



# THE RETIREE GUARDIAN

Newsletter of CenturyLink Retirees

Issue 2 — 2022

[www.cltretirees.org](http://www.cltretirees.org)

## Message from the Chair

Hello to all and welcome to the second issue of the 2022 *Retiree Guardian*. We have made a lot of changes and additions in the last two years and there is still much to talk about and understand as we go forward.

Our biggest issues continue to be changes generated by the company's move to Businessolvers. There has been a great deal of confusion and questions about updating your personal data to assure that benefit claim reimbursements are made in an accurate and timely manner. Additional help lines have been added with trained representatives to assist us all. Please let us know how we can help if you continue to have issues; we will be glad to get involved. I am reassured by the fact that Lumen has promised that no reimbursement deadlines have been set and remain flexible in getting the database updated.

One great addition to our organization is a new, easily-accessed website for our members. You will find specific login information on available subjects. Please note that a section is available to Retiree Association members only, so be sure to take a look at that. A nice side benefit to this is the increase in membership that the website has generated.

This issue of *The Guardian*, the website, and upcoming emails include a survey asking your opinion on how or

if we should organize an annual in-person meeting or a virtual meeting via ZOOM as we did last year. Please take a moment to let us know your thoughts. If responses show enough interest and attendance to make it viable, we would plan to meet in the Minneapolis area sometime in early to mid-September. If you are unable to attend or not interested in meeting at this time, let us know that as well. In my opinion, it is always fun to meet with colleagues to share memories and stories about our careers with "the phone company."

It has been quite awhile since my last report. In the interim, members of your Board of Directors quickly took over my responsibilities, allowing me to devote full efforts to resolve some health issues. I am happy to report that I appear to be well on my way to recovery. I truly thank my fellow board members for their thoughts, prayers, and extra effort to keep our meetings going, while dealing with the HRA issues and all the other tasks required to keep this organization meaningful. I thank all of you for your kind thoughts and great participation. I look forward to many more years of retirement adventures and hope you do, as well.

*Gerold "Jerry" Weldon*

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**Our Mission: To preserve and protect the pension and benefits we earned**



# We need your input for next Annual Meeting

Your association’s Board of Directors have been discussing the possibility of having a 2022 annual membership meeting. The meeting would most likely be in September, and if in-person we would attempt to get facilities at Mystic Lake Casino in Prior Lake, Minnesota, similar to the meeting we canceled two years ago. We need your input to make this decision. Assume that the COVID conditions will be similar or better than they are today. To secure the space we need to make a decision right away if it is going to be an in-person meeting. Please consider the following items and then provide your input within one week of receiving this. Do it today while you are thinking about it by using one of the means discussed below.

1.  I would attend an in-person meeting.
2.  I would prefer a meeting via Zoom or other video service, similar to last year.  
Note it would be available on-line for those who cannot participate on the day of the meeting.
3.  I am not interested in either form of meeting.

We have provided three ways to give us feedback. You can use the survey comments section to provide more information than just answering the three main questions. Things that would help us include:

1. If you prefer an in-person meeting would you want a full meal as in the past or would you prefer shorter time frame with coffee and pastry?
2. Does the COVID situation influence your decision?
3. Who or what subjects would you like to hear at the meeting?

**Please provide your feedback using one of the following:**

1. Go to the on-line survey at <https://tinyurl.com/ctlretirees> to answer the survey and provide your comments.
2. Send Paul Williams an email at [vpwilli@comcast.net](mailto:vpwilli@comcast.net). Just state if you are likely to attend and prefer it in-person or via video plus any comments.
3. Send Paul a letter at 7653 Cahill Avenue, Inver Grove Heights MN 55076-3004.

Thank you for your input. (See page 14 to find out who the people in the photos are. Hint: 2019 Annual Meeting)



# Pension Plan “De-Risking” and the Recent Lumen Activity

By Cynthia Hadsell

One of the many reasons we strongly support the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) is because of the work they do on issues like pension plan “de-risking.” De-risking is intended to remove the risk to a corporation of pension liabilities. The pension assets are transferred to an insurance company which then administers the plan for a fee. The pension payments remain the same. First, let’s be clear. There is no pending activity of this type for current retirees or beneficiaries who have a pension.

However, there was de-risking of a subset of 26,600 Lumen retirees and beneficiaries announced last fall and recently implemented. We have neither a concern that their pension is in jeopardy for the future, nor a concern about ours. This does make a good example of a real situation and why we work with the NRLN to monitor the Annual Funding Notices (AFN) you receive from Lumen if you’re a pension holder. NRLN and your association are also pushing for changes to AFNs issued by all corporations to enhance the presentation of data, make the notices timelier and add more transparency to the funding level status. We know there is interest in Congress, but there is some push-back by corporations. We’d like the legal smoke-screen to be lifted.

What about that subset of 26,600 whose pensions are now administered by a Des Moines company called Athene Annuity and Life Company? Why were those retirees picked? Lumen tells us they had monthly gross pensions of less than \$1,070. What’s the main difference for them after they’ve been “de-risked” by Lumen? If the insurance company should later go bankrupt, those pension plan participants lose the

protection of the government agency called the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) created by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

What protection is that? If Lumen were to become bankrupt or for some severe reason be unable to continue the pension plan, PBGC’s insurance program would pay the benefit provided by the pension plan up to the limits set by law. The pension amount would be less, but there would be a percentage paid. The number of participants in the Lumen plan on 12/31/2020 was 88,019. Nationally, there are almost 23,100 single-employer plans that pay annual premiums to PBGC to be part of the program. Of that number, Lumen is ranked 34th based on number of participants. What is the largest in the country? AT&T with 435,704! The 2022 annual premium per participant is about \$88. So, \$88 x 88,019 means Lumen paid approximately \$7.7 million to support PBGC’s mandate to protect pensioners.

Again, we trust that our pension plan is going to be strong into the future. We also believe we need to continually verify our assumptions as part of the association’s mission to protect and preserve your earned benefits. The insurance industry is constantly at the door of corporations begging to take over pension plans. We’d like to think we retirees are more than commodities up for the highest bid. But business is business and we must be vigilant and aware of the pension environment. It’s “risky” not to do so! Stay tuned for more information and watch for your AFN this spring!

## Correction Notice

By Clyde Just

In the last issue of *The Retiree Guardian* I wrote an article titled “History of NWB Retiree Association.” I included a list of the many members who have served as Directors of our Association, however, I failed to include John Silvernail and Virginia Busch in this list. My apologies to John and Virginia for my mistake.



# Website Updates

By Greg Snyder

Our website went into overdrive the past three months as members and non-members alike logged in to find information and help navigating issues with the new administrator for LUMEN Benefits.

Many of the Board members went into overdrive too, working with their contacts inside and outside of the company to gather relevant information, in the end publishing ten separate updates to the website. That work generated over 5,000 visitors to the site, and over 14,000 views over those three months.

Follow the CenturyLink Retirees! We currently have over 400 followers of the website. Each of them received all of the new posts in their email as soon as they were published. They had no need to dig through the website to find the help they needed – it was already in their inbox. I would certainly encourage all of our members to become followers of the website in order to receive that same service. Simply go to

the upper right of our front page, CTLretirees.org, enter your email address and click on the “Subscribe” button.



