



ICN Insider

Iowa Communications Network
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Congratulations to the Sac & Fox Tribe of Mississippi in Iowa and John Carver, Superintendent of Howard-Winneshiek CSD, whom were selected as Connect Iowa's Broadband Hero awardees.

The Sac & Fox was the first tribe in the nation to own and implement a Gigabit Community Network.

Carver was recognized for his efforts in helping to foster high-speed broadband adoption and use in Iowa.

Giving Back to the Profession

On May 7, the ICN and Data Link Telecommunications teamed up to give back to the community by presenting fiber optic concepts to 35 ITT Technical Institute students. Ric Lumbard, ICN's Acting Executive Director, gave a fascinating lecture about the ICN's miles of fiber optic cable throughout the 99 Iowa counties; how the ICN serves the state through collaboration with its various partners, and how broadband matters in our everyday lives.

"The collaboration between the ICN team and local colleges is a valuable opportunity to share knowledge, give students access to industry professionals, and give back to the profession," said Jason Salts ITT Technical Institute Instructor.

The students are learning to become telecommunications professionals and are currently enrolled in the physical networking class offered at ITT-Tech. The physical networking course teaches the students telecommunications, cabling specifications, cabling tools and media, cable testing, fiber optics and the principles of light.

Lumbard explained, "Educating students about the types of fiber, demonstrating the importance of maintaining an infrastructure by splicing/fusing, and explaining different electronics, gives the next generation of powerful industry professionals the opportunity to hear and see firsthand the components of a network."

The ICN in collaboration with Data Link Telecommunications gave a detailed lecture about the uses of fiber optic cable, bandwidth capability, and answered questions pertaining to environmental challenges of fiber compression that were experienced this past winter. The Data Link Telecommunications technicians explained the capabilities of the fiber optic splicing and fusing tools used in the field. The students were fascinated as they intently watched technicians prepare, splice and fuse fiber optic cable. After the demonstration, students were given a tour of their telecommunications trailer where the work of installing and maintaining the physical fiber optic network happens.



ICN Acting Director Ric Lumbard speaking at ITT Tech class



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Healthcare Users Continue to Gain Broadband Benefits

An ongoing effort beginning in 2014 for ICN is connecting the second phase of healthcare users to the already established Iowa Rural Health Telecommunications Program (IRHTP) broadband fiber Network, which includes 89 original sites. Healthcare users can participate in the [FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund](#) (HCF) Program, which is the newest component of the Rural Health Care Program. Healthcare participants are eligible to receive up to a 65 percent subsidy for eligible expenses related to broadband connectivity, broadband management services, installation, and equipment enabling broadband.

Between 2007-2013, a total of 118 healthcare locations were added to the IRHTP broadband network through the Rural Healthcare Pilot Program. Each healthcare site purchased last-mile fiber access to their facility, last mile network electronics and participated in cost sharing to acquire middle mile network electronics. Current healthcare facilities are taking

advantage of additional broadband capabilities, such as incorporating virtual data warehouse storage options for their medical records needs, while also using the storage abilities to host email, Office 365, or phone services.

Services that ICN can offer to healthcare users include: Private on-net or off-net Ethernet connections, PRI and dedicated circuits, Internet and bandwidth services, secondary Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) connections for carrier diversity, secondary Internet Service Provider (ISP) connections for ISP diversity, on-net connections to multiple data centers, 24/7/365 Network Operations Center telephone support, and one consolidated bill from the ICN.

The valuable IRHTP broadband network is owned by a consortium of members that are affiliated with the Iowa Hospital Association. Healthcare facilities can receive more information about IRHTP or the Healthcare Connect Fund by contacting David Swanson at David.Swanson@iowa.gov.

Connect Iowa's Second Annual Broadband Summit

Connect Iowa held their second annual broadband summit on June 16 in Ankeny, IA. Governor Branstad attended the event and reiterated his commitment to bring forth a broadband act in the State. A few highlights from the conference included: a legislative panel discussion, wireless conversations explaining cellular technology and what it can do for broadband, and various breakout sessions discussing practices in E-Health, FirstNet, and School & Libraries technology transformation. Two ICN users received the Broadband Hero Award: The Meskwaki Nation Tribe and John Carver, District Superintendent with the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District.

There was a strong presence from John Deere, which demonstrated the need for broadband in rural America. John Deere has implemented advanced technology in their tractors and combines, users regulate their seed and herbicide prescriptions online, check weather and download other information right inside the tractor. The rural broadband story took on a different view, when they explained that the future of agriculture in Iowa is going to require broadband in the middle of Iowa's fields.

For more information visit <http://www.connectiowa.org/>

2014 Legislative Summary

The Legislature adjourned on May 2. The following were the bills of interest to ICN:

[SF 2347](#) includes an appropriation of \$992,913 to the Department of Education to provide technical assistance for network classrooms, planning and trouble shooting for Local Area Networks (LAN), scheduling of video sites, and other related support activities. This appropriation was made to the ITTC during the last two fiscal years and to Iowa Public Television prior to that. The bill was signed into law by Governor Branstad on May 30.

[SF 2349](#) includes appropriations of \$2.7 million to the Department of Education (DOE) for Part III lease payments and \$2.2 million to the ITTC for equipment replacement, as well as language to allow the Commission to enter into contracts in excess of the contract limitation amount established in Iowa Code section 8D.11. The bill was signed into law by Governor Branstad on May 30.

[HF 2288](#) concerns various reporting requirements applicable to State agencies and other requirements associated with the Department of Administrative Service. The bill eliminates the yearly ICN Savings Report. The bill was signed into law by Governor Branstad on March 26.



