Iowa Communications Network

ICN Insider

Iowa Communications Network

Sharing Iowa's
Infinite
Possibilities

We would like to thank everyone that participated in ICN's 2010 Customer Survey. In the next newsletter, we will be sharing the results with you!

For additional information on the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, visit the web site www2.ntia.doc.gov.

Welcome to the ICN Insider!

Welcome!! As we begin the 2011 Fiscal Year, ICN is unveiling a new way to communicate to Iowans. We want to provide a clear perspective on the variety of projects and topics that ICN is pursuing. We know that Iowans like to stay updated and connected, and this newsletter will give valuable information relating to the goals and achievements for the ICN.

This newsletter is just one of a number of initiatives that are underway to give Iowans a better understanding of ICN and the services that we provide. Projects that are currently being developed include an awareness campaign and training opportunities, which will educate our users and all Iowans regarding the services that we provide. In addition, ICN will be enhancing its website as well as including informative video segments covering a variety of topics.

We want to hear from YOU. If you know of a newsletter topic, have photos from an event that was broadcasted over the ICN, or would like to send us a testimonial about the services that you receive from the ICN, feel free to contact Lori Larsen at lori.larsen@iowa.gov. Sharing Iowa's Infinite Possibilities is our goal when providing telecommunications services.

Welcome!

ICN Received Broadband Infrastructure Funding

ICN received $16.2 million for broadband infrastructure funding for its *Bridging the Digital Divide for Iowa Communities* grant project. ICN's grant will enable many public and private partnerships to be established, specifically with Iowa's local telecommunication providers. Institutions will be able to consider other Internet applications that require large amounts of bandwidth, like transmitting hospital MRIs and video streaming. Additional information will be provided in future newsletters.

Education is Boarding the Bandwidth Bandwagon

Educational facilities and other users can further their mission when utilizing ICN's bandwidth capabilities. The bandwidth used connects users to ICN's 10 Gigabit Ethernet Network, which is state-of-the-art technology for data transport, and is considered by the telecommunications industry as the leading-edge technology. ICN provides all 99 Iowa counties with native Ethernet services, which has a reliability of 99.999 percent.

Many of Iowa's K-12 schools are increasing their bandwidth usage to incorporate the Internet and other social networking options into the students' curriculum.

Internet sold to educational facilities continues to increase.

Message from Dave Lingren, ICN's Interim Executive Director

Welcome to the ICN Insider. The ICN Network was built for Iowans, and the partnerships with our customers allow for us to focus on providing the best telecommunication services to our authorized users and the citizens they serve. Take a moment to read through this newsletter, it will provide you with an inside look into ICN's operations.
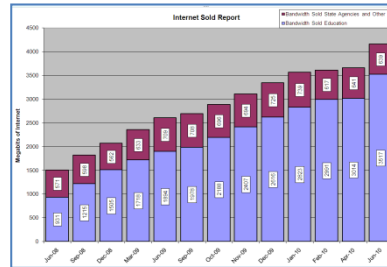
Give Your Students a World of Opportunities

Power up your video sites and give your students the experiences that they will continue to talk about for weeks to come. ICN sponsored program, *K-12 Connections*, provides Iowa's K-12 educators and students access to unique opportunities and the capability to participate in distance learning experiences via the ICN. ICN makes it possible for instructors and learners, physically separated by location, to participate in interactive events in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Does your teacher need continuing education credit? Many options are available that will save money and valuable time. Teachers can learn about session offerings, register, and check the progress of their registration directly from the *K-12 Connections* website.

The best part of these experiences is that the opportunities are at NO COST.

Experience the power of your video site with *K-12 Connections* and ICN.

Educators looking for an ICN high school course for their students can post or view "want ads" at IowaLearningOnline.org.

Progress Continues in Incorporating IP Network

As the summer begins, ICN's progress in integrating its current MPEG/ATM videoconferencing platforms with its IP Network (H.323 platform) continues full speed ahead. The first phase milestones were completed successfully. The focus of the first phase was to upgrade the VOSS scheduling software allowing for interoperability when scheduling between platforms.