Give it try. You will always have the option to select the frequency of notifications, or unsubscribe at any time.

While we remain committed to providing new updates on LUMEN / BusinessSolver issues or other timely topics, not all of the posts published to the site are of the need-to-know variety. We also are republishing the fun “Person-to-Person” stories written by Don Warsavage. They are great personal history stories from “our” companies’ past, and we hope you enjoy them.

As always, your input helps us do a better job, so if you have any suggestions for the website, or anything else, please don’t hesitate to send them to us via the contact form on the website.

Thanks for flying with CTLretirees.org!

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## Treasurer’s Report

By Paul Williams

The first quarter is always a little slow in the treasury, and this year is no exception. I won’t say I am getting bored, but so far this year I have only recorded 10 deposits and written seven checks. If you are wondering about the deposits, yes, we have members who renew at the beginning of the year. Our official year runs from June 30 to July 1 of the next calendar year. I don’t mind people renewing early as it spreads out the work. I and our contractor would be swamped if everyone renewed on June 30. We also had many brand-new members this year. I think most were influenced to join by our new website and some of the positive reaction to comments on Facebook during the hassle with the new HRA vendor. If you are new, Welcome! I don’t know why you are reading this instead of some of the informative and interesting articles in this issue, but glad to have you on board.

On the other side of the ledger, only one of the checks

was significant. We sent \$10,260 to the NRLN. That is \$5 from each of your dues and provides you a group membership in the National Retiree Legislative Network. Don’t confuse the two organizations. We work to keep you informed and to protect your Lumen benefits. The NRLN works to keep Congress and the government informed about retiree issues and to obtain legislation that protects all retirees. We are separate organizations that support each other and work together when beneficial.

One other item that you might not have thought about is that my next upcoming duty will be to fill out our tax report. Yes, we are a 501c(5) nonprofit corporation. Even though we do not pay taxes, we still have to report our revenue and expenses. If you were wondering, a contribution to our organization is not tax deductible for you. That is only for 501c(3) corporations like churches and charities.

# Membership and Retiree Guardian Updates

By Clyde Just

Our membership count at the beginning of this year was 2,052 paid members. In the first quarter of 2022 we have lost 24 members who have passed away and we have picked up 27 new members for a net gain of three members. While I don't expect that trend to continue, it certainly is a nice start to this year.

As of the end of March we have 1,626 members who have a July 2022 renewal date for their dues. Those of you who get a printed copy of *The Retiree Guardian* can check the last page to see when your dues are due. If you get an email copy, please check the cover letter of your email to see your renewal date.

Due to the July 4 holiday, you may see a few days delay when you will receive Issue 3. However, we should still get it sent out by the middle of July. The last issue of *The Retiree Guardian* for this year will be coming out in early October.

In this issue you can see that we have one picture of a retiree group and we also have one "I Remember When ..." article. Thanks to those members who sent these in and I urge (plead) with all of you to consider sending in more of both of these types of items for the next issue of *The Retiree Guardian*.

## *Challenge Accepted ...*



A retiree gathering at JB's Restaurant in Mesa, AZ on February 23, 2022. From the left: Jim McGough, Bill Wilson, Duane Langeberg, Wally Loran, Mary Ann Loran, Gail Langeberg, Eunice Kjelden, Jan Kjeldebo (non-telephone guest), Carol Anderson, Brenda Carlson, Pat Burns, Tom Burns, Bill Mattson, Sheldon Struble, E. John Carlson and Gary Kjelden.

# Lumen Benefits Update

By Barbara Wilcox

As I'm sure all retirees know by now, the transition to Businessolver, the new benefits administrator for Lumen, has been challenging. Marina Pearson, Lumen Vice President for Benefits, and her staff have been working hard to get the kinks out and to make it so that we can access our benefits, make changes and get our questions answered in a timely fashion. As I write this, the problems haven't all been resolved yet, but progress is being made.

## Direct Deposits and Withdrawals to/from Your Bank Account

If you were having premiums for dental insurance directly withdrawn from your bank account and/or reimbursements from your Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) directly deposited into your bank account, this process was interrupted at the first of the year. This is because your bank routing and account numbers could not legally be transferred to Businessolver. Businessolver has been sending bills in the mail or email for dental premiums and checks in the mail for HRA reimbursements. If you want automatic withdrawals/reimbursements to resume, you need to provide your bank routing and account numbers to the Lumen Health and Life Service Center by logging in to [lumen.com/healthbenefits](https://lumen.com/healthbenefits), contacting the Lumen Service Center at 833-925-0487, Mon-Fri, between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (CST), or using the paper form recently mailed out to retirees.

If your monthly pension payments were being directly deposited in your bank account, that should have continued without interruption, because it still is State Street bank that is paying our pensions.

## Pre-91 & 1992 ERO Retirees Medicare Premium Reimbursement

If you are a Pre-1991 or a 1992 ERO (Enhanced Retirement Offer) retiree, then you are eligible to receive reimbursement for the Medicare Part B premium that you pay to the Federal government. In the past, you sent a copy of your statement from the Social Security Administration (SSA) giving your 2022 payment

amounts to the Service Center to update your reimbursement. For most of you, the reimbursement is added to your pension payment each month. Unfortunately, the Service Center has been behind on processing the statements you've sent in, and many still are not receiving the correct reimbursement amounts for 2022.

In February, Lumen sent a letter to all retirees receiving a Medicare Part-B premium reimbursement announcing a change in how Lumen is updating these reimbursements. If you were reimbursed the standard Medicare Part B premium amount (listed in the letter), then your reimbursement will be automatically updated to the standard Part B premium for 2022 (\$170.10), retroactive to the first of this year.

## Pre-91 & 1992 ERO Retirees Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) Reimbursement

If you receive IRMAA reimbursement, the same amount you received in 2021 will carry over to 2022. If your amount has changed for 2022, you will need to notify the Service Center at the address below. If you have already sent in your Social Security information to the Service Center, it is not necessary to send it again. Businessolver is still working on getting all of the updates made.

## Address and Fax for Medicare Part B and/or IRMAA Reimbursement

Lumen Health and Life Service Center  
Businessolver.com, Inc.  
P.O. Box 850552  
Minneapolis, MN 55485-0552  
Fax: 515-273-1545

## Post-90 Retirees Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) Reimbursements:

The Businessolver department that handles the HRA is called MyChoice Accounts.

Processes have changed for paying and getting reim-

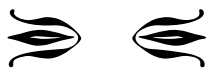
bursed for Company group **dental insurance** premiums. Post-90 retirees are now paying the full amount of the dental premium to the Health and Life Service Center each month (\$35.60/person). For retirees on Medicare with an HRA, there is an automatic reimbursement of \$20/person each month. Retirees can change the amount of this reimbursement if they choose. They can receive the full amount paid. Or they can cancel the dental reimbursement and use that money for other health care needs.

Post-90 retirees who signed up for their Medicare-related health insurance (Medigap, Part D or Medicare Advantage) through Via Benefits or a predecessor company (OneExchange or Extend-Health) may have automatic reimbursements already set up for their monthly premiums. These automatic reimbursements were supposed to continue without the retiree doing anything. It has been my experience that there were some disruptions in this process, but that the reimbursements for the most part are occurring now. Should you have questions, you can reach Via Benefits at 833-414-1446.