Employee Spotlight Sheri Stephens

Sheri Stephens is a Purchasing Agent II and has been with the ICN for 18 years. She has lived all her life in Central Iowa, and graduated from Nevada High School. The best part of her job is the people she works with from vendors to customers to employees.

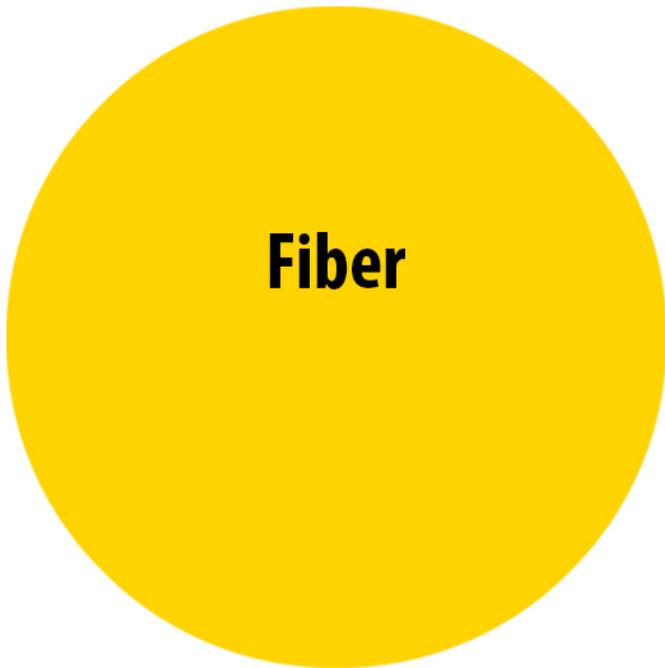
Sheri's aunt and uncle own Pete's Pizza in Indianola which she says is the best pizza around. She bowls and plays golf and with that comes tournaments. Her favorite vacation was to Buffalo, NY for a bowling tournament and while there they visited Niagara Falls. "It was beautiful at night with the lights on the falls; the best view of the falls is from the Canadian side," Sheri says.

Sheri is involved in many volunteer organizations. She serves on the State Employee Health and Recreation Committee

(SEHARC), has coached youth bowling for 25 years, was just elected to be a District Director for the Iowa State Bowling Youth Association, is the Treasurer of the Ogden Athletic Booster Club, and helps with Ogden school activities including the concession stand during the wrestling season.

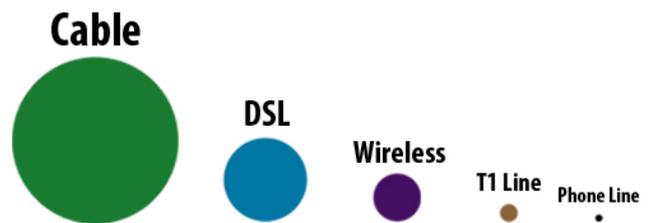
If she could meet someone in history, it would be someone related to... you guessed it... bowling! Bowling came to the New World in 1600's as the game of ninepins. She would like to meet the unknown person in history that circumvented the law by adding the tenth pin. This changed the entire game in every way. For the better most would say, but Sheri DISLIKES the 10 pin. "I throw a great shot and always leave [that pin] standing solid!!"

Two of her most memorable experiences have been when her son Trevor graduated from college at Northwest Missouri State University on her birthday last year, and when her daughter Rachelle recently made her a grandparent to a beautiful granddaughter on April 14, 2014 which happened to be her 25th wedding anniversary.



When compared to the speed that is available with other technology, fiber can offer the highest speed of data transmission, allowing for greater reliability and less instances of congestion. The current definition of broadband by the FCC is download speeds at or above 4 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds at 1 Mbps, but with the

Back to the Basics - How Big is a Gig? Download Speed Comparison



rise of streaming, the FCC is soliciting public comments on whether broadband speeds should be redefined.

The 2014 Broadband Service Inventory in the State of Iowa map from Connect Iowa shows Iowa incorporates various broadband infrastructures such as Fiber, Cable, DSL, Fixed Wireless, and Mobile Wireless with advertised speeds of at least 6 mbps downstream and 1.5 mbps upstream.

Connect Iowa's 2012 Average Residential Download Speed for the State of Iowa map shows central Iowa and various counties average residential download speeds mostly fall in three tiers that range from 3 Mbps to < 25 Mbps. Other counties in Iowa fall in the lower tiers ranging from 3 Mbps to 768 Kbps.





PBS LearningMedia Online Curriculum through Iowa Public Television

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The Color Purple

Audience: **Grades 9-12**

Alice Walker chose to write *The Color Purple* as a series of letters in the spoken vernacular of the characters. This video from *Alice Walker: Beauty in Truth* explores the significance of Walker's decision to use this form and style of writing to convey the realities of African American life in the South in the first half of the 20th century.

[Learn More...](#)

Resources to Honor the Life of Poet Maya Angelou

Audience: **Grades 7-12**

Renaissance woman and civil rights activist Maya Angelou has died at the age of 86. These educational resources from PBS NewsHour Extra honor the life of poet Maya Angelou.

[Learn More...](#)

Listening Memory Game

Audience: **All**

Play a memory concentration game: listen closely then match pairs of sounds.

[Learn More...](#)

Phases of the Moon

Audience: **All**

The Moon, Earth's only natural satellite and one of the brightest objects in its sky, appears in the sky in many different shapes. Over the course of a month, the observed shapes result from the interaction of the Moon's orbit around Earth and reflected sunlight.

[Learn More...](#)

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