a few minutes. To register or sponsor a hole, [click here](#)

Suppliers and telecom companies are asked to contribute prizes, gift certificates, or cash for the prize giveaways at this year's MTA Golf Day. Notify Tom Farm 651. 481-1786, tfarm@otcpas.com or Glenn Miller

Minnesota Telecom Alliance
www.mnta.org
Tel: 651-291-7311
Fax: 651-291-2795
E-mail: info@mnta.org

MTA Officers: John Finke,
Chairman; Robert K. Eddy,
Vice Chairman;
Brent J. Christensen,
Secretary-Treasurer;
Randy Young,
President/CEO

Weekly Bulletin editor:
Moses Dennis

320.235-8881, glennm@mwd-inc.com by June 20 if you wish to donate prizes.

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Qwest Wants to Raise Rates It Charges CLECs

Qwest has asked the FCC for approval to increase the rates it charges competitors to lease business lines in Minnesota, according to the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Small companies and the Public Utilities Commission disagree with Qwest's claim that it has significant competition for business customers, which is necessary to receive FCC approval to adjust the rates. Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLEC) would see a hefty increase if the request is approved, the paper reported. For example, the price for a high-capacity business line would go from \$68 a month to \$156 a month and set up cost would jump from \$88 to approximately \$627. [Read more...](#)

RFP for Next Generation 911 Available Online

The Department of Administration has notified the 9-1-1 Program Office, Department of Public Safety that the NG9-1-1 Request for Proposals will be available on their website either Friday, June 6th or Monday June 9th. To download the RFP go to: www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us If anyone needs help in downloading the RFP they can call the Helpline at 651.296.2600.

Please DO NOT contact the 9-1-1 Program office if you have questions regarding the RFP. Direct your questions to Joan Breisler, Acquisition Management Specialist, Department of Administration. The RFP will direct you on the appropriate manner to address your questions.

Verizon to Become Largest With Alltel Acquisition

Verizon Wireless has entered into an agreement to acquire Alltel Corporation from investment firm TPG Capital and GS Capital Partners, for \$5.9 billion and assume \$22.2 billion in debt. The acquisition, if approved, would make Verizon the largest wireless company with more than 80 million subscribers. Alltel has around 13 million customers in 34 states. The parties are targeting completion of the merger by the end of the year, subject to obtaining regulatory approvals. [Read more....](#)

TV, Internet and Wireless

FCC May Regulate Termination Fees for Other Services

Cable and Internet access may also be included in any order the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issues on relaxing or eliminating rules on early termination fees charged by cellular phone companies.

Chairman Kevin Martin this week said, "To the extent that the commission takes action and says that these kinds of practices are reasonable and these are not, that could have implications for other industries. "

He has come out in support of a proposal that would give the FCC, rather than state regulators, oversight of rules governing early termination fees assessed on consumers for breaking their cell phone contracts, while also imposing more limits on those charges. [Read more...](#)

Testing New Methods to Better Manage Net Traffic

Two of the largest cable companies, Time Warner and Comcast, have announced plans to test a new method of controlling Internet access for heavy users, according to media outlets. Comcast on Thursday began a 30-day test of managing bandwidth in two of its Virginia and Pennsylvania systems. The nation's largest cable company is currently being investigated by the FCC for delaying peer-to-peer file sharing traffic.

Besides controlling the flow of data, both companies are also considering rate structures based on speed with customers paying more for higher speed. [Read more...](#)

Lawsuit Settled Over Billing Third-Party Content

AT&T's wireless customers who have been billed for third-party content, such as ringtones, horoscopes and jokes, can claim refunds as part of a settlement this week of a class-action lawsuit. The other three major wireless companies face similar lawsuits. The third-party vendors solicit customers to sign up by entering their phone numbers on websites or by sending text messages, according to the Associated Press. The charges later show up unexpectedly on the customer's monthly bill. [Read more...](#)

FCC & REGULATORY FILINGS

JUNE 30: ANNUAL ICLS USE CERTIFICATION: Rate of return carriers and CETCs must file a self-certification with the FCC and USAC stating that all Interstate Common Line Support (ICLS) and Long Term Support (LTS) will be used only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which their support is intended. Failure to file this self-certification will preclude the carrier from receiving ICLS support.

