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## ACUTA eNews October 1989, Vol. 18, No. 10

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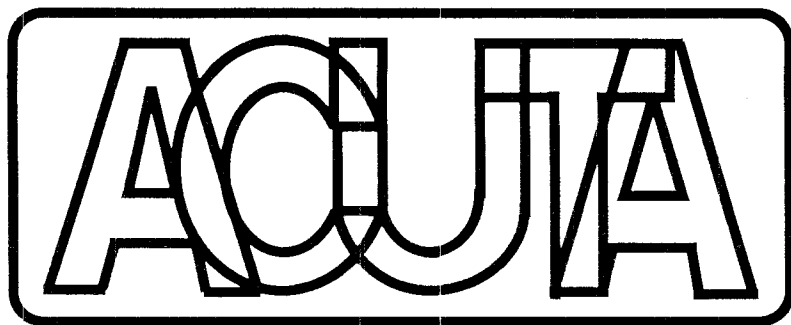


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OCTOBER 1989

# NEWS

*Association of College & University Telecommunications Administrators, Inc.*  
THE VOICE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

One of the hottest topics among ACUTA members...

## Student Services

ACUTA's 1989 spring seminar on Student Services was one of the most well-attended ACUTA events yet. Approximately 250 telecommunications managers and staff members came to Memphis to learn more about this increasingly important topic. As the seminar brochure stated, "The modern student living quarters, on or off campus, is no longer someplace to store the books and rest your head—it needs to be a technology-enhanced study area with a requirement for voice, data, video and print services."

This issue of *ACUTA News* contains two articles on student services. Dino Pezzutti of Ohio State University reports on BRUTUS (Better Registration Using Touch-tone Telephones for University Students) and Marv Eckard of the University of California at Berkeley describes his school's successful program which combines campus telephone service with residence hall student service.

If you have a student services story or a project of another kind to share with your fellow ACUTA members, please send an article to *ACUTA News*. We want to provide an information exchange and cover the topics of greatest interest. Don't hesitate to share your experiences, both positive and negative.

We want to hear from you!

### Telephone Registration at Ohio State University

*Dino Pezzutti, Region 5 Director  
Director of UNITS, Ohio State University*

Since May 1987 students at Ohio State University in Columbus have been registering for classes by means of an AT&T conversant voice system. Plans for the system coincided with completion of UNITS (University Network Integrated Telecommunications System), which included the installation of touch-tone instruments throughout campus.

Ohio State's system, known on campus as BRUTUS (Better Registration Using Touch-tone Telephones for University Students), is now handling the quarterly registration of some 49,000 students. Classes can be

(continued on page 2)

### Student Residence Hall Telephone Service: A Win/Win Program

*Marv Eckard, University of California at Berkeley  
(Region 8 Member)*

Sharing the campus telephone services with residence hall students has resulted in lower student telephone costs and a reduction in cost for faculty and staff telephone calls at the University of California at Berkeley.

**Background** - In August 1984, the campus #5 Crossbar Centrex with approximately 12,000 faculty and staff lines was replaced by DMS-100 service. The opportunities offered by this enhanced service, along with changes in the regulatory environment, led to the possibility of providing telephone service for resi-

(continued on page 3)

## **O**hio State University's touch-tone registration system now handles the quarterly registration of some 49,000 students. Classes can be scheduled not only at the Columbus campus but also at Ohio State's regional campuses.

### **BRUTUS** (from page 1)

scheduled via BRUTUS not only at the Columbus campus but also at Ohio State's regional campuses in Mansfield, Marion, Lima, Newark and Wooster, Ohio.

The BRUTUS system is updated and maintained by the Office of the University Registrar and University Systems, the administrative computing center at Ohio State. Working together, these two facilities plan and implement all system enhancements.

Here's how BRUTUS works. Prior to scheduling, each student is issued a personal access code along with a registration worksheet. When students call BRUTUS, they enter the quarter for which they want to register, their social security number, their personal access code and their scheduling request. BRUTUS uses a digitally recorded voice response system to lead the student through the registration procedure step-by-step. By entering numbers on a touch-tone phone, students can add or drop classes, choose secondary classes if a selected class is

closed, verify fee statements and check current mailing addresses. If for some reason an advisor or college office needs to speak with a student before he or she schedules, a lockout (access denial) can be placed on the student's access code until that student has seen the appropriate personnel.

James R. Tootle, assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, says the overall response to BRUTUS has been good. He commented that in the beginning there were some minor problems, but they were worked out quickly as they arose. According to Tootle, "Good planning went into it (BRUTUS) and the registrar's office has responded well to the needs of the college offices. Problems are usually corrected by the time the next quarter rolls around."

One problem that occurred in the early stages of BRUTUS had to do with courses requiring permission. There are two types of courses requiring permission to add: those that are full and those that require the permission

of the instructor. The problem was that BRUTUS was designed with only one permission feature. A student would receive an instructor's permission to add a class but the class would be full. The permission from the instructor would override the permission to add a full class, resulting in overcrowded classes. To solve this problem a second permission feature was added to BRUTUS by University Systems' programmers.

The biggest problem, according to Tootle, was getting students to adjust to the new system. "Some students, especially seniors, did not want to learn BRUTUS." But as time goes on, the students are becoming accustomed to scheduling with BRUTUS, and the new students welcome the convenience of scheduling over the phone.

Another problem involved students who missed their assigned time, or "window," to schedule through BRUTUS. These students were then coming into the college office to schedule classes, causing a backup at the registration desk. In order to solve this problem, an open "window" after the regular scheduling period has been implemented so students who miss their window have a second chance to schedule through BRUTUS.