To set up one-time or automatic recurring reimbursements from your HRA, or to change an existing reimbursement, follow the instructions in “Your Guide to Your Retiree Health Reimbursement Account (HRA),” mailed to retirees with HRAs earlier this year. You can log in to [lumen.com/healthbenefits](http://lumen.com/healthbenefits) or use the paper claim form provided in the Guide. If you have questions, contact the Service Center.

For additional information, refer to the “Retiree Benefits System Navigation Guide” that was sent to Post-90 retirees in March. The Pre-91 & 1992 ERO Retirees Navigation Guide will be mailed out the week of March 28, 2022.

See the article by Jim Heinze on page 18 for updated information on contacting the Lumen Health and Life Benefits Service Center.



Thanks to Marina Pearson and her team for contributing to this article.

## Recent Scams to Watch Out For

By **Barbara Wilcox**  
**SHIP Counselor**

- **U.S. Mail Scams regarding COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment):** You may receive a letter instructing you to call a number to activate a COLA on your Social Security payments. The Social Security Administration will not request that you do this. COLA is an automatic process and already has been added to your Social Security payments for 2022. Do not call the number on the letter.
- **Medicare-targeted commercials discussing getting more Social Security money:** These are advertisements for Medicare Advantage plans. They are misleading, because the possibility of getting money added to your Social Security check is limited and depends on a lot of factors, including, what state you live in, what plan you enroll in, if your income is low enough. Furthermore, in most cases you can't enroll in or change a Medicare Advantage plan this time of year but would have to wait for the fall Medicare Open Enrollment period, Oct. 15-Dec. 7. If you call the number on the commercials, this gives them permission to call you at any time to try to sell you their Medicare plans.
- **Fraudulent web pages/Facebook pages:** These are common. One page is called Latest Medicare Benefits, and they are advertising increased payments and benefits. They invite you to fill out a questionnaire. Don't do it. As soon as you fill out an online questionnaire it gives them permission to contact you and try to sell you their Medicare Advantage plan.

To report a scam, or if you have questions about Medicare, contact your local SHIP program, by calling 1-877-839-2675.

# Memories from Northwestern Bell

Submitted by Harold Hodges, Sr.

*January 1962, Plainview, Nebraska*

I don't think it got above 0 degrees in two weeks. We were placing an open wire circuit between Norfolk and Creighton, Nebraska.

We stayed in Plainview at a "Mom and Pop" motel. I was assigned to room with Jim. Jim smoked Raleigh cigarettes. I remember him smoking in bed. I watched as the cigarette burned between his fingers. He was half asleep as he would push it up until it hit the filter and then went out. Then, I knew I could go to sleep.



This picture is in Plainview on a ten-pin side-arm, where I am apparently showing off my King Kong impression.



This picture is at the Orchard junction, where the toll line heads north to Creighton.

I still remember two "wheels" or "big shots" as we called them coming to see us in Creighton. They rolled their windows down about two inches to talk to us.

Some of the words we used in our work include a "tramp." That is where the two open wires roll left to right in two spans. A "phantom" is where four wires

do the same.

Here are some additional "highlights" or "lowlights" as I remember them:

- Working east of Plainview we found a dead cat on the road. We thought it would be funny to put it on the front seat of the boss's pickup. We watched for him to get into the truck. We heard a few cuss words and out he came swinging the dead cat by the tail, chasing us down the highway.
- We set a pole and left behind a banjo by accident (similar to a shovel with a nine-foot handle). The next day the boss saw it was missing. He said he didn't know how we could lose something with a nine-foot handle. He had a point. Luckily, we found it later.
- One more memory when I was taking a 10-foot cross arm off of a pole. I was supposed to let it down using a hand line, but it was easier to just drop it down. About that time the boss pulled up and parked about nine feet away. The cross arm was 10 feet long. It hit the ground and slowly tipped hitting his truck's fender. He got out, looked at the dent, and then looked at me. He got back in his truck and drove away without saying a word. I thought my telephone career was over.

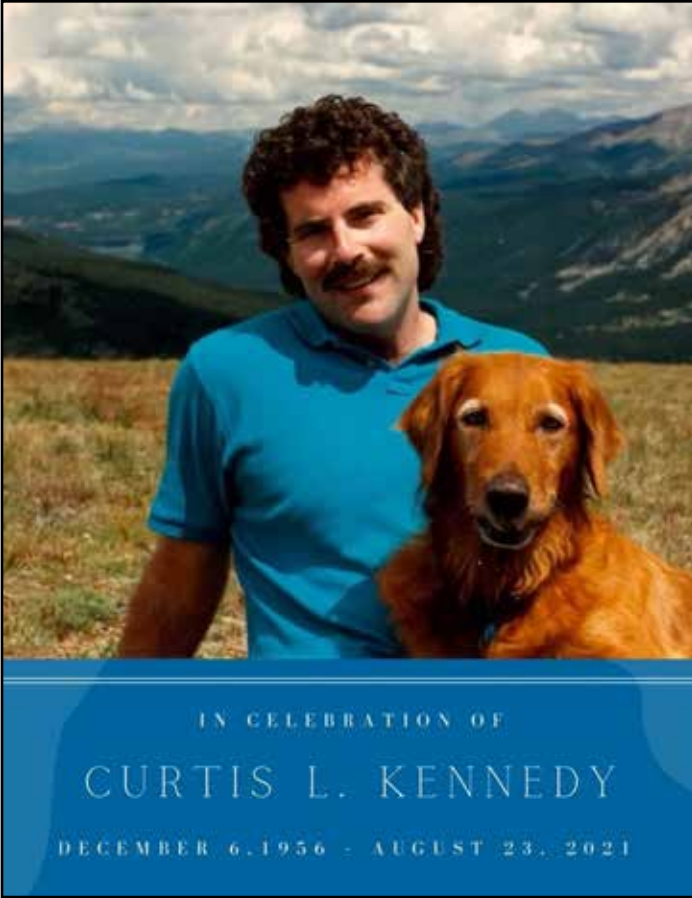
Times were sure different as we worked hard to make sure folks had working phone service throughout all kinds of weather.



This last picture is in Creighton where there was an inverted crossing. Our toll line was above the secondary power. I believe we were about 45 feet up.



# Remembering Curtis Kennedy



Curtis Kennedy served as the attorney for many Mountain Bell, Northwestern Bell, US WEST, Qwest and CenturyLink retirees, both as individuals and as groups. He also served as attorney for the Retiree Association, commonly known as AUSWR (Association of U S WEST Retirees), a 14-state Regional organization, which folded at the end of 2013.

He first won the MIPP/SIPP suit in the late 1980s and early 1990s, primarily affecting managers who had stepped down from their management positions to avail themselves of a non-management early retirement offer, only to have a more lucrative offering be presented a short time later. Curtis was able to win their rights to the more lucrative program.

He then moved on to represent management retirees in the Phelps lawsuit, which guaranteed those who

took the February 1990 5+5 early retirement offering their health care coverage for life. This same provision was subsequently extended in 1992 to the non-management ERO retirees.

