

BELLTEL RETIREE

The Official Newsletter for Retirees and Employees of Bell Atlantic, GTE, NYNEX, Verizon and Its Subsidiaries
Paid for by contributions from Verizon retirees

Summer 2007



Volume 42

Retiree Proxy in Dead Heat with Verizon – 49% to 49% Outcome Could Signal Another Retiree Victory

The “Say on Pay” proxy proposal submitted by Association of Bell-Tel Retirees President Bill Jones for shareholder consideration at the May 3rd Verizon Annual Shareholders’ Meeting was in a dead heat at the end of the day: 49% voted for and 49% voted against the measure.

At the meeting in Pittsburgh Verizon announced that “the preliminary results for the proposal on an advisory vote on senior executive compensation are too close to determine whether the proposal passed or was defeated. The outcome will be determined by the final tabulation.”

This proxy asks the Verizon Board of Directors to include, as a voting item at future annual meetings, an advisory resolution allowing shareowners to approve or disapprove the executive

compensation package of the company’s senior executive officers.

“This vote, regardless of the final outcome after the recount, is a major victory for shareowners and the retirees of this company,” said Mr. Jones.

The proxy proposal, whose vote is considered “historic” by industry insiders, is similar to others submitted, and defeated, at other major corporate shareholder meetings at Bank of New York and Morgan Stanley, for instance.

A study conducted by the Corporate Library showed that Verizon CEO Ivan Seidenberg has earned \$75.1 million over the past five years while shareholder returns were negative 26.8 percent.

In his speech before the Verizon shareholders and Board, Mr. Jones stat-

ed, “Isn’t it amazing that while we discuss how the officers might receive tens of millions of dollars as **only part** of their total compensation, some seniors are trying to decide between groceries or a visit to the doctor?”

“In contrast,” he continued, “under Verizon’s so-called Performance Unit Stocks, our CEO receives 34% of his total possible award for finishing **behind 80% of the company’s peer group.**”

Hye-Won Choi, vice president and associate general counsel at TIAA-CREF, one of the nation’s largest pension firms said, “From a shareholder-relations standpoint, if I were management I would voluntarily adopt it given that it was so close.”

TIAA-CREF, a major shareholder of Verizon stock, voted for the proxy proposal.

“Long-term shareowners believe that the owners of the company should be able to express their approval or disapproval of the Board’s compensation package for the CEO and the other senior executives,” concluded Mr. Jones. “An advisory vote would provide useful feedback and encourage shareowners to scrutinize the new, more extensive disclosures required by the SEC.”

At our news deadline, recount results were estimated to take two weeks before a definitive victor could be announced.

On another note, the proxy proposal submitted by the Association and Association CFO Robert Rehm, calling for the limit of service on outside boards by Verizon directors, garnered just 12% of the vote at the shareowner meeting. Part of the reason may be that Verizon had already partially adopted the policy at their January 2007 meeting as a result of the proxy proposal

(Continued on page 3)

More Than 200 Retirees Gather in Delaware

The 11th Annual Association of BellTel Retirees Member Meeting saw over 200 members gathered in Dover, Delaware on April 25th at the Dover Downs Hotel and Casino. More than 2/3 of the attendees were first time participants to a retiree Association annual membership meeting.

Retirees came from all over the eastern seaboard, from as far south as Florida and as far north as Vermont, and included members from Virginia, West Virginia, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Carolina and of course, Delaware.

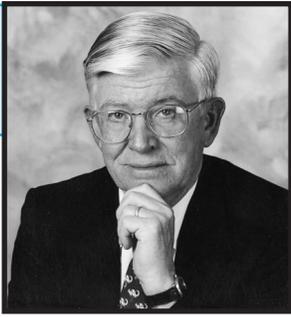
After a warm welcome by Association Executive Vice President Mike Kucklinca and a treasurer’s report from Eileen Lawrence, Association



Attendees at the 2007 Association of BellTel Retirees Annual Meeting

President Bill Jones told those gathered about the history of the organization and the direction in which it is going. Mr. Jones outlined the five strategies that govern the Association

(Continued on page 5)



President's Message

by C. William Jones

In my message in the last *BellTel Retiree*, I asked all of you to help us recruit new members. This is critical as we have experienced a huge loss of members who have passed away in the last eighteen months. Membership numbers and the contributions they provide are not only our life blood; they are our power when dealing with the company and with Congress.

