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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Having had a few days to reflect on the annual conference at Snowbird, Utah in August, I recall an increasing number of new faces. Those who have been members of ACUTA for several years have had the most influence on conferences in the planning stage primarily because of the feedback they have provided. ACUTA now has well over 200 members. For the past year Connie Gentry has been working on the 1979 Conference in Atlanta. Now is your chance to help her and other Workshop and Conference Hosts develop programs that would be valuable to you personally. Connie has developed a questionnaire that will allow you to voice your ideas whether you're the newest member or a seasoned veteran, whether you've been to conferences and workshops or not, whether you are a neophyte to the telecommunications business or a skilled administrator.

When you receive yours in the ACUTA NEWS, take a few seconds to let her know how she can provide the learning opportunity you want.

For those who wonder whether they should consider Interconnect or why they shouldn't, Ferris State College in Big Rapids, Michigan is hosting a Workshop on Interconnect October 29, 30 & 31. Lois Hitzeman has developed a program that is not designed to sell the idea of interconnect nor dissuade you from it; but rather to tell you what some of the opportunities and problems are. Among the viewpoints you'll hear are an independent consultant, a manufacturer, a College accountant, a technician, and, of course, the Telephone Company. If you have a question you'll want to have answered there, send it to Lois. She'll see that it's incorporated into the program. With you active participation, this workshop has the potential of being one of the best.

After several years as Regional Director of Region 3, Tom Meglemre has found it necessary to give up that responsibility. Tom has been an active member of ACUTA, having been an Editor for the Newsletter as well as Regional Director. Tom, ACUTA thanks you for the time and energy you've given so willingly. The new Regional Director for Region 3 is Jacqueline Huge Pollack. Jackie is at Cleveland State University and hosted a Workshop last spring under some rather tenous conditions.

We also welcome Mike Bruder from Virginia Tech as Membership Chairman. If you know of any prospective members who would like to join ACUTA, Mike is the person to contact. He's a regular contributor to the ACUTA NEWS with his Virginia View column and replaces Jim Dronsfield who was elected Treasurer.

Don Latuk, President

PARTY LINE

Your editor apologizes for the very first and absolute LAST late issue of ACUTA NEWS. I must have been that relaxed, peaceful feeling I caught in the beautiful mountains of Utah that left me thinking I had all the time in the world to get back to work...

We left Utah on Thursday, about noon and was home at 3pm on Friday. Just in time to put the finishing touches on the opening night ceremonies for the AAU National Junior Olympics. We had approximately 5,000 young athletes participating in Track & Field, Diving, Judo, Gymnastics, Synchronized Swimming, Wrestling and Boxing. (part of my duties include the job of coordinator of all university facilities for special events such as the Junior Olympics). An awesome responsibility, but most rewarding when everything goes right. Hope you were able to catch some of the events on NBC-TV. They were great!

The following week, I was still dreaming about the mountains (I still feel strange when my car bows it's head and says 3 Hall Mary's everytime we end up back home without going over a hill or bump higher than a good sized melon), however, our students returned to school, 4000 dorm phones to worry about. Then we opened a new major office and class room building, involving major installations for telephones. Administration decided to relocate and combine three departments just a few days before school started and to top it all off, our State Fair (in which we play a major role) opened... We were installing phones everywhere in the dorms this year, because the dorm population far exceeded the space available and they were converting lounges, closets, you name it, to rooms. Adding to all of this, I still edit the telephone directory/faculty roster, and our football office had some "earlier than usual" communication needs this month... We should have started in July if the outcome of the game is any indicator... WHAT A MONTH!

We are only a few weeks away from the first phase of our cut-over to a new telephone switch, The GTE-AE #2 EAX. The system is installed and is being tested now. They are installing the operator's turrets now and creating a lot of excitement in our office. Watch for a future "in-depth" article in ACUTA NEWS on our new switch...

See you "on time" next month....
HELP WANTED:  (Ad from M.I.T.)

We are currently looking for a person to fill the position outlined below. The person we are looking for should have an associates degree, or equivalent experience and/or training. Telecommunications experience (preferably "hands-on") is desirable, as is a minimum of 1 - 2 years of supervisory experience--similarly, a 2nd class radio license.