Also in an early 1990s suit, Embree, Hull v. US WEST, Curtis was part of the legal negotiating team which brought additional Term of Employment (TOE) service credit to any and all women in each of the operating companies that comprised US WEST, who had taken maternity leave/s during the course of their employment. This made many women advance in seniority or become retirement eligible earlier than they would have without the settlement.

For those retirees who lived outside of the telephone serving areas of US WEST, the company had revoked the retiree reimbursement for telephone service provided by an independent company. Curtis negotiated a one-time settlement in the Colvin case for all affected retirees.

Additionally, Curtis assisted throughout the process of the establishment of the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) in Washington D.C. It was created to establish the voice and the concerns of retirees from major US Corporations. In addition to representing US WEST and its successor corporations' retirees, he represented the retirees of other major corporations, as well.

Curtis reviewed all of the pertinent retiree documents issued by US WEST and its successor corporations, so that retirees could always be cognizant of their benefits and the financial health and status of the plans under which their benefits operated, including their financial viability.

For all of this service, we will always be infinitely grateful to Curtis Kennedy. RIP, dear friend.



See page 16 for Curtis Kennedy's obituary.





Thank you for providing names and obits of friends and associates who have passed. Please ask your loved ones to include your telephone work history in your obit. It helps when the newspapers are scanned for past employees. Also, if someone's name is missing, please submit it again and we can list it in the next issue.

When reporting, please remember that more information is better. If you call, please spell the names and remember that the city and state are also needed in emails and calls.

RMH Accounting maintains the membership database and compiles the names for *Milestones*. They can be contacted at [ctlretirees@rmhtax.com](mailto:ctlretirees@rmhtax.com) or 763-432-2860; Greg Snyder can also be contacted for the NWBell five-state area at [TPNupdate@gmail.com](mailto:TPNupdate@gmail.com) or 352-316-5872, while Bill Alsdorf can be contacted for the Colorado/Wyoming area at [auswr.colowyo@gmail.com](mailto:auswr.colowyo@gmail.com) or 303-659-4181.

Thanks!

Greg and Bill

\* current member

## Colorado

- Beckius, Gloria E . . . . . Holyoke/Ogallala NE
- \* Gowan, Donald . . . . . Loveland
- Northrop, Judith Ann "Judy" Englewood/Sioux Falls
- \* Rains, Ronald "Ron" . . . . . Brighton/North Platte
- \* Shelhammer, Sandra . . . . . Canon City/Fargo

## Iowa

- Bartholomew, Gail M . . . . . Iowa City
- Baumeister, Gus . . . . . Des Moines
- Bierman, Juanita R. . . . . Muscatine
- Bleeker, Elenor . . . . . Cedar Falls
- Brown, Bernie Faye . . . . . Des Moines
- Buckley, Joe . . . . . Waterloo
- Carlisle, Clarene Annette . . . . . Des Moines
- Carlo, Helen JoAnn . . . . . Cedar Falls
- Clevenger, Janet Faye . . . . . Ankeny
- Connor, Alan Gerald . . . . . Waterloo
- Daly, Margaret D . . . . . Waukee
- Detweiler, Billie Eugene . . . . . Cedar Rapids
- Dolan, Berdean Joyce "Birdie" . . . . . West Des Moines
- Dougherty, Deloris G . . . . . Des Moines/Ottumwa
- Dow, Robert "Bob" . . . . . Keomah Village
- Dumler, Judy . . . . . Waterloo
- Durr, James . . . . . Dubuque

- Fiala, Dorothy Lucylla . . . . . Sioux City
- Fleming, Marilyn Jean . . . . . Red Oak
- Globe, Linda Charlene . . . . . Mondamin
- Heins, Paul R . . . . . Ames
- \* Held, Alta May . . . . . Mason City
- Henderson, Alys LaVon . . . . . Manchester
- Hills, Bernadine Marie . . . . . Johnston/Aurelia
- Hollister, Evelyn Howe . . . . . Marion
- Hutt, Rodney Earl . . . . . West Des Moines
- Kastler, Delores . . . . . Webster City
- Malake, Sylvia R. . . . . Cedar Rapids
- McClaflin, Marie . . . . . Des Moines
- Mechaelsen, Coralie . . . . . Webster City
- Moore, Judy Ann . . . . . Boone
- Morgan, Ellen R . . . . . Clinton
- Mortensen Sr, Peter Carl "Pete" . . . . . Onawa/Omaha
- Muellich, Betty (Sinhold) . . . . . Dubuque
- Mullens, Bernadine Marie . . . . . Johnston
- O'Lear, Walter John . . . . . Ottumwa
- Peck, Raymond D "Ray" . . . . . Clinton
- Peterson, Shirley Jean . . . . . LeClaire/Clear Lake,
- Rains, John Ezra . . . . . Des Moines
- Rasmussen, Constance . . . . . Sioux City
- Reiter, June . . . . . Monticello
- Rilea, Rita . . . . . Stuart
- Shoemaker, Dolores Elaine . . . . . Burlington

*milestones continued on page 9*

## **Iowa (continued)**

Sillick, Helen Mae . . . . . Cedar Rapids  
Smith, Angela Fagan . . . . . Missouri Valley/Omaha  
Smith, Edwin "Jack" . . . . . Council Bluffs  
Speth, Jimmy Lee . . . . . Davenport  
Stilbolt, Mary Jane . . . . . Davenport  
Stillman, Ann Marie . . . . . Emmitsburg  
Sturms, Ruth M . . . . . Muscatine  
Swenka, Dennis . . . . . Morse  
Swick, Betty . . . . . Oskaloosa  
Tague, Kenneth Dean . . . . . Johnston  
Timmons, Elva Lou . . . . . Prairie City  
Trimble, Beverly Ann . . . . . Urbandale  
Utroska, Barbara J . . . . . Clinton  
\* Vetter, Gwendolyn . . . . . Spirit Lake  
Voight, Robert James . . . . . Raymond  
Wagner, Dolores Mae . . . . . West Branch  
Watson, Sheri L . . . . . Council Bluffs

## **Minnesota**

Asleson, Adeline . . . . . St. Peter  
Barglof-Tweedt, Beverly Agnes . . . . . Osakis  
Benjamin, Jacquelyn A . . . . . Maplewood  
Blesener, Charles "Chuck" . . . . . St Michael  
Borovac, Michael Nicholas . . . . . Side Lake  
Brixius, Dorothy M . . . . . Watkins  
\* Bursik, Paul M . . . . . Detroit Lakes  
Carlson, Rand E . . . . . New Hope  
\* Carlson, William A . . . . . Duluth  
Christoffer, Pearl Avynelle . Windom/Round Lake  
Conroy, James S . . . . . Duluth  
Delorme, Karen . . . . . Moorhead  
Evers, Carol Gunn . . . . . Minneapolis  
Haas, Donald E. . . . . Inver Grove Hts.  
Hausauer, Ruby Q . . . . . Bemidji  
Henle, Betty . . . . . Marshall