I am extremely pleased to report that many of you took my plea very seriously and sent in individual names. Some even sent lists of Verizon retirees who belonged to various retiree groups. To all of those members who sent in names and addresses, thank you very much. We appreciate everything that you do to support the Association.

To all of those who did not respond, it is never too late. We need a constant infusion of new members to stay

strong. So please help us to help you.

I also want to emphasize that active employees, or pre-retirees, are welcome to join the Association, as it is important that they be kept up to date on the issues that will affect them in retirement.

I encourage members who are active employees in the company to provide us with names and addresses of company workers who would be interested in joining the Association.

For those of you who belong to a retiree group, I would like to remind you that if your group would like to have a speaker from the Association at one of its events, please contact our office. We will do our best to provide a speaker who will gladly put together a presentation that will be of interest to all.

Turning to a different but related subject, the new legislative lobbying organization, ProtectSeniors.Org, is working very hard to pass legislation to protect retiree healthcare benefits. That organization is open to active employees and retirees of all corporations in all industries. If you have any

friends or relatives who might be interested in saving their company subsidized healthcare insurance, direct them to www.protectseniors.org and call the ProtectSeniors.Org office at 202-434-8193 with their contact information.

The Association of BellTel Retirees Vice President – Information Systems, Jim Casey is working on revitalizing and renewing our web site. They hope to have them on line soon.

The entire board of the Association of BellTel Retirees joins me in thanking you for your continued support and wishes you a happy and healthy retirement.



Association of BellTel Retirees Inc.

UNITED, TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE

Published by: Association of BellTel Retirees Inc.

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Retiree Proxy in Dead Heat with Verizon – 49% to 49%

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submission by the Association this past fall.

In his speech Mr. Rehm went on to “...applaud the Board for recently adopting our proposal in part, apparently as a result of this proxy being submitted. Unfortunately, the changes don’t go far enough, but it was a small step in the right direction.”

“The honored job of serving as a corporate Director has taken on added complexity and significance in recent years, demanding more time and attention,” added Mr. Rehm. “Shareholders expect that when we compensate a Director more than quarter of a million dollars a year for a part-time job, we can be confident that our Directors ‘have and will devote’ sufficient time and due diligence to the business of the company we own.”

Congratulations to Mr. Rehm, whose proxy, while not winning in the shareholder’s vote, will have immediate impact at the company.

The Association’s 2007 proxy proposal campaign has once again earned a great amount of media attention from leading outlets including **The New York Times**, the **Wall Street Journal**, **Fortune Magazine**, **Bloomberg News**, **Reuters**, the **Associated Press**, the



Pittsburgh Post Gazette and **Crain’s New York Business**, among scores of others, all raving about the retiree’s efforts to improve corporate governance at Verizon.

“Over the years all of the proxy proposals the Association has put forth, whether they win or lose, promote change,” said Mr. Jones. “I suspect we’ve got a good chance on this one.”

Previous successes by the Association include the 2003 proxy proposal limiting overly-generous executive compensation packages and golden parachutes. At the time it was the first proxy loss by Verizon or any other Bell System company in its 100-year history.

Also in 2003, Verizon agreed to implement another retiree proposal prior to its annual shareholders meeting to exclude pension credits from the calculation of executive compensa-

tion, which had gained 43 percent of shareholder votes the previous year.

The following year retirees were forced to come back at the company on the Executive Severance Agreement proposal after Verizon executives and its board of directors failed to follow shareholders’ mandate to limit overly-generous executive compensation packages and golden parachutes. This time, when the retirees authored a binding proxy proposal mandating the board to implement the change, Verizon relented, agreeing that the company will seek shareholder approval for any future Executive Severance Agreement more than 2.99 times an executive’s base salary and bonus.

In 2005, before the company’s proxy ballot went out to shareowners, Verizon agreed to a retiree proxy’s demand to reign-in Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan (SERP) income for senior executives. Before this change, executives received SERP contributions equal to 32 percent of their combined base salary plus bonus for every dollar above \$210,000 during their first 20 years in the plan. The agreement negotiated by retiree leaders reduced these excessive amounts to a maximum of 4% to 7%.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. is dedicated to promote the protection and enhancement of the pensions and benefits for retirees and beneficiaries of the companies and subsidiaries that make up the Verizon Corporation.

The Association will convince the company to properly care for its thousands of dedicated retired employees.

