

Inside Towers

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Roger: Two-Way Radio Is Over-and-Out

It seems that two-way radio transmissions are a thing of the past. At least that's the way the FAA sees it. The agency has a list of 240 or more airport towers that could be closed and dismantled.

They crisscross the nation, from sites in downtown Mobile, AL, to the Salinas Municipal tower in Salinas, CA, to Northeast Florida Regional Airport, in St. Augustine. Also on the list is the Frederick Municipal Airport in Fredrick, Md., some 20 miles south of Camp David, the president's retreat in the Maryland mountains.

Several towers came down last week around Amarillo, TX. "What's going on is these remote control relay links are no longer being used throughout the country. They're going to new technology...fiber optics," Randy Perl, Resident Engineer of the Parson Corporation, told the NewsChannel10.com shared website for KFDA, KEYU, KZBA in Amarillo.

Perl travels the country taking the towers down and says changing technology is a good thing. But not everyone agrees. And while Whitaker says he will miss the radio tool when it is completely gone, he is pleased with the new forms of communication. "Like in the satellite giving us communication. I know eventually it will be there. We have transmitting towers and radar and things like that, so it's going to be a big thing because it's always moving."

Local Amarillo pilot John Whitaker says the two-way system was useful, more "hands-on." As the FAA continues to tear down towers, reports the NewsChannel10.com it is giving much of the land they were on to its owners.



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Who Wins With LTE-U?

Last week, supporters of LTE-U technology launched the EVOLVE coalition to promote consumer benefits of unlicensed spectrum and calm regulatory concerns that this technology won't cause major disturbances. Jonathan Schildkraut of Evercore ISI noted in the firm's July Telecom Newsletter that there were certain winners and losers in the LAA (Licensed Assisted Access) world. "We see three reasons why the carriers could benefit from the allowance of LTE-U: (a) reduced capital needs, (b) expanded platform for converting wireline services to wireless networks, and (c) reduced price-per-bit."

The analyst noted that an increase in unlicensed spectrum could mean that Multiple System Operators like Google and other Wi-Fi first providers, who have likely become accustomed to greater shar-

ing, will become more fearful of this technology. Before EVOLVE was formed, T-Mobile and Verizon were spearheading the push for this technology. Verizon has noted they would begin using LTE-U in 2017. Schildkraut explained, “The government has not yet issued a formal ruling on LTE-U, but coupling the formation of EVOLVE and our view that the FCC is looking to foster a competitive environment, we believe the carriers are likely to benefit.”

Judge Rules in Favor of Verizon

Judge Jon Levy of the U.S. District Court for the District of Maine ruled September 30 in the matter of Cape Elizabeth vs. Verizon Wireless. In March 2014, the town denied the carrier a permit an installation on an existing water tower. Judge Levy ruled that the town was wrong to deny the permit. However, he also decided to uphold the town’s claim that Verizon’s permit was not subject to the federal Spectrum Act, which requires municipalities to approve requests for installing equipment on existing structures (Keep ME Current).

Verizon filed a lawsuit in July 2014 after the Zoning Board upheld a decision made by the code enforcement officer to deny the company’s request the previous month. The Current reported that Code Enforcement Officer Ben McDougal determined that the structure did not fit the town’s definition of an “alternative tower structure” or meet other requirements in the town’s zoning ordinance. In the filing, Verizon claimed the Board violated the Spectrum Act and the town’s ordinance when denying the permit. Judge Levy decided that the 70-year-old water tower is an alternative tower structure. The water tower is owned by the Portland Water District and has not been used for water storage since 2007.

In the judge’s order, Levy said, “the Spectrum Act does not apply to the proposal because the proposal does not qualify as an ‘eligible facilities request.’ Therefore, the act does not mandate that the town approve Verizon’s permit request” (Keep ME Current). He also explained that the town’s zoning ordinance does permit the installation of wireless antennas on water towers.



WSM's 90th Birthday Highlights Cool Broadcast Tower

WSM 650 AM Radio hosted an open house at its broadcast tower and radio transmission complex in Brentwood, TN, to celebrate their 90th year in operation. Since 1925, the radio station has been one of the most famous country music stations, and the Grand Ole Opry was the first of WSM’s shows. The 808-foot tower was added to the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service in March 2011.

Built in 1932 by Blaw-Knox Steel Co., when energized the station’s diamond-shaped vertical antenna, located just south of Nashville, made it the tallest tower in the nation. According to the Brentwood Homepage, from May 2010 to January 2011, WSM broadcast from the white building near the tower on its 30-acre Brentwood tract after the 2010 flood devastated its studios in the Opryland Hotel complex.