Before BRUTUS it was not possible to require a problem student (i.e., probationary student) to come into the office to meet with a counselor. With the lockout feature, a student must meet with the proper people in order to schedule classes for the next quarter. According to Tootle, "It allows us to get a better handle on problem students that was not possible in the past."

Since January 1989, both full- and part-time students have been using BRUTUS to register for classes. In the past only students who were assessed full-time fees were allowed to make schedule changes (adds, drops) using BRUTUS. Now, thanks to the addition of On-line Fee Assessment to BRUTUS, as students make changes in

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their schedules their fees are automatically changed accordingly. In the past, part-time students were not allowed to make schedule changes using BRUTUS because there was no way to monitor a switch to full-time status. According to Thomas D. Sanfilippo, lead programmer/analyst and BRUTUS system project leader at University Systems, if a part-time student added classes making him/her a full-time student, the student's fees could not be appropriately changed. He says, "Allowing part-time students to register using BRUTUS has been appreciated by the various colleges and students alike." For example, a continuing education student (usually an off-campus student taking night courses) can register over the telephone, thus saving unnecessary trips to the registrar and the college office.

On the first day of the winter quarter in 1989, the addition of part-time student schedule changes through BRUTUS caused the computer to experience an on-line slowdown. The computer operated at 97 percent capacity, causing a slow response for users. Part of this problem was due to students making repeat calls. When students were unable to get into a class, they would continue to call BRUTUS in hopes of calling immediately after a seat had opened up. "Ten percent of the students calling BRUTUS were making repeat calls, accounting for 40 percent of the incoming calls to the system," said Sanfilippo.

In order to avoid this problem in the future, students may be limited in the number of repeat calls they can make. Also, an on-line waiting list for classes that are full may be implemented. If students try to register for a class that is full, they will be given the option of being placed on a waiting list. When an opening appears, the student at the top of the list would be automatically enrolled in the class.

In the spring quarter of 1989, a combined registration form for both summer and autumn quarters was made available. In the past, students had to register separately for the summer and autumn quarters, and this required

two separate calls to BRUTUS.

In the future students may be allowed to pay fees through BRUTUS by entering their credit card numbers, making registration even more convenient.

How do students feel about the BRUTUS registration system? The general response has been very positive. Students no longer have to make extra trips between their college office and the registrar's office and therefore save time previously spent waiting in lines. According to Tim Gray, a senior at Ohio State, the best thing about BRUTUS is "being able to schedule at my own convenience instead of having to go through the hassle of physical registration."

In the two years that BRUTUS has been in service, it has proven to be a very successful energy- and time-saving tool for the students, faculty and staff of Ohio State University.

#### Win/Win Program (from page 1)

dence hall students. Based upon the experiences of other institutions, we realized that additional information and careful planning was critical before this program could be implemented.

Although the 2,400 residence hall telephone lines were connected to the campus Centrex system, the 4,900 residence hall students obtained their basic service directly from Pacific Bell, much like a private residence. Each residence hall room had one contact student as the customer of record for telephone service. This necessitated the contact student to collect monies from roommates for the cost of services used on the telephone line. Another drawback to the arrangement was the delay in establishing telephone service each semester for incoming residence hall students.

#### Planning Phase

Our initial step was a feasibility study of the potential fiscal impact of sharing telephone services. This study, conducted in 1986, indicated that

utilizing the least cost routing on the campus Centrex system would reduce costs. The study revealed that student and faculty/staff calling patterns would allow for optimization of the campus network. The calling patterns were:

#### WATS - INTRA LATA CALLS

	Faculty/Staff	Students
Day	66%	17%
Evening	13%	55%
Night	21%	28%

#### F/X - INTRA LATA CALLS

	Faculty/Staff	Students
Day	68%	21%
Evening	12%	55%
Night	20%	24%

#### PRISM - INTER LATA CALLS

	Faculty/Staff	Students
Day	67%	13%
Evening	11%	52%
Night	22%	35%

The anticipated savings for students was \$100,000, and the cost reduction in telephone charges for faculty and staff was another \$100,000. The criteria called for rates at least five percent less than current rates for Direct Distance Dialing.

A review of the regulatory, policy and political issues was also conducted to identify potential problems. This review, along with the results of a survey of residence hall students, indicated that this program was highly desirable for the campus. Students expressed a desire for lower rates and service that offered convenience of use. More than 39 percent of students used some form of authorization code or calling card in an attempt to lower their telephone costs. More than 78 percent of the students expressed a desire for an individual billing; billing of telephone costs to the contact student was viewed as a major problem, and collecting monies from roommates for telephone calls was a burden for many of the contact students.

Based upon the findings of the feasibility study and review of service issues, it was determined that the program should be implemented on the

Berkeley campus. The 1987 fall semester was set as the target date.

## Implementation Phase

The initial step of the implementation plan was to establish residence hall telephone service as an auxiliary enterprise. Telephone services provided by the enterprise would include:

- 1) Monthly dial tone service
- 2) Local and long distance calling
- 3) Available optional line features
- 4) Coordination for line installation, repair and maintenance
- 5) Billing, cashing and accounting for all services
- 6) Campus customer services.

The enterprise was designed to operate on a self-sustaining basis using revenue for services to cover operating costs. An operating budget of \$1.3 million with 3 FTE was established for the service.

One of the first steps in the implementation process was to present the proposed service to the Resident Hall Student Presidents' Council. The program was outlined as lower telephone costs, individual student billing, campus access for billing or service resolution, and potential service enhancements such as data networks.