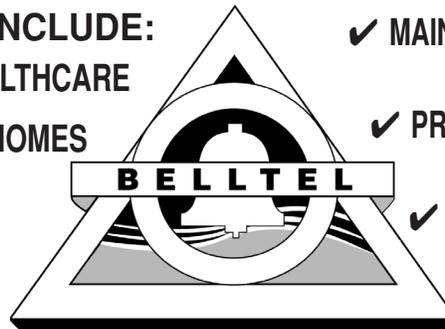
The Association will conduct activities designed to educate elected federal, state and local representatives and promote the passage of legislation which will protect and guarantee, rather than invade, our hard-earned pension and benefits funds.

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Verizon Savings Plan Changes

By Robert Rehm

In a letter addressed to Verizon Savings Plan participants dated March 21, 2007, the company issued notice of the following:

“Effective March 31, 2007 the current 7-day trading restriction on requests to transfer amounts into the Verizon Stock Funds will end, and a 2:00 p.m. ET deadline will be established for all transfers from any savings plan investment option to another investment option in the Savings Plan.”

The Pension Protection Act of 2006, legislation geared towards improving the pension system, requires a change in the trading restrictions that currently apply to the Verizon Savings Plan investment options. The notice sent to plan participants stated that this change supports a long-term investing approach that will help control trading costs for the benefit of all plan participants.

The change appears to offer more flexibility to participants electing this investment option. All transfer requests **before** the 2 p.m. ET dead-

line on any New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) business day will be effective as of the close of business on that day. Transfers requested after 2:00 p.m. ET will be made effective as of the close of business the following NYSE business day. All other restrictions and fees remain in place.

Verizon advises that since this explains a material change to the Savings Plan, you should keep it with the Summary Plan Description previously sent, as it is intended to supplement the Offering Statement for the Verizon Savings Plan for Management Employees. These documents are also available on Fidelity's NetBenefits website at <http://netbenefits.fidelity.com>.

If you would like a paper copy of any of these materials, “free of charge,” or if you have questions, please contact the Verizon Savings Plan Service Center at 1-888-457-9333

In related news, if you're nearing age 70½, tax law requires individual retirement account (IRA) holders to begin withdrawing at least minimum

amounts, known as RMDs (Required Minimum Distributions), from their accounts at that age.

That means your IRA savings must start coming out in specific increments no later than April 1st following the year you reach 70½. The exact distribution amount changes from year to year, so be sure to check the requirements annually. RMDs are calculated by dividing an account's year-end value by the distribution period determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Additional information and IRS minimum distribution table can be accessed at www.bankrate.com and/or by contacting the IRS.

Bob Rehm, pro-bono Chief Financial Officer and Board Member of the Association, reminds everyone that this material is offered for informational purposes only and not as financial or legal advice or direction.

WANTED: NEW MEMBERS

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More Than 200 Retirees Gather in Delaware

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and the actions taken on behalf of its members. These strategies are: pension fund assurance, negotiations, litigation, legislation and proxy proposals.

Mr. Jones went on to explain how the proxy proposals, whether victorious or not, have helped to promote change in corporate governance at Verizon, and also give retirees the opportunity to have their issues and concerns heard by company management.

Paul Miller, Executive Director and Chief Lobbyist of ProtectSeniors.Org, followed Mr. Jones with a legislative report. Mr. Miller emphasized the importance of members getting as involved as possible in what happens on Capitol Hill. "If you haven't lost your benefits yet," he warned, "it can still, and will, happen."

The guest speaker for the meeting was former United States Congresswoman Barbara Kennelly. Mrs. Kennelly, a former ranking member of the House Ways and Means Committee's Subcommittee on Social Security, is the current President and CEO of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM). She was the first woman to serve as Chief Majority Whip and she was Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and the House Committee on Intelligence, and lobbies on Capitol Hill on behalf of retirees all over the nation.

Mrs. Kennelly and the NCPSSM concentrate their efforts on fighting the privatization of Social Security. "Two days after President Bush was re-elected, he announced that he was going to [privatize Social Security Insurance]," said Kennelly in her speech. "The press and the nation weren't looking at the shortfalls of



Participants at the 2007 Association Annual Meeting.

Social Security. Instead, the focus is on the creation of a new system."

"But what about the 45-year-old, single mother with a few kids," added Kennelly. "She will need Social Security in a few years when she turns 62. What about her?"

The floor was then opened for questions from the membership.

Retiree Steve Gramiak stood up to applaud the Association for their dedication to retiree issues and sticking to its convictions.