Long Trail Holdings Acquires Eastpointe Industries

Eastpointe Industries, an Oklahoma-based communications tower manufacturer, has been acquired by Dallas, TX-based holding company Long Trail Holdings. Tulsa-based investment banking

and business advisory firm ClearRidge advised Eastpointe Industries management in their search for a partner who would help expand the business. Eastpointe was represented by Bruce Jones and Matthew Bristow, managing directors of ClearRidge. “Long Trail Holdings had the shared vision for the continued growth of Eastpointe, as well as the industry experience through their board and limited partners that made them stand out as the ideal partner for Eastpointe,” Jones said in a statement (Tulsa World).



West Virginia's Manchin Wants Senate Broadband Hearing

Concerned that West Virginians don't have proper access to wireless coverage, Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin has asked for a hearing on the state of wireless service in America, according to the Logan, W.VA. Banner.

“As Senators who represent rural and remote states, you know how important access to communications services is to public safety, economic development, and education,” Manchin wrote in an October 2 letter sent to Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation & the Internet Chairman Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Ranking Member Brian Schatz (D-HI). “Without access to broadband and mobile services, our rural communities and people cannot compete in the global economy.

In an earlier letter sent last week to FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, Manchin asked the agency to improve its universal wireless service in the Mountain State. He said the broadband industry has made “great strides in building out mobile infrastructure” nationally over the past decade, resulting in hundreds of millions of consumers now having access to advanced wireless communications, “but significant coverage gaps still exist in West Virginia and across rural America.”

Manchin encouraged the FCC to use its Mobility Fund, established to significantly improve wireless coverage in unserved, rural areas by supporting private investment. Manchin also invited Wheeler to West Virginia to see firsthand the communications challenges that remain in rural communities. The FCC created a new universal service program in 2011 designed specifically to support the deployment of advanced wireless infrastructure. The program was designed to provide the most funding to the states with the lowest rates of wireless penetration. West Virginia had one the lowest rates of wireless service penetration when the fund was initiated, reports the Banner, adding “that is where we remain today.”

Adelstein to Testify at Senate Hearing

Jonathan Adelstein, president and CEO of PCIA—The Wireless Infrastructure Association, will testify at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation tomorrow. He will be joined by a panel of other industry leaders to discuss the ways to remove barriers to wireless broadband deployment. According to the PCIA, “This session is part of a series of hearings designed to produce bipartisan broadband legislation. Adelstein, a former FCC Commissioner, will address the urgent need for America to invest in and deploy greater wireless infrastructure to meet the soaring consumer demand for mobile data. He is expected to emphasize the need to streamline siting procedures, improve job training programs, and tap federal property to locate wireless facilities, among other issues.”

AT&T Response to Verizon's 5G Announcement

By Michelle Choi, an insider at [Lease Advisors](#)

Verizon announced that it will begin to test 5G network technology next year with the goal of full implementation by 2017, just five years after the debut of the Verizon 4G network. The industry giant began testing 4G in 2008, made the first 4G call in 2009, and launched its 4G network in 2010, but the planned rollout of 5G will cut that timeline in half. Other wireless industry carriers are on track to implement 5G networks by 2020, significantly later than Verizon.

Executive VP Roger Gurnani said, "5G is no longer a dream of the distant future. We feel a tremendous sense of urgency to push forward on 5G and mobilize the ecosystem by collaborating with industry leaders and developers to usher in a new generation of innovation." 5G will be able to deliver 50x more capacity than 4G, allowing mobile devices to perform high-capacity tasks and stream or download high quality videos in seconds. VP of Network Technology and Planning, Adam Koeppe said Verizon's goal is to test 5G technology on existing networks as soon as possible and be at the forefront of the advancements.

AT&T, however, had a few things to say after the announcement. AT&T Mobility CEO Glenn Lurie commented at the CTIA Wireless Industry trade show that carriers often over-promise and under-deliver with regard to new technology. He believes that the underlying technology of the 5G network is still developing standards and it is too premature to begin announcing the coming benefits to customers. "Let's make sure that before we start hyping what it's going to be, that those standards are agreed to," Lurie said. Continue reading [here](#).



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★ CCI	04:01pm EDT 81.42	↑1.48 ↑1.85%	80.13 81.45	1,793,875
★ SBAC	04:00pm EDT 109.51	↑4.12 ↑3.91%	106.01 109.88	1,609,501
★ S	04:01pm EDT 4.42	↑0.17 ↑4.00%	4.20 4.50	28,575,818
★ T	04:00pm EDT 33.43	↑0.79 ↑2.42%	32.97 33.49	25,322,837
★ TMUS	04:00pm EDT 40.96	↑0.26 ↑0.64%	40.65 41.49	1,957,449
★ VZ	04:00pm EDT 44.00	↑1.16 ↑2.71%	43.24 44.02	13,537,805

Macquarie Securities Upgrades SBA

Macquarie Securities has upgraded SBA Communications (SBAC) to Outperform as growth is expected to pick up in 2016. Analyst Kevin Smithen explained, "We may be a little bit early in our Outperform call on SBAC as we feel that '16 AFFO/share consensus forecasts may have to come down 2-3% for the current Real (Brazilian currency) spot. What we think is not well understood, in

our view, is that SBAC has improved its visibility into renewed spending from AT&T in 2016, which we were able to validate at our recent meeting with AT&T senior management.” The analyst also explained that regarding the share repurchase plan, their model assumes a \$125 million per quarter buyback or just under a ~4% annual clip. “We have SBAC exiting ’16 at 6.2x run rate EBITDA, which we feel is prudent as the company begins the transition to REIT status,” Smithen wrote. “However, should SBAC choose to remain at 7x, the company could repurchase ~\$1 billion in additional shares or pursue inorganic expansion.”