ICN will move directly into extensive testing to ensure the service will work at the highest quality levels in the industry. For additional information contact ICNVSPTeam@iowa.gov.

Leased Connection Options for our Telco Partners

By working with our telecommunications providers under the leadership of Senator Pam Jochum, an amendment was passed during the 2010 Legislative Session to Chapter 8D of the Iowa Code to allow flexibility for leased connections technology (HF 2531).

When the requirement for the leased lines to schools, libraries, Area Education Agencies (AEAs) and state agency connections was created, the connections were required to use a specific telecommunications technology.

With this change, the ITTC can determine the technology to be used that provides sufficient capacity. This change will allow more vendors to be eligible to bid on Part III and other leases.

The change is quite an accomplishment and moves the focus to ensure users have adequate capacity rather than be limited to a specific technology requirement.

"The ICN is the country's premier fiber-optic Network, committed to continued enhancement of distance learning and providing Iowans with convenient, equal access to education, government, and healthcare."

Organizational Changes at ICN

Senate File (SF) 2088, which was passed during the 2010 Legislative Session, included language about Span of Control [SOC]. The SF affected the ICN resulting in organizational changes.

Sharing Iowa's Infinite Possibilities

ICN's organizational changes included:

- Operations and Engineering Departments were combined into ICN's Network Operations and Engineering Division.

- The creation of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, which is responsible for ICN's finances.

- Deb Evans moved to the Finance Division Administrator, managing the Billing/Auditing, Payables, and Warehouse teams.

In addition to the SOC changes, ICN had four employees take the State's Early Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP).
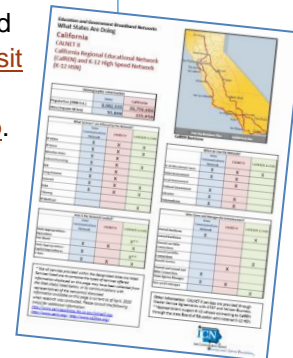
US Broadband Google Map

ICN created a Google mapping tool to help inform individuals on how other states provide the same type of telecommunication services to education and government. ICN's interns, Sean Bachman and Steven Price, completed broadband research, analysis of networks, and compiled the data. The information includes services provided, how the services are paid for, how the networks are governed, funding, and ownership. Click to visit ICN's US Broadband Networks Google map.

Upcoming Video Session for Students and Educator through Iowa Public Television's K-12 Connections

Serving Students with Disabilities in Nonpublic Schools

September 8, 2010; Wednesday, 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Audience: **AEAs, LEAs, accredited nonpublic schools, parents**

This session will explain the law's requirements for serving students with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in accredited nonpublic schools.

Registration Deadline - Tuesday, August 31, 2010

Monarch Tagging

Friday, September 10, 2010; Audience: **Grades K-5**

Students learn about the monarch butterfly as an international traveler and participate in the *MonarchWatch* tagging program. A naturalist from the Polk County Conservation Board demonstrates how they tag monarch butterflies and discusses the importance of keeping track of this migratory insect. This interactive program allows time for student questions, so come prepared.

Registration Deadline - Tuesday, September 7, 2010

Arthur's Sleepover

Friday, September 24, 2010: Audience: **Grades K-4**

Everyone loves a sleepover! Join us for this exciting ICN session where we read the book *Arthur's Sleepover* by Marc Brown and engage students in interdisciplinary activities designed to foster learning while having fun at Arthur's sleepover. During the session, we will sing Arthur's theme song, pack our paper suitcases with sleepover words, read *Arthur's Sleepover*, vote for our favorite book genre, map Arthur's sleepover campsite, and use pretzels to spell Arthur's name!

Registration Deadline - Tuesday, September 21, 2010

For More Information about Upcoming K-12 Connections Contact:

Marcia Wych or Trista Peitzman
Educational Services
(800) 532-1290 or (515) 242-3100
trista@iptv.org
www.k12connections.iptv.org

"Do you have new staff, administrators or friends who might be interested in receiving this newsletter? Please pass it on and have them contact lori.larsen@iowa.gov to be placed on the distribution list."

Remember to visit ICN's website at www.icn.state.ia.us to keep updated on all ICN related news.

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