Assistant Technical Supervisor in the operation of telecommunications facilities throughout M.I.T., including off-campus laboratory and equipment facilities--individual will supervise and directly participate in the installation and maintenance of the Dormitory Telephone System (Dorm Line), and other M.I.T. owned and maintained switching systems; supervise maintenance of radio equipment and other telecommunications equipment, and report troubles to the appropriate repair service; coordinate and monitor the implementation of telecommunications equipment services and support services rendered by the appropriate communication service/equipment suppliers; direct part-time student employees, and assist in the management of full-time personnel.

If you have anyone who may be interested in applying for the above, we would be pleased to talk to them. Please direct any inquiries to: Dennis Baron 617-253-3657 Morton Berlan 617-253-3650

/s/ Morton Berlan, Supt. for Admin Services
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Mass 02139

One of our readers is asking for information on an Automatic Answering Dial Access for a tape information retrieval system. They are currently using operators to answer calls for taped information, the operator selects the tape and puts it on a machine for playing. They are wanting to eliminate the need for operator assistance, but they don't want to use an expensive computer-controlled system. Anyone with any knowledge of such a system, please let your editor know. If you need additional information on what is needed, call Jim Phillips at 904-377-9021.

ACUTA WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

Kathy M. Lovett
Manager Telephone Centrex
University of Oklahoma
N.E.L. Bldg, 905 Asp, Norman, Ok 73019
405-325-1873

Marlene McVicar
Analyst
University of Manitoba
Ft Garry Campus, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2
204-474-8177

I had a note from Joe Cleary from Indiana Higher Education Telecommunication System. Joe said that he has written a book on the interconnect industry that is now in the hands of a publisher. We will be looking forward to it Joe and we wish you the best of luck with it.

The following article is the result of an inquiry in ACUTA NEWS regarding what various institutions had done for the handicapped. We felt the one answer we received so far, it should be shared by all. It came from Dorothy Heinecke, Director of Telecommunications at Illinois State University.

"In response to your inquiry about the special feature you want to write on services for the handicapped faculty, staff, or students, we have been in such a program for about four years now. It has been difficult to get under way because of money that was needed which was not granted by state legislature. This year, we are moving ahead rather rapidly because our budget included funds for the Office of the Physically Handicapped.

The first thing we attempted to do was to get General Telephone Company to change our pay stations to make them available for the handicapped. When we started this back in 1974, it was very difficult to even find booths that would be easily accessible by persons in wheelchairs. We had already gone to touch-tone in phone booths, so those persons who had no sort of handicap in their fingers were able to dial much easier. After months of study, investigating various kinds of booths, we finally found some that were available. These are called "Bennet-Nawman Handi Booths." The national sales office is at 39 Quail Court, Suite 201, Walnut Creek California 94596, phone 415-937-2000. They have sales offices in Burlington, Wis., Birmingham, Ala., Lindenhurst, N.Y., Quaint, Tx., Lafayette, Ca., and Orange, Ca. That was our first project. Then, we went to the usual ramps and access to buildings.

About the same time, we were having problems with telephone instruments in both student rooms and in faculty & staff offices. Students had been contracting for hard-of-hearing handsets for some time. General Telephone previously had applied one installation charge and then the student paid a monthly charge which we billed a semester in advance. When that student moved from one residence hall or from one room to another, General Telephone made the change without additional cost to the student. They are now charging students for moving the hard-of-hearing handset. We are objecting to this and have even put our Office of the Physically Handicapped on the project in the hope that General Telephone will reconsider.

As far as faculty & staff are concerned, we have a number of physically handicapped persons. Some of them are, of course, hard-of-hearing and they have various kinds of handsets provided to them by the University. We have had persons who had very little volume to their voices and were handicapped through a lung or respiratory ailment. At various times, we have furnished them with headsets and the plantonic microphone which will pick up even whispers. Other ones are unable to hold telephone instruments and they have speaker phones available for their work. On the industry side, General Telephone has installed all of our paystations with a so-called "blue button" which makes it possible for persons with hearing aids to use paystations and get no feedback. For the time being, this is what Illinois State University has done.

/s/ Dorothy Heinecke
The ESS Cut-over

There are less then four weeks left before cut-over now. Twenty two days to be exact. A thousand things go through my mind as the day draws near: What have we missed, What critical element has been forgotten, Who will drop the ball?

And worst of all, it's almost deadline day for my newsletter article. What can I possibly write about? Talk about not seeing the forest for the trees!

Herewith a few thoughts on our conversion to Centrex ESS:

It seems like years since the original decision was made to convert our on-campus Centrex step switch to a Central Office ESS. There have been an awful lot of meetings held and decisions made since then.