Sharon Quillen, a retired worker from Delaware, encouraged people to join the Association regardless of being former union represented or former management.

Member Jobie Goodwin asked, "Will the Association be working with groups like AARP?" Mr. Jones replied, to thunderous applause, that AARP is more of an insurance and marketing



Retiree Sharon Quillen

firm than a true retiree advocate, and despite previous efforts to seek a partnership, AARP was not interested in joining forces with the Association and other retiree advocacy groups on pro-retiree legislative issues.

The Association would like to thank our members, supporters, volunteers and special guests for joining us in Delaware for another successful annual meeting.

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While Pension Plans Disappear, CEOs Get a Raise

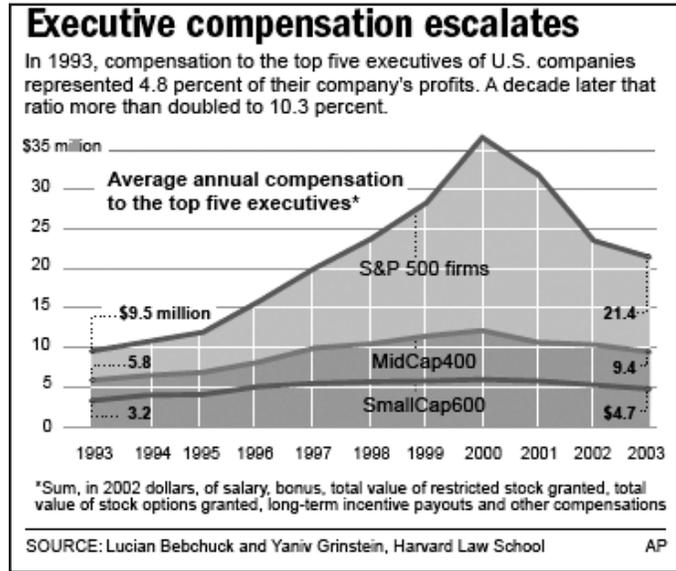
An increase in awareness of CEO salaries has brought the issue of pay vs. performance to the forefront of business news. It has also highlighted the disparity in monies paid top executives and those made available for retiree pension plans.

The average salary for top U.S. executives is increasing at a faster rate than overall wages, compounded by the fact that just 33% of workers at larger companies today have traditional benefit plans, compared to the 84% that had them in 1980.

In 2005, Verizon Chairman and CEO Ivan G. Seidenberg was paid \$19 million in salary, bonuses and restricted stock - up 50% from the year before. 2006 saw his compensation jump to just over \$21 million. The Verizon compensation committee said he deserved it because of the company's performance in 2005. In that year earnings fell by 5.5%, VZ shares dropped 26% and its bonds were downgraded.

In the same year, 50,000 Verizon managers had their pensions frozen.

Many companies complain of the costs of pensions - freezing, reducing or eliminating them altogether - yet still



build bigger and bigger pensions for their executives. **The Wall Street Journal** reported that it is actually the executive pensions that are affecting a company's bottom line: analysis of corporate filings revealed that executive benefits are what are adversely affecting American workers' pension plans because they are, in essence, a debt to the company.

According to the **Journal**, pensions for rank and file workers are offset by returns on investments from the retirement fund. For the highest ranking

execs, there is usually no fund and therefore no investments on which to receive a return. This causes executive benefits to become a liability to most companies, and this liability is hidden when companies don't list them separately from other pensions in reports to the federal government; savings that result from dwindling employee pensions help to hide the rising cost of the exec pension plans.

An AT&T spokesperson stated that "in any industry, senior execs are almost always provided with enhanced levels of benefits as a way to recruit and retain the best talent and the best possible leadership to lead the company."

The remedy: greater disclosure. The Securities and Exchange Commission has imposed new rules, effective in 2007, which require more information from companies regarding top executives' total pay to help make accounting more precise. This includes compensation for the previous fiscal year, holdings in the company and retirement agreements.

Another solution includes greater power for shareholders - public companies putting top executives' pay to a shareholder's vote, and having that vote enforced. The Association has proposed a proxy to Verizon seeking shareholder say in executive compensation packages. At press time, the vote was in a dead heat, with 49% of shareholders voting for and 49% voting against the proxy proposal. Verizon reps called the decision "too close to call" and definitive results are expected after a recount.

At Lucent Technologies Inc. a proposal passed with 54% of the votes in February 2006 that will tie in compensation with company performance.