Zoning & Moaning

Fighting in Bellevue

The development of three cell towers in Bellevue, NE, has been a touchy subject for nearby residents, who have been fighting their construction for nine months. Although two of them would be disguised as bell towers, residents and the city council have been set against the towers because they deem them as unsightly and too intrusive. In stark contrast, a cell tower disguised as a bell tower in the Southwind neighborhood, just a few miles from Bellevue, is so unassuming that residents who live a few hundred feet away have no idea that it is anything other than it appears.

The three towers are needed in Bellevue, which has been suffering from a lack of coverage. The city council of Bellevue has had several options to remedy the problem – including one that would give the city an extra \$2,500 a month. However, the council vetoed that plan because it would have been unsightly and occupied too much land in one of the city parks. Residents have cited concerns about tower appearance, health hazards, and potential decreases in property values to fight their construction. Currently, the FCC and independent studies indicate there are no health hazards to living in proximity to cell towers. For now, there is no noticeable effect on property values; although, values may actually rise in areas with better coverage. The problem for cell tower representatives is that urban development often deprives them of prime locations for new towers that are needed to accommodate the growth. For now, the best solution seem to be disguising towers or locating them in alternative structures.

Verizon Sues Belchertown for Denying Permit

The Planning Board in Belchertown, MA, has denied Verizon’s request for a permit to build a cell tower. The company has filed a lawsuit against the town in federal court, seeking to overturn the Board’s August 2015 denial of a special use permit. Verizon applied for the permit in order to build the 140-foot communications tower in a residential neighborhood. The Board originally approved the permit request on July 28, but a later vote ended up in a denial. When the tower was first approved, it was only done by a 3-2 vote and a super majority of the four votes was required. When all five members reconvened in August, a super majority was achieved denying the request.

Verizon filed its lawsuit on September 14 in the U.S. District Court District of Massachusetts naming the town of Belchertown, the planning board and the five board members as defendants. According to MassLive.com, the company says the board's decision was wrong, violates their legal right to provide cell phone service for their customers in a manner they deem necessary, and asks the court to grant them what the planning board did not: permission to build the tower. The 1996 federal Telecommunications Act requires decisions made by local governments to be "supported by substantial evidence contained in a written record." No trial date has yet been set, the court said on Wednesday. View Verizon’s filing [here](#).

Township Considers Conditional Use Permit

The Cherry Ridge Township Supervisors in Pennsylvania is considering a conditional use permit requested by Horvath Communication. The tower is one of seven structures the company is looking to build in Wayne County. A public hearing was held last Wednesday where opponents and supporters of the tower voiced their opinions. The permit is required because the potential site is in a rural development zone and the tower would be for commercial use. The Supervisors will issue a ruling this evening. According to the Wayne Independent, the tower would significantly increase high-speed wireless service in the area, specifically on the heavily-traveled Route 191, the township's main artery.



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Company Profile

Singer Executive Development Consistently Climbs Successful Ladder

Andy Singer, a young engineer, began his company in 1990 with a “vision of destiny.” Now 25 years later, Singer Executive Development has grown into an accumulation of that dream to help companies achieve success through team building, public speaking, negotiating and sales workshops. Learning about as many business functions as possible, Singer combined his training skills, MBA and business experience to “develop a set of training courses and mindset that provides for accelerated learning of these core business skill sets,” according to the Singer Executive Development website. A speaker and author, Singer teaches critical skill sets that are not taught in schools to technical, engineering and program managerial teams. Singer said that deciding on which training programs he would offer was interesting.

“I’ve always been involved in technology. There was such a basic need for time management skills, supervisory skills, sales skills—they weren’t taught in high school and in colleges, and it seemed like areas effective to train in,” he said. “And, it’s fun to see people who pick up those skills. It feels like you’ve done something useful.”

The first technical training course that the company developed was Microwave Antenna System Basics, Installation and Alignment, a topic near and dear to the former engineer’s heart. Next was the Microwave Radio System Training, a recent launch that would normally take years to complete. Singer distilled that down to three days so people can understand it better.

“Engineers will say, ‘We’ve been told to do something, and we just do it. Now we can understand the theory behind why we’re supposed to do it,’” Singer said.

Other courses offered include: Presentation Excellence, Ultimate Negotiating, Effective Supervision, Master of Time, The Art of Profitability and Line Sweeping 101: Line Sweep Training. Continue reading [here](#).