This presentation, along with the development of informational packets, telephone services handbooks, service agreements, etc., was critical to the success of the program. **Information received from other universities in the Association of College and University Telecommunications Administrators (ACUTA) was extremely helpful in this process.**

Our next steps included efforts to convert the 2,400 Centrex lines from tariff Dormitory Service Option C to Option A, to establish a new class of service for residence telephone lines, to initiate the authorization code feature, to load the authorization code assignment capability into the campus CENPAC Centrex management data base system, to establish the residence hall dialing plan and to add these lines to the existing campus Centrex least cost routing system.

The conversion of the lines from Option C to Option A involved a disconnect/reconnect effort by Pacific Bell and was accomplished over a weekend in August 1987, before the start of the fall semester. The new class of service for the residence lines was established to allow the following without use of an authorization code:

- On-campus calling, five-digit dialing
- Zone 1 calling
- Receipt of incoming calls, including collect calls
- 911 Emergency reporting
- Dialing access to toll free numbers (e.g., 950, 800, etc.).

A seven-digit authorization code was needed to place the following types of calls:

- Intra-Lata calls, outside Zone 1
- Inter-Lata calls
- All calls utilizing operator services, including directory assistance for Inter- and Intra-Lata calling.

The authorization code feature was already established on the administrative side of the Centrex system. To reduce the potential misuse of campus authorization codes by students, the residence hall authorization code feature was modified so it could only be used on a line with the residence class of service.

The authorization code assignment capability was added to the existing CENPAC Centrex management system used by the university. This allowed the telecommunications office to assign and control the activation/deactivation of authorization codes in a more timely manner.

The dialing plan established for the residence hall lines was the next step, and that definition included the following:

- On-campus calling: 2-XXXX or 3-XXXX
- Local, Zone 1 calling: 9-XXX-XXXX, 950-XXXX, 800-XXX-XXXX, and 9-911.
- All other calls: 9-Telephone number (411 to International) - Tone Prompt-XXXXXXX (authorization code).

The campus DMS-100 least cost routing system was further defined to accept routing of the residence hall lines over the existing routing table. The defined network included the following service:

- Intra-Lata FEX services

- Intra-Lata WATS services
- Inter-Lata Prism services
- International Services.

Since most of the additional student traffic was in the evenings and on weekends, no additional trunks or circuits were added at cutover. Subsequent traffic studies showed the need to expand the Inter-Lata trunks from three T-1s to four T-1s.

Concurrently, a service bureau was selected to process the Station Message Detail Report (SMDR), print bills and maintain individual student account records. An off-campus service bureau was chosen rather than an in-house system. The major reason for this choice was the minimal start-up time required to implement this service versus the time required to develop and implement in-house software programs.

## First Year Experiences

The billing service was initially established as a PC-based system. Transaction and data base updates to the vendor's mainframe were accomplished via dial-up modem. This decision led to processing problems as the data base grew to 28 floppy disks. Information about a particular student's account might be needed at the time the data base was either being updated with payments or downloaded to the mainframe, resulting in response delays. The change-over to an on-line system with the service bureau in our second year of operations resolved this problem. The operation currently has real-time access to payment records, billing cycles and student account status.

Information packets were mailed to incoming residence hall students at their homes in the summer. The students were asked to complete and return their applications for telephone service prior to the start of the fall semester. The intent was to allow students to have long distance dialing capability on their arrival at the residence hall. This effort did not provide the benefit perceived, due to the large number of students moving from room

to room during the first few weeks of the semester. Since each authorization code was tied to a specific telephone number for billing purposes, and each telephone number was dedicated to a specific room, the billing data base generated from these initial records was not up-to-date and caused delays in reassignments of authorization codes.

One of the immediate benefits of the program was the student being able to walk into a residence hall room and find a working telephone line. The student only needed to plug a telephone into the modular jack to make room-to-room calls and campus calls, and to receive incoming calls. With the assignment of an authorization code, a residence hall student was able to make toll calls immediately. This was a vast improvement over the three-day delay for telephone service that students experienced with the prior direct Pac Bell service.

### First Year Results

During the first year of service the \$100,000 savings target for students was met, and the reduction in campus telecommunications fixed costs exceeded \$100,000. Students realized a savings of approximately 12 percent per month in telephone costs. The control of payments for telephone services also exceeded expectations with a bad debt of less than one percent. The average number of student accounts was 4,400 per semester. This represented nearly 90 percent of the students in residence halls. The optimization of the campus network by adding the student evening and weekend traffic had a major positive impact on campus usage costs. The average cost per minute for campus Inter-Lata calls dropped by nearly 28 percent. Each residence hall telephone line carried an average of 378 minutes of Intra-Lata traffic, 218 minutes of Inter-Lata traffic, and 10 minutes of international traffic per month. This was represented by an average 95 calls per line per month. The average monthly bill per student account was \$41.

### Second Year Activities

This year we added an alternative operator service on the residence hall lines. The service is being offered so visitors and students without an authorization code can place a collect call on the residence hall line or charge a call to a bank card. This feature also enhances the campus Conference Marketing Program by providing phone service in residence hall rooms used for conferences during the summer. Conference attendees have phone service upon arrival and can make toll calls using bank cards. Billing is handled directly by the alternative operator service.

The telecommunications unit is currently developing long-term plans to address the major campus building program that will increase the number of residence telephone lines by 375 lines in 1990 and another 1,500 lines by 2005. Plans are also underway to provide new opportunities and services for residence hall students. The provision of data services and voice mail are examples of two projects being reviewed.

It is clear that careful planning was the key to the program's success. The proactive approach of using the experiences of other universities in the development of policies and procedures helped lay the foundation for residence hall telephone service. Management of the service and planning for the future will be based upon our ability to continue to learn from our experiences and address the needs of our users, a true win/win opportunity.