"You should get superior pay for superior performance. What we have now is superior pay for below average performance," said Ed Durkin, director of corporate affairs for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, whose union proposed a "pay for superior performance" policy onto the ballots of 17 companies, including Black & Decker.

ASSOCIATION OF BELLTEL RETIREES INC.

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President, Congress and Retirees Aligned on CEO Compensation vs. Company Performance Issue

At the tail end of his State of the Economy Address on the steps of Federal Hall in New York City, President George W. Bush expressed concern over the disparity in corporate executive pay and company performance. His speech came a day after the Democratic-led Senate agreed to vote on and support a measure that would limit the amount of CEO pay that would be eligible for tax-free deferral.

President Bush urged corporate boards to consider a more realistic compensation packages for its executives as opposed to the lavish salaries and bonuses seen in recent years.

"America's corporate boardrooms must step up their responsibilities," President Bush said. "You need to pay attention to the executive compensation packages that you approve. You need to show the world that America's businesses are a model of transparency and good corporate governance."

A recent example of inflated salaries and bonuses includes Home Depot chief executive Bob Nardelli who was earning upwards of \$25.7 million a year before he was ousted, while the company's shares sank by 12 percent.

During his speech, the President did not endorse federal intervention in the corporate boardrooms, but instead highlighted new government rules that give investors access to better detailed information from public companies as to the executive salaries and bonuses they are paying.

Critics expressed doubt that Mr. Bush's speech would change the growing trend of inflated executive compensation packages. Paul Hodgson, senior research associate at the Maine-based firm the Corporate

Library, stated, "It's a little late for him to comment on this situation..."

U.S. Representative Barney Frank, (D-Mass.), chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, introduced legislation to require shareholder approval of executive compensation packages. H.R. 1257, the Shareholder Vote on Executive Compensation Act was introduced on March 1, 2007 and only a short 27 days later was ordered to be reported to the House floor by a vote of 37-29. At press time, the bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. Senator Barack Obama recently introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

This past fall, the Association drafted and submitted a Verizon shareholder proxy proposal calling on the Verizon Board to adopt a policy which would allow for an advisory shareholder approval of compensation for the company's named executive officers. At press time, the vote was in a dead heat, with 49% of shareowners voting for and 49% voting against the

proxy proposal. Verizon reps called the decision "too close to call" and definitive results are expected after a recount.

This proxy proposal received acclaim from columnists at the **Wall Street Journal**, **New York Times** and shareowner proxy services including Institutional Shareholder Services.

"As long-term shareholders," said Association President Bill Jones, "we believe that the owners of the company should be able to express their approval or disapproval of the Board's compensation package for the CEO and the other senior executives, just as shareholders do at public companies in the U.K. and Australia."

According to Institutional Shareholder Services, in the U.K. the required shareholder advisory vote on compensation policies, "has proven a valuable tool in encouraging companies to improve their practices...[and] has contributed to a significant increase in constructive dialogue between companies and directors."

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2006 FINANCIAL REPORT

The 2006 Association of BellTel Retirees Inc financial report was presented at the recent annual meeting in Dover, Delaware. At the meeting we took the opportunity to thank our office staff for their outstanding work performance throughout the year and, in particular, for their dedication to helping the many members who call us looking for assistance. Our staff works closely with the Executive Director and the board, communicating members' concerns, and making recommendations for improving overall administrative operations. They have our overwhelming thanks and we are very proud of their work.

As required by the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, BDO Seidman, LLP conducted an audit of our 2005 financial statements in June 2006. The audit included examining, on a test basis, records, receipts, methods and internal controls as supporting evidence of the amounts disclosed in our financial statements. The auditors found that our financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. at December 31, 2005 and conform to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The audit's statement of financial position as of December 31, 2005 reflected total assets of \$578,002. Audit results were presented to the Board and a copy has been filed with the New York State Attorney General.

Following is a summary of our financial transactions for 2006. All 2006 financial records will be audited in the second quarter of 2007.

