

TSTCI INFORMATION

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR TSTCI MEMBER COMPANIES

APRIL 2006

www.tstci.org

Texans Helping Texans

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Texas Statewide Telephone Cooperative, Inc. is a statewide telecommunications non-profit organization representing the interests of Texas rural independent telephone systems. All member companies are regulated by the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE TSTCI SPRING MANAGERS' CONFERENCE!

Those deadlines come up pretty fast. Before the hotel rooms fill up, call the Radisson Resort on South Padre Island today for room reservations -- and be sure to send your conference registration form in too. (Registration forms are available on our website: www.tstci.org.) You can fax your registration form to 972-243-6139. The hotel group rates are \$155 for cabana rooms and \$280 for condos. These group rates are available for arrival June 3 and check out June 11, provided you inform the hotel you are with the Texas Statewide Telephone meeting. Call the hotel for reservations at 956-761-6511 or 1-800-292-7704. Your credit card will be charged for the amount of the deposit. Guaranteed reservations must be canceled 72 hours prior to arrival or you will be charged for one night. NOTE: The cutoff date for our room block is May 10. The rooms *will* sell out, so we encourage you to make your reservations as soon as possible.

Watch for the TSTCI Bookkeepers/Accountants/Commercial Conference information soon -- it's set for July 12-14 at the Westin Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio.

If you have any questions about any TSTCI meetings, or if you need any of the meeting information, contact Martha Shepperd at 972-243-8705 or martha.shepperd@chrsolutions.com or Ann Weinberg, 703-237-1644 or ann.weinberg@chrsolutions.com.

With our Sincere Gratitude

Texas Communications Expo, Inc., (TCEI) has once again demonstrated their generosity and support of the telecommunications industry through a \$4,000 donation to the TSTCI Discretionary Fund.

We would like to express our appreciation and recognize TCEI for their never-ending generosity and dedication to our industry. As many of you know, profits from each year's EXPO are donated to telecommunications organizations that promote education and training within our industry.

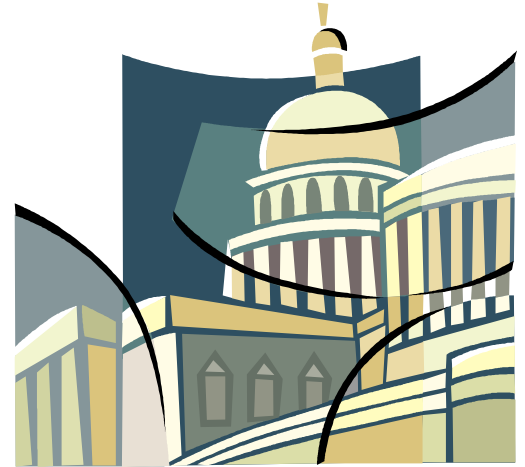
**ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS, THANKS TO
TEXAS COMMUNICATIONS EXPO, INC.
FOR THEIR SUPPORT!**

FCC CHAIRMAN MARTIN RENOMINATED

On April 25, President Bush renominated Kevin J. Martin to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2006. Upon Senate confirmation, Mr. Martin will be reappointed Chairman of the FCC.

After receiving the news, Chairman Martin stated, "I am honored to have been renominated for a second term as Commissioner and Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. I thank President Bush for the privilege to continue to serve in his Administration."

He continued, "This is an exciting time of growth and innovation in the communications sector. I look forward to working with the Administration, Congress, my fellow Commissioners and the talented staff at the FCC to provide all Americans with the services and opportunities offered by the best communications system in the world today."



KUDOS TO TSTCI'S DIRECTOR OF CONFERENCES!

TSTCI's Director of Conferences, Ms. Ann Weinberg, is much too reserved to toot her own horn, so we're proud to share a note from one of our members reflecting Ann's value:

Hello!

I just wanted you to know what an awesome employee you have!!! Ann Weinberg is a role model for all of us. She is such a pleasure to work with. I have known Ann for several years and have worked with her with TSTCI and just wanted you to know what a valuable person she is. Her professionalism and knowledge are superior. If the quality of a firm's employees is an indication of future success, then CHR Solutions has a very bright future.

Just thought you should know.

Kathy Rea



TEXAS LAWMAKERS BACK IN SESSION



Governor Rick Perry called Legislators back into session April 17 with the goal of lowering property taxes. One of the key elements of the tax relief package is House Bill 3 – relating to the franchise tax. HB 3 passed the House with a vote of 80 for, 68 against. The bill was sent to the Senate, which has scheduled hearings in the upcoming days, hoping to have the bill out of committee and on the Senate floor the first week of May.

A couple of telecommunications related bills have been filed; however, the Governor has stated that he will not open the call to other issues until Legislators pass tax reform legislation. TSTCI staff has been keeping the TSTCI Legislative Committee and the Board of Directors informed as issues arise that may affect our members.