*Editor's Note: Marv Eckard is the Associate Director of Communication Services for the University of California at Berkeley, with responsibilities for three major campus service units: Telecommunications, Reprographics and Mail Services. Prior to assuming this role, he was the Telecommunication Manager during the campus cutover to the DMS-100 system.*

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR ACUTA REGION?



**REGION 1** consists of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont...

**REGION 2** consists of the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia...

**REGION 3** consists of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands...

**REGION 4** consists of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas...

**REGION 5** consists of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin...

**REGION 6** consists of the Provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan and the Northwest and Yukon Territories...

**REGION 7** consists of Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming...

**REGION 8** consists of California, Hawaii, Nevada and the Territories of American Samoa and Guam.



## Administrative Director's Office

*Del Combs, Administrative Director*

Toronto in early October is beautiful! Add to that a final season-ending weekend of baseball in the Dome to decide the league championship and a hit dinner-theatre show at Second City and you have the perfect setting for ACUTA's just-concluded fall seminar. Toronto is an ultra-modern, clean and safe city which our 120 attendees thoroughly enjoyed.

It has been several years since I have witnessed as much informal networking outside the formal sessions. Meals, coffee breaks and the hospitality suite (what a view of the city from atop the Hilton International Hotel!) were an extension of the classroom for discussions. John Powers, our speaker, gave a superb presentation on wiring and cabling but the real

chemistry for this extremely successful seminar was the make-up of the attendees. Besides managers and directors, there was an abundance of wire and cable "experts" from various telecommunications departmental staffs who added a lot of flavor and color (interpreted as experience and conversation) to what is sometimes a dry subject. This was not a dry subject in Toronto. In fact, John Powers was much like an ole regular Baptist preacher at the end of the two-and-one-half-day seminar. The cooks and food servers had to "sing him down" a little after noon on Wednesday (our last day) so the attendees would have time to eat before running to the airport.

For those of you who are not familiar with "singing down an ole regular Baptist preacher," I'll explain. Many preachers—and there could be as many as seven or eight that would preach from 9:00 in the morning until 1:00 or 2:00 in the afternoon—would get so wound up that the congrega-

tion would have to sing a song (or two) to "drown out" the preacher to get him to sit down and stop preaching. In Toronto, the cooks and servers became the congregation to stop J.P. before everyone missed their lunch and plane. In plain language, an excellent job, John.

I'm sure Mal Reader, our longtime program chair, had much to do with the outstanding program. Of course our seminar owes much of its success to the outstanding support of our exhibitors and sponsors. We had a few new companies and several steady and dependable companies of past events that were in attendance. Thanks again from all of ACUTA.

In the near future—hopefully by Scottsdale in January 1990—look for the announcement of ACUTA sportswear and accessories that will be available for purchase. A few samples (jackets, golf shirts and hats) were given away as door prizes in Toronto and were proudly worn by the winners.

## A Personal Note

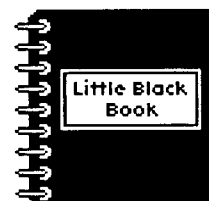
*Pat Paul, Cornell University*

After serving as Membership Chair for four years, I have been elected Secretary and will be turning over the membership duties to Bonnie Johnson of the University of Kentucky, our new Membership Chair.

I look forward to fulfilling my new responsibilities and have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure as Membership Chair. Probably the most "fun" part was the First Timers' Contest we started three years ago to help acclimate newcomers at the summer conference. Talking to people interested in joining ACUTA was always rewarding, but receiving the application meant seeing ACUTA grow. Bonnie will be working more closely with the eight Region Directors to expand our membership through personal contact with an additional emphasis in retaining the members we already have. I, for one, think this will be much more effective than the more impersonal annual membership drive approach we've used in the past.

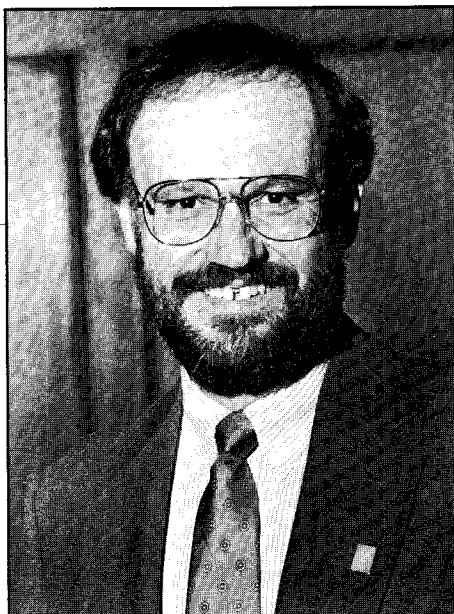
The transition will be completed soon and, based on the excitement Bonnie's already shown, I'm sure she will be a very successful and effective Membership Chair.

Good luck, Bonnie!



## 1989-90 ACUTA MEMBERSHIP ROSTER IS ON ITS WAY!

The 1989-90 ACUTA Membership Roster will soon be in members' mailboxes. This is one of the many benefits of ACUTA membership (you also receive a subscription to the monthly newsletter, discounts on registration fees, and advance information on ACUTA events). For a membership application, call ACUTA Headquarters at (606) 252-2882.



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mike Grunder,  
Yale University

Up above the clouds at 30,000 feet I'm heading for Scottsdale to meet Administrative Director Del Combs to tie up all the loose ends for our January seminar. New Haven airport was fogged in. LaGuardia, too. A quick ticket change and I drove up to Hartford airport to try again.

In line for check-in and here comes a guy with a microphone, a cameraman and a big happy face. At last, I'm gonna be famous!