	% of Total
Newsletter	
Printing/Postage	21.82%
Publishing	<u>6.80%</u>
	28.62%
Wages/Taxes	14.50%
Meetings/Travel	7.25%
Public Relations/ Media/Promotions	6.07%
Fundraising	5.33%
Tel./Web Site	1.88%
Office Overhead	6.64%
Professional Fees	11.59%
Dues/Contributions	18.11%
Total	100%

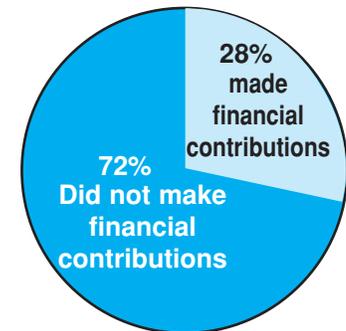
REVENUE

Our 2006 revenue and other income totaled **\$670,279**, a decrease of 7% overall for the year. Members' contributions fell behind 2005 by 8%, reflecting a 12% loss in total membership. This loss was offset by a 3% gain in the average contribution. Twenty-eight percent of the membership contributed in 2006, and the average contribution was \$23.81. We continue to seek ways to increase the number of contributing members, and to find ways to reduce operating expenses.

EXPENSE

Our expense for the year totaled \$764,291, reflecting a 14.8% increase vs. 2005. This increase resulted mainly from our strategic decision to intensify our lobbying efforts for passage of HR1322 by forming and providing the start-up funds for our own lobbying organization, ProtectSeniors.Org - which represents 16.6% of our total expense. This lobbying expense will

MEMBERS FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION IN 2006



be reduced each year as ProtectSeniors.Org establishes its own membership base and reaches out to retirees of all corporations across the country.

Excluding our investment in ProtectSeniors.Org, we reduced other expenses overall by 7%. Publication of our newsletter, including printing, postage and advertising expense, continues to be our largest expense.

Wages and taxes represent 14.5% of total expense. We control wages by efficient use of temporary support in peak administrative periods. Your board is not compensated, and we continued to devote over 9,000 hours of personal volunteer time in the year 2006 to help Verizon retirees and to highlight their needs nationwide.

Professional fees include costs for our auditing and accounting services, and legal costs in connection with our proxy effort. We do not anticipate a reduction in these fees.

Travel expense to reimburse the board, and conference and annual meeting expense increased in 2006. We held our 10th anniversary annual meeting on Long Island, the location of our first annual meeting, and costs were above average. A higher reimbursement rate for car mileage (IRS standard) increased travel costs. We conduct several board meetings a year via conference calls, in an effort to hold down travel expense.

Nationwide media coverage for the

(Continued on page 9)



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Retiree News & Notes

Heartfelt Thanks

After longtime Association of BellTel Retirees Inc. member and contributor Nelson Greer recently passed away, the organization was notified that in lieu of flowers, his family requested that loved ones make financial contributions in Greer's name to the Association, a first in the Association's history.

Mr. Greer started his career with the New York Telephone Company and served 33 years before retiring in 1981. His first position was collecting coins out of pay phones after the Second World War. Mr. Greer's final position with the company was as an Account Executive managing the Cornell University and Ithaca College systems.

He was very proud of the work that he did, his service with the Pioneers of America and collected all of the glass bells that they sold. Just before he passed away he gave his son John the one that he treasured the most.

John, an attorney for the Department of Defense in Fort Meade, Maryland, was extremely pleased that the Association was so appreciative of his father's last request. John told the

2006 FINANCIAL REPORT

(Continued from page 8)

Association and its retirees' issues continued to grow as more news sources sought our input and opinions. This is our best source for highlighting the work of the Association and our reputation as a leading advocate of retiree issues. Fundraising costs increased as we sought to increase contributions, but were offset by savings in postal costs with a new method for handling returns.

Our total assets at year-end were \$467,829. We have a solid foundation for 2007 and with your continued financial and grassroots support we will implement important strategies in the legislative, proxy and legal arenas.

Thank you.

Eileen Lawrence, Treasurer

Association that his father enjoyed reading the *BellTel Retiree*, and more than once heard his father request that when he passed away, in lieu of flowers or charity contributions, he wanted contributions sent only to the Association.

To date, we have received contributions from family, friends and John's coworkers at the Department of Defense. Each contribution is acknowledged personally and greatly appreciated.

AT&T's Attic – A Rare Glance

Association of BellTel Retirees Member, Don Robert House, takes a special interest in the history of the communications industry. Years ago, Mr. House, Curator Emeritus of the North American Data Communications Museum at the San Diego Computer Museum, began efforts to create a museum dedicated to preserving special service, teletypewriter and data communications technology.

Mr. House and a team of Bell Labs volunteers began to travel the country collecting everything they could get their hands on. They wanted to open a communications museum like no other the world had seen, but their efforts were hampered when Lucent surrendered its Warren, NJ warehouse shortly after the Bell Labs volunteers had added the last items to it.

