

December 22, 2020 - Public Issue

ACA CONNECTS: KEY DEVELOPMENTS

ACA Connects Commends Congress for Approving Funds to Help Americans Maintain Broadband Connectivity During COVID-19 Crisis

ACA Connects President and CEO Matthew M. Polka issued the following statement on Dec. 21 on the new bipartisan legislation by Congress designed to help millions of Americans recover from the COVID-19 crisis by facilitating access to broadband Internet service, among other things:



“The COVID emergency has highlighted both the value and importance of broadband connectivity and that all Americans must have access to such service during the emergency and beyond.

“It is for that reason that ACA Connects urged Congress in the COVID emergency legislation to direct support to help in-need individuals obtain such connectivity, and we commend Congress for adopting this approach.

“By providing \$3.2 billion in direct support for broadband connectivity for low-income families, as well new stimulus checks and additional unemployment assistance, Congress will help Americans stay connected for the months ahead to the reliable, robust broadband connectivity that ACA Connects members and others provide.” [Read more.](#)

ACA CONNECTS: YEAR-END MESSAGE OF CHAIRMAN BOYERS

In this video recorded at her home in Poplar Bluff, Mo., **ACA Connects Chairman Patricia Jo Boyers** says it's time to put 2020 behind us and start looking to the industry's bright future. Please click [here](#) to view Boyers' holiday season video.



ACA CONNECTS: SEASON'S GREETINGS!

ACA Connects staff made this brief video (click [here](#)) to express its thanks for all the support from **ACA Connects members** and to point to a 2021 that is far less disruptive than 2020.



ACA CONNECTS BLOG: A MESSAGE OF HOPE TO A WEARY WORLD

By Crystal Kemp, Conway Corp.

I had occasion last week to speak on behalf of Conway Corp. to a group of women leaders in our Arkansas community. I wanted to share with you some of the thoughts I shared with them while I hope you are moving into a time of rest from the weariness that is 2020. (Also, as a bonus, I've included the Kemp Family Christmas Card.)

To remember important things, I keep a notebook where I take notes when I attend programs, conferences, etc. There may be quotes from some of you in that notebook!

As part of my preparation for last week's talk, I reached for the notebook in search of inspiration to include in my remarks. I found it in a stack with another notebook from my Girl Scout leader planning days. I was a Girl Scout troop leader for 18 years. In that Girl Scout notebook was a list I made six years ago for a group of 13-year-old junior Girl Scouts who were planning to lead some younger brownie Girl Scouts in an upcoming event. [Read more.](#)

Crystal Kemp is Chief Marketing Officer at Conway Corp. in Conway, Ark.



Pictured: Crystal Kemp, her husband Mike Kemp and their daughters Katie and Sarah.

ACA CONNECTS: NEWS HEADLINES

[Nathan Simington Sworn in as FCC Commissioner](#) (TV Tech, 12/14)

Nathan Simington is officially an FCC commissioner. Following his confirmation by the Senate on Dec. 8, Simington was sworn in on Dec. 14 by FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. Simington's term is back-dated to July 1, 2019, when the previous term of former Commissioner Michael O'Rielly was scheduled to end.

[CFU's Internet Service Named Best in U.S. for Gaming](#) (Release, 12/16)

Earlier in 2020, PC Mag named Cedar Falls Utilities the fastest ISP in the country, beating out large providers across the U.S. Now, our community-owned broadband network has earned another accolade from PC Mag – Best Gaming ISP for 2021. PC Mag does not use a speed index to compare Internet service providers for the Best Gaming ISP award. Instead, they measure the quality of the connection.

[Cable Broadband Sub Growth To Slow In 2021](#) (Light Reading, 12/16)

U.S. broadband growth continued to surge through the third quarter of 2020, but "pull-forward" growth driven by the ongoing pandemic will likely lead to a slowdown in 2021, MoffettNathanson analyst Craig Moffett predicted in a new report on the domestic broadband sector.

[Sparklight Extends COVID-19 Relief Efforts Through 12/21](#) (Release, 12/13)

Sparklight extend the availability of its 15 Mbps residential Internet plan for \$10 per month for the first three months of service to help low-income families and those most impacted from coronavirus challenges, such as seniors and college students through Dec. 31, 2021.

[Comcast Will Now Keep 35 'Neighboring' Local Channels](#) (TV Answer Man, 12/15)

Comcast has reached an agreement with local broadcasters to continue carrying 35 local channels in 38 different markets which the cable operator said last month would be dropped on December 22. "We have come to an agreement with the owners of these stations that will allow us to offer them in the same manner as we have in the past," a Comcast spokesperson said.

Dish, Cox End Long Retrans Battle, Restoring 14 Stations (Next TV, 12/13)

Dish Network has announced a multi-year agreement with Cox Media Group to restore 14 stations in 10 markets that had been blacked out on the satellite TV operator's platforms since July. Dish didn't announce terms of the agreement with Cox, which is owned by Apollo Global Management.

Roku Removes Spectrum TV App In Fee Fight (TV Answer Man, 12/13)

Roku has removed Charter's Spectrum TV app from its Channel Store in the latest carriage dispute involving the streaming device maker. The app, which allows Charter's Spectrum subscribers to watch live TV and On Demand programming, is still available for Roku owners who have previously downloaded it.

Maine Sen. Calls On Streamers To Provide Free Content (WMTW, 12/15)

Sen. Angus King is calling on six major streaming services to provide content for free this holiday season to help encourage people to stay home and slow the spread of the coronavirus. King sent his [letter](#) to leaders of Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney +, Apple TV+, Hulu, and HBO Max and pointed to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance that Americans should avoid traditional holiday travel and gatherings.

ACA CONNECTS: ACTION BRIEF TOP THREE

Most-Clicked Links From Dec. 9 ACAAction Brief:

1. [Tongue River Alleges 'Inside Deal' On B'band Funding](#) (Sheridan Press, 12/4)
2. [SpaceX Gets \\$886M From FCC For Starlink In 35 States](#) (Ars Technica, 12/7)
3. [Ritter Communications Opens Its \\$8M Data Center](#) (Release, 11/30)

ABOUT ACA CONNECTS

Across this vast country, small and rural markets participate in the digital revolution by receiving video, broadband, and phone services from more than 700 small and medium-sized independent operators represented by ACA Connects - America's Communications Association.

ACA Connects' members -- cable, phone, and fiber-to-the-home operators and municipalities -- deliver affordable basic and advanced services to nearly 8 million households and businesses. ACA Connects members operate in every state, offering high-definition television, next generation Internet access, and digital phone service.



Access to advanced communications is not a luxury but a critical necessity for consumers and companies, schools and hospitals. America's economic prosperity in smaller markets and rural areas depends on the growth and success of ACA Connects members, who believe a connected nation, is a united nation.

ACA Connects asks lawmakers and regulators to ensure fair treatment so that small and medium-sized independent operators may continue to supply affordable video, broadband, and phone services to Main Street America. Through active participation in the policymaking process, ACA Connects members and leaders advocate for the interests of their customers, their companies, and their communities to help ensure the continued viability of their way of life in hometown America.

For more information, visit www.acaconnects.org, or contact:

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