

Paul Bunyan Communications CEO Speaks On National Gigabit Panel

Panel Included Former Kansas City Mayor and Director of Center for Rural Entrepreneurship



As Paul Bunyan Communications continues to roll out their GigaZone service options in northern Minnesota, the project has also garnered national attention. Recently CEO/General Manager Gary Johnson was asked to participate on a Gigabit panel at the NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

"Delivering Gigabit Service to Your Community" was a panel discussion that featured Johnson, along with Joe Reardon the former mayor of Kansas City which was selected as the first Google Fiber community, and Don Macke the Director for the Center of Rural Entrepreneurship. The panel was moderated by NTCA CEO Shirley Bloomfield.

The purpose of the panel was to discuss Gigabit connectivity and the fact it brings more than just high-speed data to customers. It fosters innovation and economic vitality, benefiting the entire community while promoting entrepreneurship and economic development. The session helped look at both the similarities and differences of large and small gigabit communities.



"As a cooperative we feel very strongly about investing in our network and our communities."

- Gary Johnson

"There is no doubt that Gigabit Internet is a big topic throughout the country right now and I was honored to be asked to speak about our GigaZone project. Like with any new technology, there will be those who are out front in bringing it to consumers and if you look at our past history it should come as no surprise that Paul Bunyan Communications is one of the pioneers in deploying a Gigabit network. We were one of the first in the country to expand our network after the deregulation of the Telecom Act of 1996, to offer high speed Internet services, to provide television services over a telephone network, and to bundle phone, high-speed Internet, and television for one price. As a cooperative we feel very strongly about investing in our network and our communities so they have access to the most robust, advanced communication services available." said Johnson

NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association represents nearly 900 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America. NTCA advocates on behalf of its members in the legislative and regulatory arenas, and it provides training and development; publications and industry events; and an array of employee benefit programs. In an era of exploding technology, deregulation and marketplace competition, NTCA's members are leading the

IP evolution for rural consumers, delivering technologies that make rural communities vibrant places in which to live and do business.

"Paul Bunyan Communications has demonstrated an incredible amount of forward thinking over the past 20 years, time and again leading the way in providing the very latest in technology to its members. They have showed not only how it can be done, but that you can be successful doing it. It is inspiring to see and by sharing the new GigaZone initiative with our entire membership we know it will lead to similar projects throughout rural America." said Bloomfield.

"When you live in an area where advanced technology is available, many may assume it's available everywhere. You don't have to go that far from Bemidji or Grand Rapids to find consumers without access to even the most basic of high speed Internet service, yet our entire 5,000 square mile service area has had access to those services since 2004, some areas as early as 1999. It's good that our members expect to get the latest and greatest but it can be taken for granted. We do not do things to get national attention or awards, we do it for

the greater good of our membership and the communities we serve. That is what matters to us at the end of the day. That said, whenever something we do garners regional or national attention it is an opportunity for us to share our story which can help educate our customers and the region about how we compare to other areas in Minnesota and the United States," added Brian Bissonette, Paul Bunyan Communications Marketing Supervisor.

"The impact Paul Bunyan Communications has made on economic development in the Bemidji area is tremendous" said Dave Hengel, Executive Director of Greater Bemidji, "there are some common needs businesses are looking for when looking to relocate, start up a new location, etc. One question all ask is about access to affordable, reliable broadband Internet. When I show them what Paul Bunyan has in place they are blown away by the level of services available. It is very appropriate for Gary to be on this panel with the former Kansas City Mayor who helped bring Google Fiber to his town because that is what Paul Bunyan is doing for our region on a much larger scale and in a rural area which has more challenges than densely populated urban centers."

TELE U WHAT

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BEMIDJI

1831 Anne St. NW
Bemidji, MN 56601
Phone (218) 444.1234
Toll Free (888) 586.3100
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 6:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Paul Bunyan Net

Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 7:00 pm
Saturday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
NOTE: No walk-in customers after 6:00 pm, phone support only

GRAND RAPIDS

Grand Square
1220 S. Pokegama Ave.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Phone (218) 999.1234
Toll Free (888) 586.3100
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 6:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

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from Grand Rapids



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FISH FRY CREW
& LUEKEN'S
VILLAGE FOODS

..... and visit the
WATCH ESPN BOOTH

FEATURING GREAT KIDS ENTERTAINMENT!