Since then, the warehouse keys have been given to the new AT&T which has few employees in their archives department, and an even smaller budget. Thus, items are collected only once in a while, and most of the collection is merely collecting dust.

Mr. House is doing all he can to ensure that these items are given the historic justice that he feels they deserve. If his efforts are successful, the collection will soon be on display at the San Diego State University Library.

For more information on this rare collection, contact Mr. House via email: drhouse@nadcomm.com.

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Member Mailbag



Dear Association,

I am confused because I have received solicitations from ProtectSeniors.Org and NRLN. Both organizations are involved in legislative activities.

Which one should I support?

C.H.
Greenville, SC

Dear C. H.,

There are many organizations that are involved in legislative matters and a lot of them are very dedicated to their cause. However, not everyone can afford to contribute to numerous organizations.

The Association of BellTel Retirees formed ProtectSeniors.Org to focus on what we think is the most important issue facing retirees and pre retirees - saving our company-subsidized health-care insurance. Therefore, unless you can afford contributions to many

organizations, we recommend that you direct your support to the Association of BellTel Retirees and to ProtectSeniors.Org.

We pledge to use your contributions very prudently and in a focused manner to protect your hard-earned benefits.

Dear Association,

Let me be among those to send you and Bud Brown a thank you for the article regarding "Concession Service," (Spring 2007).

When I retired in '91 from one of the Enterprise companies we were told this was not one of our benefits. Your article prompted me to inquire. The results of the call were absolutely amazing; I am, somehow, now entitled after all these years.

The bottom line is you and Bud have started the process that will refund every dollar I have paid in dues since joining the Association.

Again, thanks for your great work and that of all of the contributing members of the organization.

Sincerely,
Richard F. Gheen
Huntingdon Valley, PA

Dear Association,

I just wanted to say THANK YOU to the folks at the Association for your help in getting my Healthcare coverage straightened out.

After literally months of phone calls and hours on the phone with the Human Resources people at Verizon and Hewitt explaining to them the issue and that the documentation they sent out in October of 06 was not correct, which by the way, seemed to go no where. Making ONE phone call to the Association was all it took.

My issue was resolved within 2 days. Again THANK YOU so much for your help.

As the old saying goes "I couldn't have done it without you." Keep up the Great work that you folks are doing.

Ron Jacobsen
Retired District Manager
NYNEX

Dear Association,

The Spring 2007 newsletter was a great issue - loaded with valuable information! My son has recently retired from Verizon and I have called his name and address into your '800' number to get him started into membership. Thanks Very Much.

Robert C. Rohrer
Frederick, MD

Dear Association,

As another year begins I would like to thank you for all your efforts on my behalf as well as countless other retirees who may not be able to write to you.

Your dedication and tireless effort is greatly appreciated!

May your light continue to shine bright and may God's wisdom and love be a source of comfort to you and all the other members of your team.

Sincerely,
Joan Wilson

DID YOU ACCEPT THE BUY-OUT?

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RECENT RECOVERIES

\$200,000	\$76,500	\$38,000
\$80,000	\$75,000	\$24,250
\$23,475	\$10,000	\$60,000
\$14,500	\$22,500	\$55,000

News for "Snowbirds"

In an effort to keep Florida's seasonal resident customers, Verizon has begun offering a new "Snowbirds" program which lets winter residents reserve their home phone, high-speed internet and Verizon's DIRECTV service absolutely free - meaning no recurring monthly charge.

Besides the obvious monetary benefits, the program gives the estimated 35,000 "winter-only" residents the opportunity to keep the same phone number while away for the summer season.

The program encourages customers to call the Customer Service and Solutions Centers with their departure date and anticipated return. Verizon also guides customers to call

Verizon News



Verizon OnLine for high-speed Internet service and DIRECTV because both can be maintained for up to six months.

FiOS TV is on the Rise

Despite industry skepticism, Verizon Telecom has recently

received approval to provide FiOS TV service to more than 10 million households, allowing the company to be more of a competitor in the video market.

Currently, Verizon is about a third of the way to their goal of reaching 18 million households by 2010. At the end of 2006, the FiOS network had passed more than 6 million homes, doubling the number from the previous year. Verizon Telecom reports that nearly 3 million homes are open for video sale in 10 states including California, Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. Indiana, Oregon and Rhode Island are next.