Henningson, Helen Rozum . . . . . Brainerd/Fargo  
Jensen, Mary Jane . . . . . Duluth  
\* Kirkeby, Vernon D . . . . . Ortonville  
Koop, Marvin . . . . . Thief River Falls  
Kopacek, Doris Elaine . . . . . Willmar/Mankato  
Lance, Roger Allen . . . . . Pine Island  
Lujan, Eileen M . . . . . Bloomington  
Majsterski, Richard J . . . . . Fridley  
Malecha, Inez . . . . . Waterford  
Mallow, Glen Charles . . . . . Detroit Lakes  
Mathewson, Eva Lynn . . . . . Brainerd/Staples  
Miller, Gary L . . . . . Stuartville  
Mongoven, Delphine Rose . . . . . Thief River Falls  
Nascene, JoAnn LaVonne . . . . . Pine City  
Nelson, Gregory . . . . . Milaca/St. Louis Pk.  
Noyes, Robert . . . . . Detroit Lakes  
Nunn, Priscilla Jane . . . . . Hibbing  
Oliver, Diane B . . . . . Minneapolis  
\* Pazlar, Frank . . . . . Dellwood  
Pederson, Jack Ames . . . . . St Cloud  
\* Petersen, Francis E "Pete" . . . . . Brooklyn Park  
\* Prins, Janet . . . . . Jeffers  
Ranheim, D'Ann Cameron "Dee" . . . . . Excelsior  
Rhen, Nora J . . . . . East Grand Forks  
Rima, Alma B . . . . . Grand Rapids  
\* Rodin, Beryl L . . . . . Duluth  
Samuelson, Gerald Carl . . . . . New Brighton/Fargo  
Smith, James Glenn . . . . . Grand Marais  
Sorteberg, Carolyn Yvonne . . . . . Anoka  
Stabs, Patricia Anne . . . . . Duluth  
Stadsvold, Lois . . . . . Starbuck  
Stanoch, Shirley C . . . . . Minneapolis  
\* Thelen, William "Bill" . . . . . Arden Hills  
Tomhave, Geraldeane "Gerri" . . . . . Fergus Falls  
Wurdeman, Elaine M . . . . . Waconia/Victoria

## Nebraska

Anderson, Robert Lake "Bob" . . . . . Lincoln  
Asp, Doris Jean . . . . . Holdrege  
Bailer, Donna Pauline . . . . . North Platte  
Bauermeister, Beulah . . . . . Omaha  
Brown Sr, Edward "Ted" . . . . . Omaha  
\* Caffrey, Margaret J . . . . . Omaha  
Currigan, Ruby I . . . . . Omaha  
Dugger, Bobbie Sue . . . . . Omaha  
Eggers, Robert N . . . . . Omaha  
Eledge, Darlene J (Hensman) . . . . . Omaha  
Gustafson, Donald D . . . . . Omaha  
Hansen, Bonnie Mae . . . . . Kearney/Douglas, WY  
Hissam, Norma Jean . . . . . Crawford  
Hoban, John Patrick . . . . . North Platte  
\* LeMaster, Gerald I "Gus" . . . . . Omaha  
Martin-Kacena, Swanee Juneann . . . . . So. Sioux City  
Muhs, Dolores S . . . . . Grand Island  
\* Nelson, Kathryn . . . . . Omaha  
Nieto, Joyce "Joy" . . . . . Plattsmouth  
Palmquist, Robert L "Bob" . . . . . Lincoln  
Prchal, Gloria J . . . . . Omaha  
Rickert, Mary Jayne . . . . . Columbus  
Vierson, Maxine . . . . . North Platte

## North Dakota

Berg, Phillis . . . . . Rugby  
Baer, Rosemary Vivian . . . . . Fargo  
Birrenkott, Myrna . . . . . Fargo  
Ferry, Janice Ploium . . . . . Oberon  
Frederick, Maureen Rae . . . . . West Fargo  
Grefe Henry Carl "Hank" . . . . . Fargo  
Gunnufson, Lenore Marie . . . . . Fargo/Gary  
Hass Jr., William "Bill" . . . . . Valley City  
Hochhalter, Kelly Lynn . . . . . Bismarck  
Holman, Barbara Ellen . . . . . Fargo  
Jackson, Ronald . . . . . Fargo  
Kalhagen, Elizabeth M. "Betty" . . . . . Devils Lake  
Kosteletzky, Gary R . . . . . Dickinson

Larson, Lanny Gene . . . . . Fargo  
Lunde, Linda K . . . . . Grand Forks  
O'Connell, Ardene . . . . . Dickinson  
\* Reiersen, Milford . . . . . Minot  
Richardson, Maxine Kuhn . . . . . Fargo  
Schell, Bertha Rose "Bert" . . . . . Bismarck  
\* Speidel, Marcus Paulus . . . . . Fargo  
Suppa, Joyce Ione . . . . . Fargo  
Swanson, Bonnie Rosalia . . . . . Valley City  
Wagness, Gerry . . . . . Lakota  
\* Walcker, Michele Louise . . . . . Bismarck  
Yates, Evelyn P . . . . . Fargo

## South Dakota

Bader, Sharon Lea . . . . . Aberdeen  
Bittner-Little Josephine . . . . . Aberdeen  
Carroll, Russell Martin . . . . . Aberdeen  
Dibbern, Alice Aletha . . . . . Brandon  
Forgey, Kenneth LeRoy "Ken" . . . . . Redfield  
Hinds, Randall J . . . . . Aberdeen  
\* Hoftiezer, Dwain Dean . . . . . Miller  
Irwin, Mary Jane . . . . . Wagner  
Jensen, Bonnie Lee . . . . . De Smet  
Kothe, Kathryn Francis . . . . . Mitchell/Fedora  
Olson, Irene C . . . . . Sioux Falls  
Parker, Verleyn . . . . . Sioux Falls  
Ruby, Willanor "Willie" . . . . . Belle Fourche  
\* Shaffer, Jackson Clark "Jack" . . . . . Sioux Falls/Fargo  
Wilson, Allen Richard . . . . . Rapid City

## Other

Amacher, Maryann L . . . . . Sarona/Tonka Bay WI  
Derochie, Ardyce . . . . .  
 . . . . . Fargo, Oklahoma City, Sioux City  
Edwards, Lisa A . . . . . Las Vegas NV/Grand Island  
Jacobsen, Norman R "Norm" . . . . . Kansas City/St. Paul  
\* Meyers, Herb . . . . . Muskegon MI/Waverly IA  
\* Myers, Lance Florian . . . . . Holiday Island AZ/Omaha  
\* Olsen, Barbara . . . . . Green Valley AZ  
Stockey, Donna L . . . . . Earlville IL  
Werner, Joni Marie . . . . . Plantersville TX/Minneapolis

# Telephone Pioneers of America

Shared by John Postovit

November 2, 1911

The founding members, including Alexander Graham Bell, met in Boston to establish the Bell System Telephone Pioneers of America. The major goals were to perpetuate the ideals and traditions of the industry and promote fellowships that were forged as a natural result of their teamwork. Dues were set at \$5 for the first year and \$2 for each year thereafter. Membership was initially reserved for employees that had 21 years' service in the telephone industry.

There was no provision for fraternal contact, resulting in members petitioning to conduct community service activities. Permission was given to establish local pioneer units and the first 12 Chapters were formed in 1922.