APPEARANCES BY
ANGIE, JENNIFER, & KENDALL



FEBRUARY

Paul Bunyan Communications Board of Directors conducted its monthly meeting on February 16, 2015. Also present were CEO and General Manager Gary Johnson, CFO Dave Schultz and Administrative Assistant Elaine Iverson.

- The Manager updated the board on our CLEC projects. New member sign-ups in the rural Park Rapids and Trout Lake areas were discussed. GigaZone gigabit internet service was discussed. Access lines for the ILEC were reviewed.
- Digital video was discussed. PBTv Fusion and PBTv Lite were discussed. Subscriber rate increases taking effect on April 1 were discussed.
- The Manager updated the Board on data services.
- The recently held board/management strategic planning session was discussed.
- A motion was made, seconded and carried to assign the at large members outside of the traditional ILEC and CLEC exchanges to Cooperative District 3, and to assign the Trout Lake area exchanges of Coleraine, Warba and Marble to Cooperative District 4.
- Directors were designated to attend the upcoming NTCA Legislative Conference in Washington DC.
- The Manager reviewed a succession planning and retirement forecast with the board.
- Randy Frisk, Kathy Peterson and Glenda Martin were designated to the PBC Audit Committee.
- The Manager gave his monthly report.

MARCH

Paul Bunyan Communications Board of Directors conducted its monthly meeting on March 6, 2015. Also present were CEO and General Manager Gary Johnson, CFO Dave Schultz and Administrative Assistant Elaine Iverson.

- The Manager updated the board on our CLEC projects. New member sign-ups in the rural Park Rapids and Trout Lake areas were discussed. GigaZone activations were discussed. Access lines for the ILEC were reviewed.
- Digital video was discussed. PBTv Fusion and PBTv Lite were discussed. Subscriber rate increases taking effect on April 1 were discussed.
- The Manager updated the Board on data services.
- The sale of our Advanced Wireless Services licenses in 2014 was discussed.
- The upcoming NTCA Legislative Conference was discussed. Attendees will be participating in a special event with Senator Klobuchar.
- Jim Tarbell was designated voting delegate and Dave Schultz alternate for the upcoming NRTC Annual Meeting.
- The purchase of new vehicles for 2015 was discussed. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the bids as presented.
- Network Operations Manager Rob St. Clair reviewed 2015 construction plans with the board. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the low bid for an outside plant construction project in the rural Park Rapids area.
- The Manager reviewed with the board a grant awarded to the Cooperative by the FCC for two CLEC projects.
- Network Operations Manager Rob St. Clair reviewed a quote for a power upgrade in our central office. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the quote as presented.
- A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve a broadband construction fund check to reimburse general funds.
- Potential Bylaw revisions were discussed.
- The Manager gave his monthly report.



Heather Vikre



FRS Youth Tour Winner

Paul Bunyan Communications has selected Heather Vikre as the winner of the cooperative's 2015 Youth Tour Essay Contest. Heather is currently a junior at Walker-Hackensack-Akeley High School, is the daughter of David & Penny Vikre, and will attend the 2015 Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. May 30 - June 3, with all expenses paid by Paul Bunyan Communications.

The trip features a comprehensive overview of the telecommunications industry, including careers in telecom, the critical role telecommunications plays in rural America, and how legislative and regulatory decisions affect the industry. The tour allows youth to meet with members of Congress who represent rural constituents. They also participate in educational sessions about the Federal Communications Commission. Students visit some of the nation's most historic sites, including Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian Museums, and a beautiful night tour of our Washington D.C.

The FRS Youth Tour is a unique opportunity for a local student from our area to visit Washington D.C. to gain a better perspective on how regulatory decisions impact our cooperative and rural areas. Heather will also get the chance to see a lot of historic sites in our nation's capital.



