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Inside Towers

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iHeart's Towerco Creditors Want More Control of Debt Liens

UPDATE Only months after iHeartMedia filed for bankruptcy, their unsecured creditors, with tower companies accounting for over $5.5 million of that amount, are taking issue with the current compensation structure set out by the Federal Bankruptcy Court of Southern Texas. In short, companies like Vertical Bridge (with the largest claim for $3 million), the three 'majors' (a collective $2.2 million) and mid-tier companies like SubCarrier ($33,000), want more control of the proceedings. The unsecured creditors' committee after performing, in their words, "a thorough investigation," questioned the validity of several liens and wants the court to let them prosecute claims against the senior creditors. In the documents filed Monday, creditors have noted "at least 12 colorable and valuable causes of action" and the "validity of certain liens that purportedly secure such claims."

The filing by the unsecured creditors said the liens were invalid because:

- they were given when guarantors were already insolvent
- certain financing statements had expired
- documentation errors occurred
- cash proceeds were combined with cash that was not collateral for the term loans

San Antonio-based iHeart, the largest owner of radio stations in the U.S., filed for bankruptcy in March citing dwindling advertising revenues and increased competition from online media and digital streaming sources. They have said they've reached restructuring terms with holders of approximately $10 billion worth of debt and equity.

FCC Security Ban Could Affect 911 and Rural Towers

The FCC, at the direction of the administration, recently proposed a ban on equipment subsidies for telecoms that use equipment or technology from companies considered to be threats to U.S. security; that could leave dozens of small, rural cell providers that rely on inexpensive equipment from companies like Huawei and ZTE without working cell towers and reduced coverage, including 911 emergency services.

John Nettles, president of family-owned Pine Belt Communications, which operates in five low-income Alabama counties, told *McClatchy*: "Those people can only get service from

me. If that service goes away, then they get isolated again."

If the FCC ruling goes into effect, some rural providers will have to replace equipment and cut back on infrastructure in order to remain operational, *Inside Tower*s reported. According to United TelCom Chief Executive Todd Houseman, some customers only have cellular service, no landlines, so if coverage is lost, their inability to call first responders would "threaten the safety of life, health, and property in those locations." Additionally, many rural first responders rely on rural carrier networks, Caressa Bennet, general counsel for the Rural Wireless Association, told McClatchy.
Continue Reading

DOJ Tries Again to Scuttle AT&T-TW Deal

AT&T said Thursday evening, it's surprised the Department of Justice is appealing its antitrust challenge to the carrier's purchase of Time Warner but is ready to defend itself. A district court judge found in favor of the deal last month.

The DOJ offered no details of its appeal, according to *Law360.*

AT&T General Counsel David McAtee called the June 12 court decision "thorough, fact-based, and well-reasoned," in a statement. "While the losing party in litigation always has the right to appeal if it wishes, we are surprised that the DOJ has chosen to do so under these circumstances," he continued. "We are ready to defend the Court's decision at the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals."

When U.S. District Judge Richard Leon rejected the DOJ's claims that the combination of AT&T and Time Warner would hurt competition and drive up consumer prices, he warned the government should not seek a stay, *Inside Towers* reported. The parties closed the $85.4 billion deal on June 14.

Tower Ticker

July 13, 2018 at Close

Symbol	Price	Change	% Change	Low	Volume	High	52 Wk High	52 Wk Low
AMT	143.23	-0.53	-0.37%	142.93	953.70k	144.62	155.28	130.37
AMX	17.57	-0.17	-0.96%	17.55	1.86M	17.76	19.91	14.85
CCI	111.06	+0.31	+0.28%	110.34	1.11M	111.49	114.97	93.14
COMM	29.75	-0.11	-0.37%	29.71	1.17M	30.19	41.60	26.29
CTL	19.88	-0.12	-0.60%	19.72	5.13M	20.06	24.14	13.16
DY	99.17	+1.25	+1.28%	98.18	255.78k	99.99	123.99	73.95
ERIC	7.73	-0.01	-0.13%	7.70	2.96M	7.76	8.05	5.52
FTR	5.06	-0.06	-1.17%	5.05	2.20M	5.17	18.21	4.90
S	5.66	0.00	0.00%	5.59	6.75M	5.69	8.92	4.81
SBAC	164.61	-0.71	-0.43%	164.35	530.48k	166.82	177.67	134.50
T	31.67	-0.56	-1.74%	31.50	53.37M	31.92	39.80	31.17
TMUS	61.68	+0.10	+0.16%	60.97	3.08M	61.81	66.52	54.60
UNIT	21.70	+0.07	+0.32%	21.51	1.61M	21.89	26.55	13.81
VZ	51.41	+0.17	+0.33%	50.92	11.18M	51.45	54.77	43.20
ZAYO	38.44	-0.87	-2.21%	38.38	1.93M	39.35	39.66	29.98

AT&T to Acquire Cybersecurity Firm AlienVault

AT&T yesterday announced its plans to acquire AlienVault®, a privately-held company based in San Mateo, CA. The acquisition of AlienVault will enable AT&T to expand its enterprise-grade security solutions portfolio and offerings to millions of small and medium-sized businesses. AT&T cited AlienVault's expertise in threat intelligence that will allow customers to access a broad set of enterprise-grade security capabilities.