"Excuse me, sir, can you answer a couple questions?"

"Sure, happy to." (Lights, camera, action.)

"Does it bother you to be flying these days with all the recent crashes and explosions?"

(Gulp) "Well, yes, a little."

"How do you handle it?"

(Smile) "I try not to think about it (long pregnant pause) which isn't real easy with guys like you around."

"Why, thank you, sir. Have a nice flight."

"Yeah, sure."

So, on to Scottsdale; and next week the Toronto seminar. Everything appears to be in fine shape for that. But there's always something left to do, something unexpected, something forgotten. It's what makes it such hard work and, I would contend, what makes it so much fun.

I just read the August newsletter again. The day by day write-up of the Philadelphia conference was super and brought home this point again. So much good work by so many good people! (Have you ever cleaned out your file cabinet and been astounded at the amount of work you've accomplished over the last few years? Try it sometime. It's great. Unless of course...)

Bonnie Johnson from the University of Kentucky has joined the Board as Membership Chair. She's working hard on the transition with former Membership Chair Pat Paul (now ACUTA Secretary). On the top of Bonnie's agenda is to work closely with the Regional Directors and our new state and province co-

ordinators on an effective membership drive. Bonnie has "hit the floor running" and all the officers and Board are enthused with her progress to date.

The Board had its first telephone conference call of the year the other day. We meet by phone on the first Thursday of each month, so if you have an issue or question for the Board, call your Regional Director or one of the officers and we'll see what we can do. This month's call was a success except for the medical expenses associated with having phones surgically removed from so many ears. Future calls will be shorter. Minutes of these calls are available to voting members, by the way; just call the Lexington office.

Kia Malott of Southern Illinois University has agreed to serve an additional term as Past President after the sad passing of Bill Morris. Kia's primary responsibility, besides advising me and the other officers on "things Presidential," is to chair the Incorporation and Bylaws Committee. Their important work is well underway with a hoped for completion date of January 1990 (for the Scottsdale Board meeting). The committee's preliminary agenda was outlined in the August newsletter and update reports will appear in future editions. Questions or comments can be directed to Kia or to your regional director.

Oops, rough air. "Steward! Another cold one, please..."



# Focus on ACUTA News:●

***The newsletter you're reading is produced at ACUTA's new administrative office in Lexington, Kentucky, where a full-time editor is employed to write, edit and design publications. This wasn't always the case, however. For many years the newsletter was produced by a dedicated volunteer who continues to give her time and energy to ACUTA.***

***We're marking the transition from volunteer editor to full-time staff member by recognizing and applauding the first editor of ACUTA News: Ruth Michalecki.***

***Ruth is Director of Telecommunications at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, a position she has held for 31 years. She's responsible for voice communications and information transport facilities, which includes administrative and student services. Her work for the university and her work for ACUTA mesh nicely; through ACUTA, Ruth has networked with many other schools and learned what they are doing, and who and what services they use. "This keeps me from re-inventing the wheel," she says. "It's always nice to know you can bounce new ideas off someone else involved with the same kind of telecom services as you have."***

***ACUTA News editor Nanci Unger caught Ruth during a rare slow moment and asked her to reflect on ACUTA then and now.***

***How did you first become involved with ACUTA?***

I first heard about ACUTA from Bob Devenish, one of the association's early founders. I had attended a meeting of the State Directors of Telecommunications, now known as NASTD. The meeting was held in Madison, Wisconsin, and Bob was a guest at the sessions. At that time I was (and still am) a member of NASTD through our Nebraska State Division of Communications. Bob soon

learned I was from the University of Nebraska and literally raked me over the coals because I was not a member of ACUTA. Of course, I never knew such an association even existed and I wasn't sure I wanted any part of it anyway. Bob finally got a commitment from me to attend the annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, that year (1976).

***Tell us about the days when ACUTA was first organized. How has the association changed through the years?***

Bob Devenish was one of the founders of ACUTA in 1971, and he was still active in the association in 1976. Doug Brummel from Rochester University was the incoming president. Dorothy Heinecke was the outgoing president. We had regional directors, and of course we had Mal Reader back then, also! Mal is the only ACUTA member who has served two terms as president, past president and conference host.

Attendance was very small at the early conferences. In fact, we often had to round up spouses and hotel staff to fill a room for a keynote speaker, to avoid embarrassment to both the speaker and ACUTA. Sessions were conducted for the most part by members, because we couldn't afford to pay the speaker fees or expenses. Usually the host institution helped cover some of the costs.

Some of the early topics of interest included billing systems, telephone directories, operator training, how to read the Bell bills, radio communications and optimization of WATS. Really, the only university that was their own telco was Duke, and Norm Sefton conducted sessions covering their operation.

ACUTA has changed through the years, as all successful operations must change to continue to grow. The most obvious change has been the establishment of ACUTA Headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky. The membership has increased dramatically since deregulation and divestiture — in fact, I have often

thought D&D contributed more than anything to the growth of ACUTA. Only a few members can remember when we originally had vendor exhibits in the earlier days of ACUTA, and then we went through a period of no exhibitors, full circle to larger and larger exhibit areas. In the early days we would have a regional seminar or maybe two between the annual conferences, and now we have three seminars in addition to the conference.

My memory is vague on when this happened, but several years ago the Board voted to permit the appointed chairs of finance, program and membership to have voting rights on the Board. Prior to that, they were not allowed to vote on Board actions.

One thing has not changed, however. ACUTA was founded on the premise of being a network of people. I still believe that is the goal of the membership, and I firmly believe the network is there for the members making an effort to meet and know one another. For me, that is the value of ACUTA!