UDP ALIGNS WITH MASTERCARD RPPS® TO OFFER NEW POSTING PAYMENT SERVICE CALLED E-POST

(San Antonio, Texas) – UDP is now offering E-POST, an accounts receivables service that helps customers post electronically received payments more quickly, accurately, and securely. The telecommunications billing company has aligned with MasterCard RPPS to provide customers with an efficient and cost-effective, electronic receivables service that automates the posting of electronic payments.

Today, millions of people in the United States pay their bills online through their bank or bill payment service provider. However, companies may still receive paper checks from consumers who are using an online bill payment service that is not electronically connected to the Telephone Company. As a result, when paper checks are received, they become exception items that must be manually posted.

“We’re thrilled to be working with UDP on this exciting initiative to offer a service which facilitates the fast, secure, and reliable posting of electronic payments in the telecommunications industry,” said Ed McLaughlin, senior vice president, MasterCard RPPS.

The speed and accuracy of E-POST increases back-office efficiencies and eliminates the need to manage multiple payment originator relationships. Companies don’t have to dedicate man-hours to chasing down generic checks with missing remittance stubs. Payment information is received via a batch/lockbox file and a daily ACH credit is deposited in the Telephone Company’s bank. E-POST only distributes reliable funds because the bill payment service does not initiate payment if funds are not available.

MABEL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE CHOOSES TELSTRAT TO UPGRADE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Plano, Texas - April 24, 2006 - The Mabel Telephone Cooperative Company is upgrading its access network to enrich the services it provides customers. By acquiring and installing the TelStrat Inteleflex Broadband Loop Carrier Platform, the Mabel, Minnesota-based carrier will be able to offer high-speed data services through both copper and fiber-to-the-home to its 1,800 subscribers, all from one platform.

TelStrat, the leading provider of broadband access network solutions for independent operating companies, supplied Mabel Telephone with new, environmentally hardened cabinets while also retrofitting a number of existing sites. Where existing outdoor cabinets were left in place, TelStrat provided a turnkey retrofit package that replaced the outmoded legacy equipment taken out of another vendor's cabinet with new Inteleflex systems. The result is the ability to offer voice and high-speed Internet to the customers throughout its service area with the option to offer IPTV services in the future, a capability on which Mabel Telephone places a considerable emphasis.

“We're pleased to be part of Mabel Telephone's efforts to better serve their subscribers by delivering increased bandwidth and enhanced services,” Bob Carroll, TelStrat founder and CEO, said. “Inteleflex provided Mabel Telephone with a cost-effective means to move from traditional circuit switched services to emerging packet-based services. Our goal is to provide our customers with the ability to capture new revenue streams. In this case, our retrofit program also allowed them to reduce their capital expenditures.”

CAMPTI-PLEASANT HILL TELEPHONE COMPANY (CP-TEL) SELECTS MAPCOM SYSTEMS' M4® SOLUTIONS FOR INTEGRATED FACILITIES MAPPING AND MANAGEMENT

Mapcom Systems, a leading provider of Geographical Operations System (GOS) software, announced today that Campti-Pleasant Hill Telephone Company (CP-Tel) of Natchitoches, LA has selected M4 Solutions to map and manage its central office and outside plant. By leveraging M4 Solutions, CP-Tel will significantly streamline engineering and field service operations and decrease administration costs.

The M4 Solutions software includes complete design and mapping tools, as well as integrated work order, fiber and central office management, and various support applications such as CPR integration, dispatch management and services management.

The software is designed to map the entire telco plant facility from the central office to the customer structure. The software then ties each map item back to an individual database record, which in turn may be integrated with the telephone company's existing customer, assignment and billing records. M4's open database system creates one seamless repository for all of its customer and plant information, without reinventing a telco's current processes and procedures.

CP-Tel has approximately 4,000 access lines and represents a rapidly growing number of companies ranging in size from 1,000 to 500,000 access lines that recognize M4 as the most versatile and most easily integrated Geographical Operations System (GOS) software available today.

Upcoming Events

April 2006

30-May 3 ACE 2006 Engineering School – Memphis, Tennessee

May 2006

1-2 NTCA PRNET Marketing Conference – Coral Gables, Florida
5 PUC Workshop – Project No. 32169 – Austin, Texas
16 PUC Workshop – Project No. 32460 – Austin, Texas
16-18 OPASTCO Legislative & Regulatory Conference – Washington, DC
18-19 TSCPA Energy & Communications Conference – Austin, Texas
19 C. Gaylen Ackley Memorial Golf Classic – San Felipe, Texas
22 TTA Foundation 13th Annual Golf Tournament – Austin, Texas

June 2006

4-6 Telcom Insurance Group Risk Management Conference – Reno, Nevada
7-9 TSTCI Spring Managers' Conference – South Padre Island, Texas
10-13 NTCA Summer Business Conference – San Francisco, California
13 PUC Workshop – Project No. 32527 – Austin, Texas