All things considered, the work has progressed extremely well. There were some bad days in the winter caused by bum weather, half done manholes and wet cable, some traffic got re-routed and some calls got disconnected; but not too bad, really.

The mud is dry now and it's mostly grass out there; The more ordinary but extremely important things start to take focus.

Perhaps most important is getting the word out. How do we train 3500 telephone users? Or do we even bother? (If that sounds a bit cynical then you've never tried teaching people how to use a telephone!)

First, you've got to analyze exactly what is going to change. In our case only the first three digits of each number will be different (951 to 961). Access to our CCSA, the local and the toll networks, will remain the same; We're very lucky.

Small, trouble making things will be effected though. There won't be a pause or a difference in the sound of dial tone when one of the access digits is dialed, and the familiar clunking of switches will be conspicuous by its absence when people dial. These things cause problems according to those folks who have experienced a conversion like this.

Also, there are some changes to contend with when using the existing call transfer, three way conversation and consultation hold features. Granted, they are minor changes but it took forever (or so it seemed) to get people completely familiar with existing procedures.

Another consideration is the extent to which the new features will or will not be implemented on cut-over day. In our case we opted to convert with no new special features in existence. All departmental system changes will happen after the fact.

This makes the telephone company happy and gives me better control over the system in terms of who gets what and why. (We'll try like crazy not to use features as status symbols.) It also simplifies training in that I can go out to small groups and train people on the specifics of their particular system.

We're not going to try herding everyone together and train them "en masse": My experience has been that it just does not work that way. People will refuse to attend such sessions and those who do show up usually get confused when you talk in large generalities.

What we are doing is stressing the specific changes that will be experienced on cut-over day. This is being done by memo, by news articles in both internal and external newspapers and by word of mouth. We'll also give the 951/961 change some local radio time just before the cut, and each campus telephone will have an instruction card along side it on August 5th.

It all sounds simple and rather cut and dried now, but it really isn't and hasn't been. The telephone company, I must say, has done a real good job thus far. Having said that, I will knock hard on wood and see what happens in the next 22 days.

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POTPOURI

Connie Gentry, Emory Uni

My friends, never, never, never doubt the power of the written word, especially when that word is critical of Mother Bell. I am still receiving calls and comments about my July column. Most of the calls are from Bell people who seem upset not so much about what I said, but where I chose to say it. I think that's a rather large compliment for ACUTA.

Lest anyone think I am "picking" on Mother Bell because of what I wrote, we all know that "a rose is a rose is a rose", and incompetence and error are the same wherever ever one finds them. The column would have been just as uncomplimentary had it been written about any other Telco or Interconnect company. And I would have been just as angry, frustrated, and depressed.

What it all boils down to is that you and I DO NOT have to put up with incompetence, inaction, doubletalk, or any other unsatisfactory action being doled out by any utility, supplier, manufacturer, etc. My attitude about my job as a communications professional is that I will do whatever is necessary in order to accomplish Emory University's communications goals and objectives, and if that means calling the president of a company and raising hell, so be it.... Let the Church say AMEN!!!

Thanks to Stephen Lunsford of Utilities International for this item: AT&T commissioned a survey of its customers throughout the nation and they claim the result indicated 76% of the respondents gave the telephone company a "good or excellent" rating of their phone service in general; further, 95% said their phone service was very dependable or fairly dependable. However, 63% said that installation fees were either unreasonable or not very reasonable. None of the articles indicated how many Bell customers were contacted or how many responded to the survey or what mix of business/residential customers were involved.

IRS has said it will comply with the ruling handed down by the U.S. Court of Claims relative to Centrex Service. Specifically, that Centrex Service is "associated services", i.e., the Intercom portion of Centrex, are not subject to Federal Excise Taxes. This action could make Centrex service more competitive with equipment offered by private vendors if the telephone companies file and receive authorization of appropriate Centrex service tariffs.

Heritage USA, a "Total Living Center" created by Telemangement Resources and PTL Television Network, has placed an order with NEC Telephone for the largest customer owned EPABX in the world. The estimated $10 million contract calls for two NEC NA4-09 switches to provide 1,600 lines in-termin switching; future growth is projected to 24,000 lines and 6,000 trunks provided by NEC's NEAX 22 EPABX. If you live in an unenlightened area you may not know that the PTL Television Network produces the religious version of the Tonight Show called the PTL Club, and that depending on your views, PTL either stands for Praise the Lord or Pass the Loot. It's little intimate details like that, that makes this column worth reading!