***When did you begin editing and producing the newsletter?***

At my first ACUTA meeting, the major concern expressed by the few members there was the lack of a newsletter to keep the members together between conferences. I had never been involved in such a project, but it seemed to me an ideal opportunity to become an active participant in the association. I immediately asked the incoming president if I could try to produce a newsletter. He was astounded at the audacity of this newcomer from Nebraska thinking she could join the association and get involved in a major project before she knew anything about the group. Well, I have never been one to gracefully back off from something I really want to do, so I kept pestering him and everyone else during my week in Charlotte. I left without a yes or a no. I started a telephone campaign and finally someone said, "Well, we have no

# Then and Now

**A Talk with Ruth Michalecki, the First ACUTA News Editor**

one else willing to take on the newsletter, let her try!"

I worked with our university printers and between us we developed the original format of the newsletter. It has changed now of course, and that is to be expected with a new editor and a new style of writing.

The mission of *ACUTA News* is to provide a communications tool for our members, keeping them informed as to the latest regulatory information and technology updates, and what their fellow members are doing. I tried to cover items of interest to our members, and I determined what was important by the number of calls I would receive from members on a certain topic. *ACUTA News* is the voice of the members. The early editions were fairly crude; in fact, they were pretty awful, but as I gained experience the newsletter became more professional in appearance and writing style. Don Wiley, publisher of *Communication News*, paid me the best compliment when he said *ACUTA News* was the best of the user group newsletters — it was written for the members, with their interests in mind.

## ***What prompted you to begin teaching the workshops?***

The "Understanding Telecommunications" workshop was a dream of several of the Board members for years before it was developed. The job of managing telecommunications is still a fairly new profession, and it was an unknown profession in those days. The only training you could get was by the seat of your pants — it was like learning to swim by being tossed in the pool, and you either made it or you drowned. In addition, the manager or director of telecom might get permission to attend a conference or seminar, but their staff never had any training. We were committed to provide workshops at a low (or no) cost to our member institutions, holding them on the campus to avoid site costs and using our own members as

workshop instructors.

We hired a consultant to develop a novice course for us. We interviewed him, outlined our concepts of the program and he agreed to develop the course material and train the instructors. The consultant's materials didn't meet our expectations, so the Board put together the program outline during a seminar in San Diego. Steve Merrill and I developed course materials and overheads from the outline, and we conducted the first session of the workshop in Orlando. Bill Morris, Mal Reader, Jim Dronsfield and other Board members attended the session. They made suggestions for improving the material, it was changed (and is still changed as technology and regulations change) and we held a few more sessions during the next year or so. It was first offered as a full-day session during the annual conference in Banff, Canada, and has continued to be a full-day session at the conference each year.

Steve Merrill and I conducted the program together until he left the University of Utah. I conducted the workshop myself at several locations, and then Coley Burton and Howard Lowell became co-teachers of the program. I believe the Board intends to involve more Board members in the workshops as instructors.

## ***In addition to the newsletter and workshops, in what other ways are you involved with ACUTA?***

I am not involved with ACUTA in any official role any longer. I still help Mal Reader with developing the seminar and conference programs, and I am still a member of the association. I am still writing "Party Line" for the newsletter, but I miss putting the newsletter together from start to finish.

## ***In July at the annual ACUTA conference you were honored with the Board of Directors Award. What were your thoughts when you received this honor?***

Probably my biggest thought when I heard my name called was utter amazement. I have always enjoyed the support of the members, and I really love doing the workshops. My sense of pride and achievement in these workshops is hard to describe. It is a really great feeling to know you are reaching someone during the workshops and instilling a sense of enthusiasm for their job. We get so many thank you letters and receive so many accolades for the workshops, they are a reward unto themselves.

I felt the award signified a continued interest by the Board members in the introductory workshop and a commitment on their part to continue this effort to add to the professional development of all our members.

## ***What is your fondest memory of ACUTA?***

My fondest memory of ACUTA has to be the members. I have made many friends over the years in ACUTA. The workshops have played an important role in my feelings toward the association, along with the responsibility of developing the *ACUTA News*; keeping it going and watching it grow in acceptance by the members added to my feelings. The annual conference during my year as president is a fond memory — we were at Banff, Canada, that year. Working with Mal Reader over the years, seeing members that I talked into joining ACUTA become active Board members (such as Donna Powell and Paula Loendorf), sharing thoughts with Chris Moore, getting to know Dino Pezzutti and his wife, and far too many others to mention here, but never overlooked in my mind. As I said, my fondest memories involve the members.

## ***What do you feel is the greatest benefit of ACUTA membership?***

The networking of people. I hope that part never changes.



# W

## WE WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS...

The deadline for articles and information submitted to **ACUTA News** is the 20th of the month prior to the month of publication. Please contribute to your monthly newsletter! Send material to Nanci Unger, ACUTA, Suite 1810, Lexington Financial Center, 250 West Main Street, Lexington, KY 40507.



USER  
GROUP  
NEWS

## Ericsson User Group Meeting Scheduled

*Linda Bogden-Stubbs, SUNY Health  
Science Center*

A national user group meeting hosted by Ericsson Business Communications will be held Thursday and Friday, October 26 and 27, in Long Beach, California. The meeting will be held on the Queen Mary, which is docked there. Ericsson will provide most of the meals, and a special rate has been negotiated for accommodations. Several Ericsson executives from Sweden will be attending the meeting, including Rolf Ericsson. Among the topics to be addressed are the state of the telecommunications industry worldwide; Ericsson's ISDN migration strategy; an overview of the Australian ISDN field trials; and a MD110 ISDN Primary Rate Interface demo. For more information, call Joyce Donovan at (508) 624-5000.