According to a 2017 study conducted by the Ponemon Institute, more than 61 percent of small and medium-sized businesses have been breached in the last 12 months, up from 55 percent in 2016.

"Regardless of size or industry, businesses today need cyber threat detection and response technologies and services," said Thaddeus Arroyo, CEO, AT&T Business. "The current threat landscape has shifted this from a luxury for some, to a requirement for all."

Zoning & Moaning

Virginia

Homeowner Gets T-Mo to Take Down Equipment

After years of litigation, Patricia Richardson finally settled with T-Mobile over an “illegal” cell tower in her backyard, with the carrier finally backing down and removing its equipment, reported *The Virginian-Pilot*. “A little homeowner goes up against a major corporation,” is how Richardson described her fight.

The story began with a legal Dominion Energy power pole that sits on the Richardson’s property in Norfolk. All was quiet for about 55 years since the utility owned an easement on the land since 1958.

In 2001, a cell phone provider, which was eventually bought by T-Mobile, struck a deal with Dominion to erect cellular broadcasting equipment on the pole without making a deal with the landowners for access. When the Richardsons purchased the property in 2004, they didn’t make an issue of the antenna, until Dominion technicians began trespassing on their property and adding new equipment to the pole. Continue Reading

DAS/Small Cells

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Hawaii

Ah, Paradise! Pineapples, Luaus...and Small Cells

Government Technology reported that Mobilitie LLC, representing Sprint, is installing small cell equipment on 67 poles largely concentrated in Honolulu’s urban core but also in Central Oahu, Leeward Oahu, and Laie.

The first company to ink a deal with Honolulu, Mobilitie agreed to pay the city between $167,500 and $268,000 per year to use the 67 poles, based on a licensing fee of $2,500 per pole in neighborhoods with lower population densities and $4,000 per pole in higher-density neighborhoods. The arrangement, which also includes a one-time permit fee of $500 per pole and a four percent annual licensing fee increase, is valid for five years and can be extended for two additional five-year terms, according to *Government Technology*. Continue Reading

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Cell-ebrations

Florida

Good Results as Crown Collaborates with Town On Small Cell Plan

Recently, representatives from Crown Castle outlined a plan to improve cell phone service in downtown Windermere via small cells, reported the *Orange Observer*. So far, the town seems pleased with the partnership. ”I appreciate [Crown Castle] actually sitting down [with

us] and trying to come to some kind of an agreement — if you will — as to what they will look like and how they will be placed," Windermere Mayor Gary Bruhn said.

According to Project Manager Ann Bradley, the design being proposed for downtown Windermere is a street pole with one or two lights attached. She said five new poles would be installed in the right-of-way along Main Street. Additionally, each node will allow for co-location. Continue Reading

International

Australia

Aussies to Cap Spectrum For Upcoming Auctions

The Australian government said it will place a limit on the amount of spectrum available to each carrier in the upcoming 5G auction. Bidding telcos will have their current spectrum holdings assessed to determine how much more spectrum they can purchase.

The spectrum on the block in October of 2018 is in the 3.6 GHz range with a limit of 60 MHz for urban areas and 80 GHz in regional areas.

"These limits account for existing spectrum holdings in the broader 3400-3700 MHz band, meaning that carriers which already have significant holdings in this band would be limited in the amount of new spectrum they could bid for, or may not be able to participate in the auction," said Mitch Fifield Australia's Minister of Communications.

"Australians have a voracious appetite for mobile data, and our competitive telecommunications market means that Australians already enjoy some of the fastest mobile broadband speeds in the world," Fifield said. "These auction limits promote competition in the telecommunications industry while ensuring this scarce spectrum is put to its highest-value use."

Town Hall

Ohio

Storm Damages 911 System While New Towers Are Planned

Hancock County, OH was hit with a severe thunderstorm last week damaging the microwave system at the building housing the 911 operations, according to the *Review*. Office of Technology and Communications executive director Bob Vidas, said the 911 center eventually switched to a backup generator and a backup system after the building itself took a hit.

"We have T-1 backups for the northern end of the county," Vidas said. "When the microwave went down, we went straight to T-1. The microwave was right where we replaced it Monday, and they are back online as our primary

source right now."

Also related to county infrastructure, Vidas said his office received two estimates for two, 208-foot towers. He said the plan was to have the new towers installed near the current towers, and then tear down the old ones at another time, the *Review* reported.