In 1930, Life Member status was established and the first Life Member Club was formed in Canada in 1935.

In 1937, the national association was divided into 17 sections along company lines and those sections were realigned into twelve in 1942.

It was officially declared at the 1958 General Assembly that Community Service was a part of the Pioneer mission, particularly meeting the needs of the hearing and visually impaired.

In 1960, the Pioneers introduced and began repair of "Talking Books" for the visually disabled in collaboration with the National Library of Congress.

In 1962, the Pioneers began distribution of the "Beeping Baseball" which led to the development of the "Beeping Easter Egg," which the Pioneers provided for the 2009 White House Easter Egg Hunt.

In 1976, "Hug-a-Bears" begin rolling off the Pioneer assembly line and into the arms of ailing children in Hospitals. Thousands of "Hug-a Bears" have been given to Police, Fire and Emergency workers to be used when children are involved in traumatic situations.

In 1982, Pioneers started making hand operated tricycles that have been provided at no cost to children who have limited or no use of their legs.

In 1984, the Pioneers participated in the Olympics torch relay/lighting ceremony and provided security at

the Olympics held in Salt Lake City.

In 1985, Pioneers participated in the first Santa Goodwill trip abroad.

In 1991, Telephone Pioneers of America headquarters was moved from New York to Denver. That year the Pioneers entered into a partnership with the National Park Service to make national and state parks more accessible to senior citizens and visitors with disabilities.

In 1993, the service requirement was eliminated and all active employees could join the local telephone Pioneer units.

In 1994, Pioneers announce the "Focus on Education" initiative. That year the telephone gained non-profit status and the Pioneer Foundation was created.

In 1995, the Pioneers began a project partnership with Junior Achievement, became the first organization to sign a working partnership agreement with the Department of Education and created the award winning "Computers for Schools" program.

In 2007, the Pioneers launched "Power up to Read," a program designed to help children improve their reading comprehension skills. The national organization formally shortened its name and tag line to "Pioneers - A Volunteer Network."

In 2009, ten regional Pioneer organizations with 620,000 members reported 15 million hours of community service; being the largest industry-related volunteer organization in the United States and Canada.

In 2011, the Pioneers marked its Centennial year with a special celebration in its founding city of Boston.

In 2021, the Red River Valley Pioneers celebrated 110 years of loyalty, service and fellowship.



# North Dakota Pioneers History

Shared by John Postovit

Pioneering begin in North Dakota in 1925 as a club level entity under the Minneapolis C.P. Wainman Chapter.

In 1931, the area was separated from C.P. Wainman to become the Fargo Council, operating as a state wide organization. The name was subsequently changed to the North Dakota Pioneer Council.

When the company organized into three districts, North Dakota Pioneer membership split geographically into the Plains Club aligned with the Bismarck District in 1963 and the Lake Agassiz Club aligned with the Grand Forks District in 1970. The Plains Club became the Bismarck Council in 1970 and the Lake Agassiz Club became the Grand Forks Council in 1975. The Fargo-located Pioneers became members of the Red River Valley Council, which was formed in 1970.

Given the number of retiring employees, a North Dakota Pioneer Life Member Club was formed in 1961. Later reorganization created district-based Life Member Clubs at Bismarck in 1975, with Fargo and Grand Forks following in 1976. The Lake Agassiz Life Member club merged with the Grand Forks Council in 1989. The Plains Life Member Club merged with Bismarck Council in 1993. The Fargo Life Member Club merged with the Red River Valley council in 1996.

In 1995, a North Dakota Pioneer Chapter was formed to initiate new activities or programs, plus monitor and assist the three councils. The Chapter receives an allocation of about \$1200 annually from donations made to the Regional Pioneer organization; however the funds are restricted in use by the Regional donation policy. Recent qualifying distributions were a donation to the Grand Forks Veterans monument, replacement of batteries at the museum and a \$500 grant to each council. Chapter leadership maintains in contact with the Regional organization for volunteer hours and other activity reports.

For many years; NWB/USW allowed employees to conduct Pioneer functions on Company time, pro-

vided building space and the use of other company recourses, like printing and mailing. In 1997, those informal arrangements were replaced with an official partnership agreement specifying levels of financial, personnel and other support. That company support continued until USW was acquired by CenturyLink.

In 2016 CenturyLink discontinued corporate support of the Telephone Pioneers and the former US WEST Pioneers became the Legacy West Pioneers, a financially independent, self-sustaining organization maintaining the core values embodied in the Telephone Pioneers of America spirit created 110 years ago.

Pioneer Council activity was generally suspended during the pandemic with exception of special events like dedication of the Grand Forks Veterans monument and continued operation of the Pioneer Museum at Bonanzaville.

Members of the RRV council participated in the Street Fair set-up earlier this year and will continue to seek volunteers for the Food Pantry project and the Salvation Army Bell Ringing program.

Bismarck Pioneers no longer maintain the telephone system at Camp Grassic; however, the Pioneer leadership hopes to restart their monthly social gatherings in the near future.

Grand Forks Pioneer leadership maintains contact with their members via conference calls.

All three councils are facing the same problem - dwindling membership and members no longer able to participate in Pioneer activities.

## Annual Meeting Photos from page 2

Top row, first photo is Jerry Weldon, chair. Second photo: speakers Tim White and Nancy DeVinay. At the bottom of the page are Retiree Advocate Gordie Lundy with Board Members Cynthia Hadsell, Floyd Olson, Jerry Weldon, Clyde Just and Roger Borowicz.

# Time Capsule - Twenty Years Ago in Our History

## Shared by Cynthia Hadsell

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### **“Preparation for the 2002 Shareholders Meeting”**

**From May 26, 2002**

**Denver Business Journal**

Much to the dismay of many shareholders, Denver-based Qwest’s annual meeting will be in the unlikely locale of Dublin, Ohio June 4, 2002, and it’s certain to create some fireworks after the telephone company’s paltry performance in the past year.

Qwest’s CEO Joe Nacchio justified the location saying it’s the fourth or fifth largest employee base in Qwest. Local shareholders and retirees are not happy about it and they plan to let Nacchio know. “We have to go where it is – if we stay away, he wins,” said Bruce McDowell, a representative of the CWA and a Qwest employee.

Hazel Floyd, Colorado president of the Association of US WEST Retirees, plans to attend the meeting to support two shareholder proposals on the ballot which she helped sponsor. One would require advance shareholder approval of certain severance agreements and the other excludes non-recurring accounting rule income for certain performance-based compensation.

Floyd tried to pass these same proposals last year and failed, but she said they have a better shot this year. “In light of the Enron CEO thing, I think we’re going to get more [votes] than anticipated,” Floyd said. Floyd doesn’t think the proposals will pass because Qwest co-chairman Philip Anschutz owns 40 percent voting power.

The Colorado Retirees president is saddened by the state of Qwest. The company posted \$698 million loss in the first quarter of this year and share prices were around \$5 last week. “Our CEO is in the news every day,” she said. Floyd suspects the annual meeting was moved to Dublin so Nacchio and the board wouldn’t have to face large numbers of disgruntled shareholders and employees.