New Channels for PBTv Sports



Universal Sports Network brings you live and exclusive coverage of Olympic, endurance, and action sports from around the world. With more than 40 sports and 25 world championship events, only Universal Sports lets you watch your favorite athletes compete all year long.

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PBTv Sports can be added to your Paul Bunyan Television service for only \$6.99 per month and includes over 15 additional cable networks featuring a wide variety of sports programming.

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Universal Sports Network	79
Universal Sports Network HD	579
ONE World Sports	80
ONE World Sports HD	580

Requires subscription to PBTv Sports

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IMPORTANT: When trying to sign in to HBO Go or Max Go for the first time you will need to click SIGN IN and create your own HBO Go or Max Go account. IN THIS PROCESS YOU WILL NEED TO SELECT "WTVE" FROM THE PROVIDERS LIST. Paul Bunyan Communications will NOT appear on the list at this time so be sure to select "WTVE" to sign up and gain access to this content.



Lifeline provide discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain phone service.

Since 1985, the Lifeline program has provided a discount on phone service for qualifying low-income consumers to ensure that all Americans have the opportunities and security that phone service brings, including being able to connect to jobs, family and emergency services. In 2005, Lifeline discounts were made available to qualifying low-income consumers on pre-paid wireless service plans in addition to traditional landline service. Lifeline is part of the Universal Service Fund.

The Lifeline program is available to eligible low-income consumers in every state, territory, commonwealth, and on Tribal lands. Consumers with proper proof of eligibility may be qualified to enroll.

To participate in the program, consumers must either have an income that is at or below 135% of the federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the following assistance programs:

- MEDICAID
- SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME
- FEDERAL PUBLIC HOUSE ASSISTANCE (SECTION 8)
- LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES
- NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM'S FREE LUNCH PROGRAM
- BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS GENERAL ASSISTANCE
- TRIBALLY-ADMINISTERED TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES
- FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS
- HEAD START (IF INCOME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA ARE MET)
- STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (IF APPLICABLE)

Federal rules prohibit eligible low-income consumers from receiving more than one Lifeline discount per household. An eligible consumer may receive a discount on either a wireline or wireless service, but not both. A consumer whose household currently is receiving more than one Lifeline service must select a single

Lifeline provider and contact the other provider to de-enroll from their program. Consumers violating this rule may also be subject to criminal and/or civil penalties.

Tribal Lands Lifeline provides a monthly discount of up to \$34.25 off of the cost of telephone service, either wireline or wireless. This discount averages \$9.25 (which is available to all eligible low-income consumers across the United States) plus up to an additional \$25 (which is available only to eligible low-income consumers living on Tribal lands.) This discount may vary somewhat from state to state, depending on whether the state has its own Lifeline program.

In some cases, Lifeline also includes Toll Limitation Service, which enables a telephone subscriber to limit the amount of long distance calls that can be made from a telephone.

IMPORTANT LIMITATION ON TRIBAL LANDS LIFELINE AND LINK UP

Federal rules prohibit qualifying low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Tribal Lands Lifeline service at the same time. Low-income consumers who qualify may receive a Tribal Lands Lifeline discount on either a home telephone or a wireless telephone service, but may not receive a Lifeline discount on both services at the same time. Additionally, only ONE Tribal Lands Lifeline service may be obtained per household. "Household" is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address as one economic unit. An "economic unit" is defined as "all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household." Lifeline support is available to eligible low-income consumers living in group living facilities. Lifeline applicants may demonstrate when initially enrolling in the program that any other Lifeline recipients residing at their residential address are part of a separate household.

Similarly, Federal rules prohibit qualifying low-income consumers from receiving more than ONE Tribal Lands Link Up discount at a primary residence. Low-income consumers who qualify may receive a Tribal Lands Link Up discount on installation or activation charges associated with either wireline or wireless telephone service, but may not receive a Link Up discount on both services at the same time.

If you are interested in learning more about these programs, please call the National Exchange Carriers Association (NECA) at

800-228-0180