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Broadband Briefing

WIA: How Mobile Network Operators Are Addressing Mobile Broadband Demand

The wireless industry is taking significant steps to address the coming economic and technological challenge of satisfying America's unquenchable thirst for mobile data, according to a new report from the Wireless Infrastructure Association (WIA). The paper, titled *Feeding the Beast: How Mobile Operators are Racing to Keep Up with Insatiable Demand for Mobile Broadband*, features articles examining new wireless technologies and the issues facing the wireless infrastructure industry. Produced by WIA's Innovation & Technology Council (ITC) and its Data Crunch Working Group, the report covers a variety of topics designed to educate industry professionals, policymakers, and the public.

Americans are increasingly relying on mobile devices as their predominant method of getting online. As a result, traffic on mobile networks has grown exponentially over the past decade and this growth shows no sign of abating. The report explores how wireless stakeholders are addressing this demand. Network optimization efforts, densification strategies, new spectrum and new technologies are among the issues discussed. Continue Reading

Comp Country

Building Permits Week of July 9

- Sprint, 4355 Arthur Durham Drive E., contractor is Crown Castle USA, cell tower upgrade, $65,000.

Source: J*acksonville Daily Record*

Conference News

CCA's Annual Convention Offers Three Events For the Price of One

This year at CCA's Annual Convention in Orlando, they're offering three networking/social events for the price of one. CCA members pay $199 and non-members pay $225 to add-on all of Monday's activities which include bass fishing, golf and laser skeet shooting. Here's what's planned for Monday, October 1:

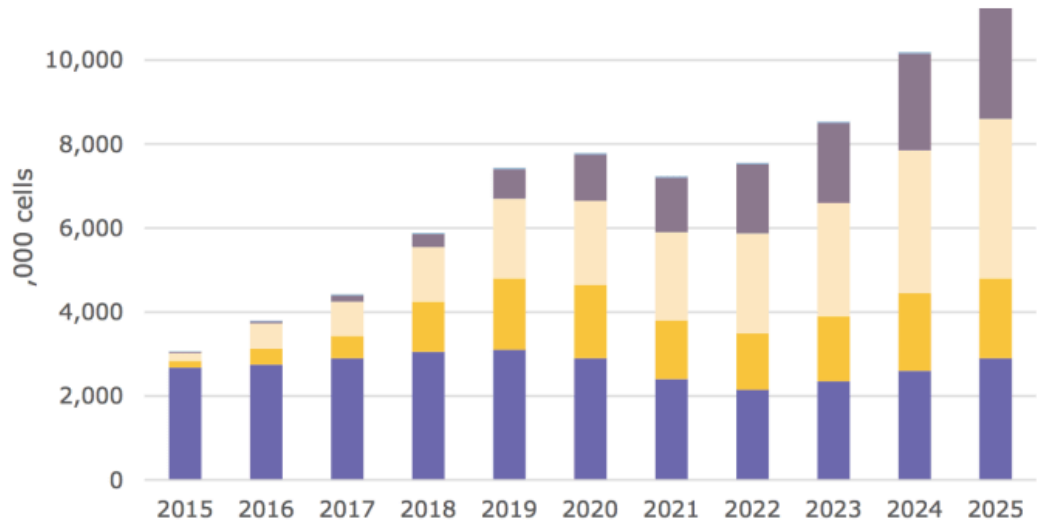
- 8 a.m.: "Catch of the Day" CCA's (first-ever!) Bass Fishing Tournament. Anglers will fish the beautiful lakes around the Omni ChampionsGate property by kayak and on-shore. The lakes are filled with citation-sized bass, and guides will be on-hand to provide instructions and will record each catch to determine the winners.
- 12 p.m: CCA's Annual Golf Tournament. Since CCA's inception over 25 years ago, its yearly golf tournament has been a staple.
- 6 p.m.: Chairman's Reception featuring Laser Skeet Shooting: Another first-time event - laser skeet shooting. Using high-tech infrared technology, attendees will compete against one another to see can hit the most virtual clay disks. Chairman's Reception and Laser Skeet Shooting are open to all registered #CCA2018 attendees.

To register see this link. CCA said prices will increase on August 24.

Sitetracker Insights

Three Steps to Maximizing Your Operational Efficiency

PART 1 of 2



Small cell deployments are poised for a dramatic uptick (Image via Small Cell Forum)

It’s not news to anyone that streamlined workflows or processes generally result in tremendous savings in both time and cost. Indeed, it would be surprising if every business leader did not have several ongoing initiatives designed to optimize their overall effectiveness. After all, small improvements in productivity can be a key differentiator between yourself and your closest competitors or hitting board and investor targets. This is especially true for tower companies and networks where these efficiencies are even more pronounced due to their business models. Continue Reading

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The Vatican, contributed by Danielle Combs.

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