Potpourri continued:

Anyone wanting a guide of modern day telephone equipment would do well to order John Sunier's The Handbook of Telephones and Accessorize, which comes complete with instructions on how to buy, install, use, and repair home and business phones. It also covers telephone answering machines, automatic callers, amplifiers, etc. Step-by-step instruction, even! Order from Tab Books, Blue Ridge Summit, Pa., 17214. Cost - $14.95, hardback; $9.95, paperback.

Speaking of books, if any of you have read any of the myriad new books on communications, why don't you write a few short paragraphs and share your impressions of the book with your fellow ACUTAN's. I've just received James Martin's "Future Developments in Telecommunications" and will report on it in the near future (after all it is over 600 pages and I don't read very fast!)

Bruce Howard reports in the latest issue of Communication News that the first edition of the "Directory of United States Electronic Mail Drops" is now available. It lists more than 150 facsimile receiving stations across the country. Tables in the back give transmission line charges and air line mileage. Order from Tahoe Information and Business Services, P.O. Box # 4031 - Stateline, Nevada 89449. Cost is $13.50 unless you send a check with your order and then it's only $8.85.

There is no inspirational quote for this month simply because I don't feel inspired enough to hunt up my Bartletts and anyway I think I took it home.

See you next month....

Our Potpourri Editor, Connie Gentry on her way to the top of the mountains at Snowbird... I'm told she made this trip several times, but not always by tram....
MOUTH OF THE SOUTH

(News from Region 2)

Another "Boston Tea Party". (No, not proposition #13) Our "Yankee" brethren up North in that great state of Massachusetts have seen the light. The Massachusetts DPU has ordered New England Telephone not to make monthly service charges to customers who purchase their own extension telephones. New England Telephone Company tried the credit type approach, but the DPU found that the Company was not entitled to charge for the service on the grounds that "When the customer provides the instrument, the Company does not provide any additional service, since calls can still only be originated over one telephone line".

Now that's what we Rebels call good old "Yankee" horse sense.

I suggest that all members try to get a copy of Lionel Van Deerlan (D-Calif.) 217 page Bill (HR-13015) on the rewrite of the nation's basic Communication Law.

If you don't get a copy, see "Telecommunication Reports" issue dated June 12, 1978. This bill will affect everyone, North, East, South and West.

(Ask and Ye Shall Receive...Maybe Department:)

Southwestern Bell implemented a $22.6 Million interim rate hike in Arkansas, subject to refund pending final approval.

South Central Bell has been ordered to refund $8 Million to its Mississippi customers.

Southern Bell has to give back $14 Million to its Florida customers since it has been earning a tad more than the 9.02% rate of return on net investment granted by the Florida PSC in August '77.

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Our friend from Wisconsin Bell, Russ Baumann at the ACUTA Banquet.....

Those pancakes were really good! John Wright looks a little skeptical, but Doug was kept busy keeping up....

Doug did have help in feeding the gang. Elwyn took orders, Doug's wife buttered the toast and Dorothy isn't sure she is hungry.....
"MOUTH OF THE SOUTH"

"Bet You Don't Really Know What Time It Is"

"TIME", said Albert Einstein, "Is what the clock reads". However, it is not that simple. For instance, "What time is it?" Take your pick, Greenwich meantime, daylight time, local time, sidereal time or is it "early times".

Most people could care less so long as they get to church on time. But time today is of the essence. Without precise split second time, power blackouts could proliferate, TV screens would look like unraveled sweaters, phone calls would be gibberish (something like your monthly telephone bill). It's a bit like the crisscrossing of the country by the trains. By late 1975, there have been 300,000 rail timekeeping errors which is accurate to within one second in 370,000 years. If you want to check your clock in the 48 Continental States, dial 303-499-7111 or if you would like to hear the same information from Hawaii, dial 803-335-4363.

As we said, time isn't so simple. To explain, requires a trip back in time. The main trouble with clock time is that it's based on the spinning of the earth on its axis and around the sun. But the earth wobbles as it spins and doesn't spin at a uniform rate. The wobble moves the poles as much as 15 meters not enough to confuse Santa Claus but enough to throw clocks off by as much as 30 milliseconds. Furthermore, the earth is slowing down. It now takes Good Old Earth 365.2422 days to orbit the sun. Because of this calendars get out of whack and hence we have to have leap years. All in all, earth is not a very reliable time keeper. Time keeping has always been a hassle, sundials don't work on cloudy days, water clocks freeze and early mechanical clocks were so inaccurate that some manufacturers didn't bother to make hands. Phineas Fog in the movie "Around the World in Eighty Days" got all confused on what day it was and almost lost his wager.