Verizon Defeats Vonage in Intellectual Property Lawsuit

Vonage Holdings was ordered to pay Verizon Communications \$58 million in damages plus royalties by a federal jury in March 2007 for infringing on three patents for Internet telephone technology. Vonage is also required to pay 5.5% of any monies made from the use of technologies associated with the infringed patents.

Verizon brought suit against Vonage

in June 2006 claiming that five of its patents had been violated by the New Jersey based Internet phone company. After the verdict, Verizon also sought an injunction to keep Vonage from using the technology, which Vonage appealed.

In its defense, Vonage claimed that it uses "its own technology and technology licensed from third parties." The internet phone provider appealed the verdict, but was denied by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The verdict comes at a time when many landline customers are switching to Internet phone companies and cable TV companies that offer phone service in bundled packages. According to Juniper Research, 7.8 million households were using Internet phone providers in 2006 instead of landlines.

If the injunction is upheld in the scheduled June 25th hearing, it could signal the death knell of the Internet phone provider, forcing Vonage to suspend services.

Telco Friendly Technology

Sometimes the so-called convenience of a personal computer can be a little intimidating to those who aren't so technologically inclined, leaving them out of the loop with others who seem to communicate solely via the World Wide Web.



A device called PrestoSM seeks to change that with a new Hewlett-Packard (HP) Printing Mailbox and the Presto Service. This new communications service allows a user to receive e-mail messages and digital photos using a printing mailbox that operates through an existing telephone line.

Simply plug in the HP Printing Mailbox (very similar to a traditional printer) and purchase a subscription to the service. An online address will be assigned to the machine and then friends and family can send e-mails and digital photos from their computers to the printing mailbox.

(Continued on page 12)

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BellTel Blood Drive

By Mike McFadden

Get a life and give life.

In the years after retirement I had done several things with my extra time and had a few part time jobs which were somewhat fulfilling; one of them especially: teaching adults to learn telecommunications. After 9-11 that changed and I was looking for something to do that would make a difference.

I signed up to chair a blood drive in my area as a member of the Association. I am proud to say that we were successful from the start, collecting about 50 pints of blood and, best of all, getting together with former workers, other retirees and family. We received help soliciting donors from my union IBEW Local # 827. Between the help from the Red Cross, my wife, Rita, and

my buddies, Gene Lista and Rich Spieler, we were well on our way.

If you are retired or active, and looking for a way to make a difference in your life and the life of hundreds of other people, do what we did. Since April 4th, 2005 until now we have run 8 blood drives collecting 348 units of blood. Each unit of whole blood can be broken down into 3 blood products ultimately having the potential to help 3 patients in need. So, do the math; 3 times 348 equals 1044 products and who knows how many people benefited.

So if you are looking for a fulfilling endeavor call 1-800-givelife. We love doing it and the Red Cross will give you all the help you need. Just do it in the name of the Association of BellTel Retirees or your union and get back to donating and helping others. Most organizations, like a senior center or fire hall will loan you space for the event and possibly even help in getting donors. You will change your life and the life of so many others and feel good doing it.

If you need help, or wish to discuss



Association of BellTel Retirees members donating blood at recent Red Cross drive in New Jersey

moving forward, call me at 856-767-1131. Upcoming blood drives are currently planned for September and December at the Stratford, NJ Senior Citizens' Hall. I look forward to seeing our donors and all who want to get together just to catch up.

NOTE: To be a blood donor you must be in generally good health, be 17 years of age and weigh at least 120 lbs. You are never too old.

Mike McFadden is the Association of BellTel Retirees Director of Union Relations.

Telco Friendly Technology

(Continued from page 11)

Once sent, messages are formatted into a ready-to-print layout selected from several simple options. Items received can be printed at the user's convenience.

The cost for the Presto service is just \$9.99 a month and a one time charge of \$149.99 for the printing machine.

For more information, call 1-866-428-0970.

Help For New York's Grandparents

If you are the primary caregiver for your grandchild and reside in New York State, www.nysnavigator.org, the website launched and funded by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, provides a comprehensive list of services you may need.

Named the Kinship Navigator, this statewide program, operated by Catholic Family Center, offers a myriad of resources connected with raising a grandchild, including legal issues and information about education, health benefits and lists of support groups in your area.

The Kinship Navigator also includes regional programs like the Northeast Parent and Child Society, Inc. in Schenectady and RAPP- Relatives as Parents Program in Putnam County.

For more information visit the website or call 877-4KinInfo (877-454-6463) between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday thru Friday.



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