Ericsson has also announced a reorganization. The company has been consolidated into two regions: East and West. John McDonald will head the East and Bill McGarrity the West. Both individuals will be responsible for all sales, service and implementation functions.

*Editor's Note: This information was received at press time. We hope to publish a report on the meeting in a future issue of ACUTA News.*

## User Groups

*Pat Paul, Cornell University*

I have coordinated the PBX User Group sessions at our annual summer conference for the past three years. In that period I have tried to provide momentum that continues between these annual sessions, but it has been extremely difficult. As we all know too well, developing new programs takes a lot of time—a commodity that's definitely in short supply for all of us.

Nonetheless, I know there has been progress over the three-year period. The coordination of most of the individual groups — AT&T, Ericsson, GTE, InteCom, NEC, Northern Telecom and ROLM — moved from Board members to the general membership after the first year and quite a few of these people have continued in that capacity for a second year. That was one goal met.

The goal I set last year was to establish a monthly "User Group" column in this newsletter and keep it filled. That was tougher, but we made it. Irrespective of who the individual user group coordinator is, you're all invited and indeed **encouraged** to submit user group information for publication at any time. Let your colleagues know when the manufacturer of your PBX is having user group meetings, and when you or someone on your staff attends, send a few notes to Lexington for the column. What new "stuff" is coming from the manufacturer? How have you/your staff "innovated" to overcome an inherent software or hardware shortcoming or used something in a unique manner? What's bugging you about the product or service? (Get your colleagues behind you and maybe collectively you **can** make a difference!)

Maybe you just need information and are frustrated because you can't get what you need. It's perfectly OK to use the column to ask questions. Let's say your management decides it's best to put non-Brand X voice mail behind a Brand X switch and you want to know what to expect. I'll bet if you write in, someone will let you know more than you could ever find out from your vendor! I'll get off my soapbox now; I think you get the idea.

My third goal was to transfer the role I was playing to a non-Board member for 1989-90. Ferrell Mallory of Brigham Young University has graciously agreed to take over the role of User Group Coordinator. Ferrell helped coordinate the ROLM group last year and took it over this year. If you need to reach Ferrell, his telephone number is 801-378-7387. Information for the column can either be sent to him or directly to the ACUTA office in Lexington; just note that it is information for the user group column.

Working to develop the PBX user groups was a start. Many of you want additional user groups and we would like to accommodate a few more groups (hopefully) next year. We do read your comments and try to respond to them.

There are a few reports from the summer meetings still outstanding from the ACUTA moderators, and I hope to be able to summarize those seven sessions for you next month. I've enjoyed coordinating the PBX user groups and know Ferrell will bring fresh ideas and additional momentum to the effort over the coming year. Thanks to all of you out there who helped me out the past three years; I couldn't have done it without you!

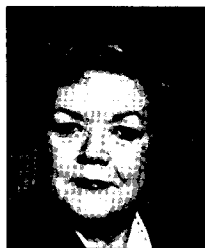
**Upcoming AT&T Joint System 75/System 85 National User Group Meeting  
November 6-9, 1989, in San Francisco**

**Contact: Ed Fontenot, Rockefeller Group/NYC - (212) 698-8770  
Or Call the "Information Line" - (201) 658-8386**



# W

hat do you do when you have the blues? According to a recent poll from the Roper Organization, most Americans reach for the phone. In fact, more respondents said they would call a friend (44%) rather than visit one (36%).



## PARTY LINE

*Ruth Michalecki,  
University of  
Nebraska*

Henry Kissinger once said, "There can't be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full." For some strange reason, that seems to fit my week to a "T."

Last week found me in Dallas, Texas, where I attended a BCR course conducted by the Lido Organization. It was unusual for me because the participants were from private corporations and the military. I was the only person there from higher education. You get a different perception when you listen to non-university telecom managers discuss issues.

I had the privilege of visiting the University of Kansas at Lawrence on September 26. I presented a check to the university on behalf of ICA for scholarships to students enrolled in their graduate telecommunications program. I am on their advisory board as the ICA member. It is interesting to see what the various universities are doing in their degree programs in telecommunications. I serve as the ICA representative for the Kansas program and for the University of Missouri-Kansas City program. At Kansas, they do a lot of major research with various telecom-related industries. Students work as interns during the summer months at places like AT&T labs, COMDISCO, NCR and others, doing applied research; then they bring the research project back to the university and continue to work on the project as part of their course work. Many of the doctoral graduates of the Kansas program go on to become professors at other institutions in their telecom programs. Just think, in 1972 the first telecommunications program was established at the University of Colorado-Boulder, and now some 19 years later there are more than 80 universities offering telecommunications degrees.

And to round out my busy week, tomorrow (October 1) I am flying to Chicago for the day to attend the ICA Academic Development meeting. Good thing I am young enough to take all this activity!

We have been anxiously awaiting a new feature called "Calling Name Display" available on the Northern Telecom DMS-100. It wasn't that we so much wanted to display a calling name as we wanted to block (in some cases) the line number calling from a called telephone with a display set. We have some areas that want to keep their private numbers private and dislike having their number displayed. To our knowledge, Northern has no immediate plans for blocking line number display on individual cases.

I was thinking about this problem when I read Victor Toth in the BCR September issue on Telecom Privacy. He says it is a good time to take note of the emerging and worthwhile trend toward heightened sensitivity for more personal and societal concerns. Included in his list of the issues attracting attention in this area were:

- Determining whether restrictions should be established on the delivery, receipt and/or use of calling party name and number information.
- Setting guidelines for the conduct of telephone monitoring practices.