By the 18th Century, John Harrison had invented the first really accurate clock, the chronometer, and by late 1800's the pendulum clock was said to be accurate to one hundredth of a second per day. However, by that time trains were crisscrossing the U.S.A. and there were some 300 different local times observed in the U.S.A. Common sense finally prevailed and at noon on November 18, 1883, the U.S. Naval Observatory telegraphed the current time to the four newly agreed upon time zones in the U.S. (each was about 15 degrees in longitude).

Since it doesn't help much if you know what time it is without telling it to the people who use it, good old Uncle told the National Bureau of Standards, those folks who tell us how long a yard is and how much a pound weighs, to get into the act. So in 1923 they opened WWV at Fort Collins (that is that telephone number I gave you up front).

Why? Because people were now catching planes, serfs were punching time clocks, you have to be on time for school, movies, trains, etc. Telephone companies even measured calls by time (contrary to what you know to be different), TV was just on the horizon, and someone had to prevent "60 Minutes" from running into "Charlie's Angels". (My Time Is Their Time.)

The earth however, insisted on marching to a different drummer with all that wobble. Remember that earth time is also called Universal Time. This small wobble error can be measured with the aid of celestial bodies and this adjustment is called Ephemeris Time. However, it takes observatories over a nine year period to make it accurate to within .05 seconds. This is too much time to get the right time. After all time is money.

Simple math (that's before new math) shows there are 86,400 seconds in a day. But with the earth spinning so erratically, some seconds are longer than others. So in 1956 scientists claimed that Universal Time was 30 seconds behind Ephemeris Time. An international conference was held to talk about what to do with this lost time and they adopted an Ephemeris Seconds which was based on the so called Tropical Year which is about 20 minutes shorter than a Sidereal Year which will only confuse you, but don't say you weren't told.

Now all we had to do was to find a clock that could tick off perfect Ephemeris Seconds. Well a lot of thought went into this again and found that natural frequencies emitted by atoms and molecules under particular circumstances would do the trick. Alas, by using the atoms of cesium, we came up with Atomic Time. Of course, we had to have another international meeting to discuss the fact that cesium atoms make 9,192,631,770 oscillations in a second--every time if you treat them right.

There remained only one more step to adjust UT to AT. This was the leap second to be added to UT. Generally one has been needed every year, although in 1972, a leap year, two leap seconds were added making it the longest year on record. (You can use this piece of Trivia in any good quiz show.)

Well, we could go on and on with this plagiarized story from the depths of Boulder, Colo., but we have a deadline to meet for the ACUTA News. Of course, we always try to get our stories in on time. Do you have some time on your hands? How about writing this column next month? It's time I took some time off. My main spring is plumb ticked out.

Hosts for the Snowbird Conference: Elwyn Hull and his lovely wife.....
Ferris State College is hosting a Region 3 Workshop on October 29, 30 and 31, 1978. Subjects to be addressed are:

- "Installation of Privately Owned Equipment"
- "Cost Effectiveness"
- "Local Telco Relationships"
- "Working With Regulatory Commissions"
- "Management & Maintenance of your System"

Those of you who attended the annual conference at Snowbird, Utah had an opportunity of a sneak preview of Ferris' installation of an interconnect system. Now you have an opportunity of seeing the complete system and learn more about interconnect challenges. Others who were unable to attend the National, should take advantage of this Region 3 Workshop.

The Workshop will be limited to 40 participants so get your reservations in early. Transportation will be provided from the Grand Rapids Airport to Ferris State College for persons requesting it.

If you have not received your brochure, or if you have any questions, please contact:

Lois Hitzeman, phone 616-796-2641 (x4002)
Ferris State College
901 S. State Street
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307

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Jerry Goldstone, Editor & Publisher, Business Communications Review

Mr. Goldstone was the Keynote Speaker at our Seventh Annual Conference. His address was reproduced and included in this issue of the ACUTA NEWS. Our thanks to Jerry for allowing us to share his address with our absent members and giving those of us who were there the chance to review his words.

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Our new President, Don Latuk

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