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

MTA & Industry Meetings/Events This Week

June 3: Onvoy Golf Day

June 5, 6: MTA-U

Upcoming MTA & Industry Meetings/Events

June 9: MTA Legislative Committee conference call, 2:00 p.m.

June 10-11: MTA Fishing Outing, Northwest Angle Resort, Angle Inlet, MN

For a look at 12 months and more of industry events, [click here](#)

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

National Exchange Carriers Association elections: **Roger W. Jones**, a long-time partner in **Kiesling Associates LLP**, a CPA firm in West Des

Moines, Iowa, has announced he is a candidate for the NECA Board Outside Director position in 2008. NECA will distribute ballots Sept. 9 and the return deadline is Oct. 7, 2008.

Associate Members News

Editor's note: The MTA Bulletin invites associate members to submit their company's news release for publication. Due to space consideration, we will run the first paragraph and provide a link to the entire release. A link to the story must accompany the news release. If possible, submit in word format for easy editing. Send submissions to mdenns@mnta.org.

Do you have an announcement for *People & Companies*? Send an e-mail (info@mnta.org) or fax (651-291-2795) to MTA

Centennial Club Members

Thanks to the following companies for joining the MTA Centennial Club.

702 Communications

Ace Telephone Association

Albany Mutual Telephone Association

Alexicon, Inc.

Alliance Communications Cooperative, Inc.

Arvig Communication Systems

- Callaway Telephone Company, Inc.
- East Otter Tail Telephone Company
- Midwest Telephone Company
- Osakis Telephone Company
- The Peoples Telephone Company of Big Fork
- Twin Valley-Ulen Telephone Company

Badger Communications Corporation

Benton Cooperative Telephone Company

BEVCOMM

Blackduck Telephone Company

Calix

Cannon Valley Telecom, Scott & Loretta Johnson

CC & I Engineering, Inc.

Christensen Communications Company

CoBank

Consolidated Telephone Company

Corning Cable Systems

diversiCOM

- Mainstreet Communications, LLC
- Melrose Telephone Company

Dunnell Telephone Company

Embarq

Farmers Mutual Telephone Company

Finley Engineering Company, Inc.

Federated Telephone Cooperative

Garden Valley Telephone Company

Halstad Telephone Company

Hanson Communications, Inc.

- Clara City Telephone Company
- Sacred Heart Telephone Company
- Starbuck Telephone Company

- Zumbrota Telephone Company

Hector Communications, Inc.

- Arrowhead Communications
- Eagle Valley Telephone Company
- Felton Telephone Company
- Granada Telephone Company
- Loretel Systems
- Pine Island Telephone Company
- Sleepy Eye Telephone Company

HickoryTech

- Enventis

Home Telephone Company
Interstate Telecom Consulting, Inc.
Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
KM Telecom
Lakedale Communications
Larson Utilities

- Minnesota Valley Telephone Company
- Winthrop Telephone Company

Lismore Cooperative Telephone Company
Lowry Telephone Company, LLC
Manchester – Heartland Telephone Company
Martin Group
Midwest Data, LLC
Moss & Barnett
MP Nexlevel, LLC
MRV Communications
National Information Solution Cooperative
NECA
North Star Chapter Pioneer Club
NU-Telecom
Onvoy Voice Services
Olsen Thielen & Company, Ltd.
Park Region Mutual Telephone Company

- Otter Tail Telcom
- Valley Telephone Company

Paul Bunyan Rural Telephone Cooperative
PCS Technologies, Inc.
Pinnacle Publishing, LLC
Polar Communications
Red River Rural Telephone Association
Rothsay Telephone Company
Runestone Telecom Association
Sherburne Tele-Systems, Inc.

- Connections, Etc.
- NorthStar Access, LLC

Shields Environmental, Inc.
Spring Grove Communications
Suttle
TDS Telecommunications Corporation

- Arvig Telephone Company
- Bridge Water Telephone Company
- Mid-State Telephone Company
- Winsted Telephone Company

Walker and Associates
Warinner, Gesinger & Associates, LLC
West Central Telephone Association
Wikstrom Telephone Company
Winnebago Cooperative Telecom Association
Windstream Supply
Woodstock Telephone Company