We are all aware of some employers' activity in monitoring employees' telephone use, always a kind of gray area. If legislation is passed, it will at least help remove the cloud of uncertainty for both sides.

Using the telephone for advertising or other solicitations is being looked at by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce (H.R. 2921). If passed, the bill would make it unlawful for any person to use a facsimile machine or electronic device to send unsolicited advertisements to any person who objects to receiving such unsolicited material; or to use an autodialer to transmit any prerecorded telephone solicitation to a person who objects to receiving such solicitations.

The article goes on to cover all the pros and cons of the automatic number iden-

tification display issue and the rights to privacy issue being battled about. In our case, some of the offices complaining about the display of their line number have a definite problem. People wishing to call offices such as EEO, Sexual Harassment Line, or the Ombudsman and remain anonymous are now concerned about the lack of privacy. On the other hand, calling number display can be very helpful at a departmental answering point. Guess you can't win them all.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

A bit of trivia for your consideration — according to the Corporate Staffing Group and the First Search in Chicago (both are executive recruiting firms), the degree of choice in corporate telecommunications management is the MBA. The second choice is the MS in telecommunications, with an MA or MPA in telecom policy or public administration with a telecom emphasis rated high.

Although some carriers and RBOCs still hire people without a degree, to really make it in the corporate world you will require a degree.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

While I was at the University of Kansas I took some time to visit their telecommunications department. Jan Weller is the telecom director and she has a super staff and some very attractive offices. Their switch is the AT&T System 85, and they are the control or switching site for some statewide applications that are worthy of a story. It was great seeing some of my former students at the introductory workshops and visiting with them. Dewey Allaire is still in the department and is currently working on a disaster recovery plan for the university telecom/computer departments. The University of Kansas is a beautiful campus with lovely rolling hills, majestic trees and outstanding landscaping. I was impressed with the campus, the telecom department and the telecommunications degree program. I promise



**IMPORTANT NUMBERS FOR ACUTA HEADQUARTERS**  
**Telephone: (606) 252-2882 • Fax: (606) 252-5673**  
**(Keep 'em handy!)**

to follow through with a story on the telecom operation at a later date.



Our story of the month concerns an international student. He received his first telephone bill from our department, and the amount due was several thousand dollars. His calls were all to one of three numbers in Malaysia, with each call lasting one minute. His calls would start at 5 p.m., then 5:01 p.m., 5:02 p.m., 5:03 p.m., etc. He would average 35 to 40 one-minute calls to the same number during the same 35-40 minute time period. His bill covered pages of one-minute calls. He had no calls for any time longer than one minute.

When he received his bill, he came to the office and said we couldn't bill him for any call of one minute or less. He maintained he couldn't get a clear connection (not a single one during the entire month) and had therefore never been able to complete a call. It seems he was a student at another university in the United States where they didn't bill for calls of one minute or less and he had developed a method of placing a series of calls, saying one or two brief words, hanging up, recalling the number, going through this entire exercise of dialing, speaking a brief word or so, hanging up, and repeating the entire process 35 or 40 times each night. Incredible!



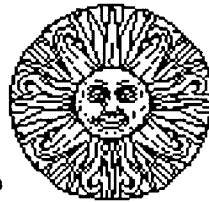
Since our last conference was in Philadelphia, I'll have to tell you a story about when Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was scheduled to speak in that city at the Town Hall. The Bishop decided to walk to the Town Hall from his hotel, even though he was unfamiliar with the city. Sure enough, he became lost and was forced to ask some boys to direct him to his destination. One of them asked the Bishop, "What are you going to do there?" "I'm going to give a lecture," replied the Bishop. "About what?" "On how to get to heaven. Would you like to come along?" "Are you kidding?" said

the boy. "You don't even know how to get to the Town Hall!"

And one more — the manager asked his secretary, "Why don't you ever answer the telephone?" "Why should I?" the secretary responded. "Nine times out of ten, it's for you!"

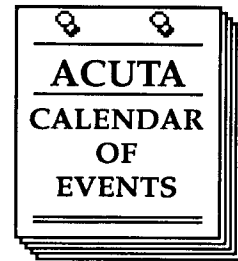


See you next month with news about a seminar I am attending on "Networks in the 1990s: Six Trends." It will be held in Washington, D.C., and will focus on Next Generation Networks. I am looking forward to learning about the new networking technologies, and to visiting Washington, D.C.



## **WARM UP YOUR WINTER IN SCOTTSDALE JANUARY 14-17, 1990**

According to the U.S. Weather Service, Scottsdale has more sun-filled days than any other city in the United States, and January temperatures average 51 degrees (ranging from 38 to 65 degrees throughout the day). Make plans now to get a taste of the Old West this winter! For more information on the Scottsdale Seminar, call the ACUTA office at (606) 252-2882.



### **PLAN TO ATTEND!**

• **Winter Seminar  
in Scottsdale, Arizona**  
 January 14-17, 1990  
 Topic: Telecommunication  
 Project Planning,  
 Implementation  
 and Impacts  
 Speaker: Phillip Beidelman

• **Spring Seminar  
in Las Vegas, Nevada**  
 April 8-11, 1990  
 Topic: Voice, Data  
 and Video Networks  
 Speaker: Lynn DeNoia

• **Summer Conference  
in Orlando, Florida**  
 July 15-19, 1990  
 Sessions on  
 Management Topics,  
 Regulatory Issues,  
 Professional Growth,  
 Voice, Data, and Video  
 Subjects and more

• **Fall Seminar  
in Portland, Oregon**  
 October 14-17, 1990  
 Topic: Case Studies on  
 Telecommunications  
 Management  
 Information Systems