Despite all the negative headlines and substantial financial losses, some analysts believe the telecom

company will recover and avoid bankruptcy, which has befallen many of its telecom counterparts. Qwest would have to get into a liquidity crunch and not be able to rollover its debt for it to be forced into bankruptcy and it has a lot of options before that happens, an analyst said. One is the sale of its yellow pages which is expected to fetch between \$8 billion and \$10 billion.

### **“Turning Point at the 2002 Shareholders Meeting”**

**From Denver Post**

In June 2002, Qwest retiree Jo Lynne Whiting traveled from Denver to Dublin, Ohio, to look Qwest chief executive Joe Nacchio in the eye at the company’s annual shareholder meeting. “I would like for Phil (Anschutz) and the rest of the board to terminate you, Joe, for cause, and I believe the case is compelling,” Whiting told Nacchio in front of a crowd of 300. “When you took over US WEST, the stock was \$50. And now it is \$5.”

Nacchio thanked Whiting for her comments, despite calling some of them “incorrect.”

### **“Nacchio out at Qwest” Telecom CEO faced criticism for \$27M pay, debt downgrade, SEC probe.**

**June 17, 2002, from CNNMoney**

Joseph Nacchio resigned Monday as CEO of Qwest Communications International Inc., the western U.S. telecom he helped to build, and was replaced by former Ameritech CEO Richard Notebaert, 54. Qwest shares rallied following the news, paring year-to-date losses to about 68 percent.

Nacchio, 52, came under fire from company shareholders at the company’s annual meeting earlier this month for his \$27 million compensation package plus stock options he received last year. Qwest endured

*Time Capsule continued on page 16*

## Curtis Kennedy

Curtis Lynn Kennedy was born in Dallas, Texas, on December 6, 1956. Curtis was surrendered to the orphanage along with his three biological older siblings: Hollis, Anna and Jimmy. In 1965, Curtis was rescued by Bill and Dixie Kennedy, with his brother Jimmy and gained three foster siblings: Kelly, Heidi and Rusty. Following Bill and Dixie's divorce, Dixie moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, with the five children.

In Tulsa, Curtis focused on school and was a stellar student. He graduated from East Central High in 1975, where he was part of the football team and was a school photographer for the yearbook. At East Central, a guidance counselor urged Curtis to go to law school rather than join the police force, which prompted Curtis to pursue a Law degree.

Curtis then attended the University of Oklahoma where he gained his bachelor's degree in 1979. He was a proud Sooner and was the president and founder of the Gamma Delta Iota.

Curtis moved to Colorado to begin Law School at the University of Colorado - Boulder where he graduated second in his class in 1982. Shortly after

his graduation, he began his career working for Calkins, Kramer & Grimshaw. He quickly decided that he could no longer work for "big guys," so he became a "Lone Gun" and went solo, working out of his apartment in Brooks Towers in downtown Denver, representing retirees who had been cheated out of their pension and benefits. He had his first big case as a solo practitioner representing 530 retirees and winning \$1 million, only to keep a small percentage.

On a trip to Detroit, Michigan in 1989, Curtis met "the mother of his children" at a bar and in 1994 he married Lisa Therese Wrobleski. Together they had three children: Zachary (1995), Alexandria (1997), and Gregory (1998). Weekends often began with cinnamon rolls, having family lunch at Red Robin, rock and roll on the speakers, and often ended with family dinners at the kitchen table.

Curtis continued his work as a solo practitioner and represented thousands of retirees. His final case went to the Supreme Court in December of 2016. Two years later, Curtis retired in 2018.

He is deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

### ***Time Capsule ... continued from page 15***

a downgrade of its debt to "junk bond" status and eliminated dividend payments. And the company said it faces an accounting probe by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The company's statement said Nacchio was resigning to spend more time with his family and pursue other opportunities.

"Dick Notebaert, 54, may be just what the doctor ordered for Qwest," independent telecom analyst Jeff Kagan told Reuters. "He's got the experience, the track record and the demeanor that should be very helpful to rebuilding shareholder confidence."

### **2022 Update**

Hazel Floyd had retired from Mountain Bell in 1983 after 30 years. She helped found the Association of U S West Retirees (AUSWR). This was a passion for her for the remainder of her life. In all of the things she did, she considered this her most important work.

Hazel died in 2014.

Bruce McDowell was a member of CWA in Colorado. We are unable to locate him at this time.

Jo Lynne Whiting retired from Qwest in 2000 as a VP. She is a civic leader in the Denver area with a focus on environmental and women's issues. She is a sought-after speaker on diversity and inclusion and its link to superior organization performance.

Dick Notebaert retired from Qwest in 2007 after successfully saving it from bankruptcy. He has served on business and community boards and is a Trustee Emeriti of University of Notre Dame du Lac.

Joe Nacchio was indicted in 2005 on 42 counts of criminal insider trading. He was convicted in 2007 and imprisoned 2009 - 2013. In 2016, Nacchio sued his personal financial advisor and was awarded \$14 million.





# What to do when a retiree dies ...

## General Directives

The purpose of this document is to use as the basis for a conversation with your dependents, family members, estate planners, investment and legal advisors, such as a certified elder-law attorney. This document is **not** legal advice, rather it is a summary of certain earned benefits to which a surviving spouse or qualified dependent(s) *may be entitled*, including those due to the designated beneficiary at the time of the retiree's death.

**NOTE: It is important to notify the Service Center of the retiree's death as soon as possible after the death, but no later than one year.**

## How to apply for survivor benefits

- \* Call 800-729-7526 or 833-925-0487, and select **Option 3**, then **Option 1**. You will speak with a representative from the benefits management company contracted by CenturyLink to administer the Service Center.
- \* You must ask the Service Center representative to provide you with information regarding: • the Group Life Insurance payout, • the Survivor Annuity Option (if applicable), and • continued health care and dental insurance.
- \* You must provide the following information about the deceased retiree: • full name of the retiree, • date of death, • Social Security Number, and • address.
- \* You may be asked to provide *certified copies* of the Death Certificate to collect the survivor benefits.

## Group Life Insurance

The Group Life Insurance policy is administered by MetLife and is not taxable income. This benefit was originally based on the annual pay of the retiree. Qwest reduced the value of the group policy to a flat \$10,000 for all retirees.

You will be asked by the Service Center representative to provide the last four digits of the retiree's Social Security number, date of birth and a personal identification number (PIN) as recorded with the Service Center. If a PIN has not been established, a temporary one will be set up, so a permanent one can be set up for you.

**NOTE: It is important to have current beneficiary information recorded at the Service Center:** Confirm your current information by calling 800-729-7526 and selecting Option 2; then Option 1; then Option 1 again.

## Survivor's Annuity

Retirees who selected the Survivor's Option at the time of retirement should make certain the spouse is aware of this

benefit. The surviving spouse may arrange for direct-deposit or provide a mailing address to receive the annuity payment.

**If the retiree outlives the spouse**, the deduction from the retiree's monthly payment to pay for the survivor annuity should be cancelled by calling the Service Center. The amount of the cancelled deduction would then be added to the retiree's regular monthly pension payment.

## Health Care Coverage (COBRA)

The health care coverage for the surviving spouse and any eligible dependent(s) will be the same as that having been provided under the retiree's coverage at the time of death, and will be administered by COBRA.

**Note:** CenturyLink currently subsidizes the first six months' health care coverage; then the surviving spouse must pay the full cost for continued coverage for the next 30 months; followed by a slightly reduced monthly premium (-2%) at the end of the 36 months, when coverage for any dependent(s) is terminated. If you are a bargained-for retiree, the CWA contract makes changes for bargained-for employees who retired after January 1, 2014. Consult your union local for details. **Premiums must be paid in a timely fashion or the coverage will be dropped and not re-instated.**

## Dental

The surviving spouse may continue dental coverage for 36-months as long as the monthly premiums are paid.

## Telephone Concession Service (also known as "discounted service")

If the retiree received concession telephone service provided by CenturyLink, it will terminate after two monthly billing periods from the date of the retiree's death.

## Other Important Contacts

**Social Security:** Notify Social Security of the retiree's death by calling 1-800-772-1213, or at the website: [www.SSA.gov](http://www.SSA.gov). Hearing Impaired number is 1-800-325-0778. Social Security notification of the retiree's death will end Medicare benefits.

**Veterans Administration:** If the deceased retiree was a veteran, the Veterans Administration should be contacted to advise them of the retiree's death and to determine if there are any eligible survivor benefits by calling 1-800-827-1000 or at the website: [www.VA.gov](http://www.VA.gov).

# Navigating the Service Center Voice Response System

By Jim Heinze

Effective January 1st of this year the Lumen Service Center for the administration of our retiree benefits was changed to Businessolver, Inc. As a result of this change there are now two telephone numbers to access the system, dependent upon the benefit about which you are inquiring.

For matters relating to the Health Reimbursement Account the telephone number is 833-925-0487.

For All Other Retiree Benefits the telephone number is the same as it has been historically, 800-729-7526.

It is important that the first contact in receiving answers to your questions or seeking a resolution to an issue dealing with your benefits is the Service Center. The Guide below will assist you in reaching the appropriate representative for your issue. If you have difficulty using the Voice Response System or if you still need help with your issue, then contact your state's Retiree Advocate, listed below.

A new Navigation Guide for accessing the *[lumen.com/healthbenefits](http://lumen.com/healthbenefits)* web site was distributed by Lumen in March, 2022.

## Guide to Navigating the Service Center Voice Response System

For matters relating to your **Health Reimbursement Account**, call 833-925-0487 and press Option 1. Then press Option 2. Then:

- To check your account balance, press Option 1.
- For instructions on how to submit a reimbursement request, press Option 2.
- For questions about an HRA claim form, press Option 3.
- For questions about eligible HRA expenses, press Option 4.
- To speak with a representative on other HRA matters, press Option 5.

For matters relating to **All Other Retiree Benefits** call 800-729-7526. Then,

To report a death, press Option 3.

For questions related to other retiree benefits, press Option 2. Then:

- For Medical, Dental, Life and COBRA Insurance, press Option 1; then press Option 1 again.
- For Pension information, press Option 3.
- For Phone concession, press Option 6, then press Option 3

Then,

- For retirees living in a Legacy Century Tel or Embarq territory, press Option 1.
- For retirees living in a Legacy Qwest territory, press option 2.

- To report a Change of Address, press Option 7

Then related to:

- Health & Welfare benefits, press Option 2.
- Pension benefits, press Option 4.
- Optum Rx benefits, press Option 7.

If you prefer communicating by email, the email address is *[LumenRetireesHelp@businessolver.com](mailto:LumenRetireesHelp@businessolver.com)*.

## Lumen Service Center 800-729-7526 or 833-925-0487

If you still have unresolved issues *after* calling the Service Center, contact your **Retiree Advocate** as listed below.

Arizona	..... Kitty Kennedy	..... <a href="mailto:kkennedy404@gmail.com">kkennedy404@gmail.com</a>	..... 520-444-6617
Idaho, Montana	..... Shirley Moss	..... <a href="mailto:samoss05@q.com">samoss05@q.com</a>	..... 208-342-3449
Iowa, Nebraska	..... Gordie Lundy	..... <a href="mailto:gmale5664@gmail.com">gmale5664@gmail.com</a>	..... 402-203-2042
New Mexico	..... Cassie Kelley	..... <a href="mailto:cassiek@comcast.net">cassiek@comcast.net</a>	..... 505-298-8666
Oregon, Washington	... Shirley Jones	..... <a href="mailto:benefit65@clear.net">benefit65@clear.net</a>	..... 206-368-8686
Utah	..... Byron Lemmon	..... <a href="mailto:bylemmon99@q.com">bylemmon99@q.com</a>	..... 801-295-4653
All other states	..... Jim Heinze	..... <a href="mailto:jjonrr@centurylink.net">jjonrr@centurylink.net</a>	..... 303-442-1831



## **NRLN WORKS TO PROTECT YOUR RETIREMENT INCOME AND HEALTH CARE SECURITY**

The National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) is dedicated to Americans over age 50. We urge you to share our website [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) in emails and with your Facebook friends. We provide timely news, important information and tools that enable you to help us lobby Congress for reliable pension and Social Security Income and lower cost Health Care Benefits and Medicare. Today, there are over 50 million of us over age 65. By 2035, our children will be among 75 million over 65. And by 2060, our great-grandkids will be part of 100 million over 65. Now is the time to ensure retirement benefits are protected for the future!

You are automatically a member of NRLN because you're a member of our Retiree Association. You can also show more support by becoming an individual member. Your voice is important for your elected officials! Watch for more about NRLN in each issue of *The Retiree Guardian*.

Links on the NRLN website will guide you to more detailed information. Here are two samples:

How to contact your elected officials: <https://www.nrln.org/congresslegs.html#/legislators/>

List of senior help sites: <https://www.nrln.org/links.htm>

LUMEN



## **Retiree Benefits**

## **News**

Did you know that Lumen has a web site that you can easily access to obtain useful information?

One example is The Retiree Benefits Newsletter, a composite of retiree benefits news articles that offer helpful information related to retiree medical, dental, wellness, HRA claims information, etc., for you to use.

Here is how:

- On your computer type in the url: [lumenbenefits.com](http://lumenbenefits.com)
- On the next screen click on Retirees
- Click on Retiree Benefits News

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Plymouth MN 55441-3868

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retirees from Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota,  
South Dakota and Wyoming.

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## Membership Application and Renewal

CenturyLink Retirees

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Change \_\_\_\_\_ Extra \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ *(please enter if you have one)*

Retired from (Company) \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_ Year \_ \_ \_ \_

Save us print and postage; get your *Retiree Guardian* electronically? YES \_\_\_ or NO \_\_\_

Pledge to be an active NRLN Grassroots Network volunteer and correspond with my  
Senators and Representative on issues important to retirees. YES \_\_\_ or NO \_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 year \$25.00 \*Membership year is July 1-June 30\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Contribution

**Please send your check to: CenturyLink Retirees**  
**12805 Highway 55, Suite 412**  
**Plymouth MN 55441-3868**

☛ Email: [ctlretirees@rmhtax.com](mailto:ctlretirees@rmhtax.com) ☛

Phone: 763-432-2860