

CableViews

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association

Issue 3 2017

From the Executive Director: Community Focus Has Guided Nelsonville TV Cable



*Jonathon McGee,
OCTA Executive Director*

"We're local and we care."

For Nelsonville TV Cable, it's more than a slogan. It's been a philosophy that has guided the company for more than 60 years.

Company founder Eugene "Joe" Edwards is one of Ohio's true cable pioneers. Trained in radio repair, he returned from service in the Korean War and founded Edwards TV and Appliances. Televisions—Admirals—were the focus. Reception in Nelsonville's Appalachian foothills, however, was spotty.

The solution? An antenna on a hill, connected via cable to a customer's television.

Edwards connected his first television just in time for Christmas in 1952 and never looked back.

While other companies also ventured into the cable business in Nelsonville, Edwards outlasted them all through work ethic, ingenuity and customer service.

Technology, of course, has changed dramatically through the years. In the early days, for example, Edwards fashioned his own signal testing equipment to ensure customers received a quality signal. He also adopted more reliable coaxial cable ahead of his competitors.

While much has changed, the focus on the customers and



Eugene "Joe" Edwards (left), the founder of Nelsonville TV Cable, talks about the evolution of the cable industry. He is flanked by his son, Jim, who today manages the company.

the community has never changed for Nelsonville TV Cable. Nor has Edwards' active role (he says he never wanted the company to get so big he couldn't "Mother Hen" it). Today, Edwards works on Nelsonville TV Cable's local programming, which through the years has included high school sports and local events.

"Local programming has always been a thing of ours," Edwards said.

Last month, for example, Nelsonville TV Cable cameras were on hand to film, for later broadcast, highlights from the Nelsonville Parade of the Hills festival, a popular annual event that draws crowds of current and former residents from throughout the area.

Today, Edwards' son, Jim, is manager of Nelsonville TV Cable, running the day to day operations. Edwards' grandson, Jay, is serving in his first term in the Ohio House of Representatives.

OCTA Annual Meeting Nov. 8–9

The Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association's 2017 Annual Meeting will be held Nov. 8–9 in Columbus.

Ohio Auditor Dave Yost will be the special guest speaker during the event's government affairs breakfast.

The event will also feature a panel discussion with cable executives examining the latest developments in the Ohio industry. The annual meeting will also include the OCTA's annual business meeting, and updates on state and federal policy.

For more details on the OCTA annual meeting, please visit www.octa.org/annualmeeting or contact April Barrowman at (614) 461-4014.



Rep. Bob Cupp, R-Lima, is the new chair of Ohio House Public Utilities Committee. In this issue of CableViews, we discuss a range of issues with the veteran lawmaker, including public policy and his days growing up in rural northwest Ohio. Please see Face to Face, beginning on Page 2.

Face *to* Face

with Bob Cupp

Bob Cupp grew up working on his family's farm in rural Allen County. A graduate of Columbus Grove Local schools, he earned his political science and law degrees from Ohio Northern University.

He is serving in his second term in the Ohio House of Representatives. He has served as an elected official in all three branches of government and at both the local and state levels: as an Allen County commissioner, a four-term state senator, a court-of-appeals judge, and a justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio. He also served as a city prosecutor and as Chief Legal Counsel to Ohio Auditor of State, Dave Yost. In the Senate, Bob served two terms as the President Pro Tempore, the Senate's second-highest leader.

Cupp has received numerous honors and awards through the years for his legislative work.

In addition to his public service, Cupp has engaged in the private practice of law in Lima for more than 25 years and has taught courses in leadership studies, judicial process, and state education policy at Ohio Northern University.

Cupp's wife, Libby, is a retired educator, who focused her efforts on career and economic education. She is a past state Vocational Education Teacher of the Year award recipient.

Bob and Libby have two grown sons, both of whom are Eagle Scouts; and two grandchildren.



Jonathon McGee: You grew up working on your family's farm in rural Allen County. Tell us a bit about that.

Bob Cupp: It was a livestock and grain farm. I come from a long line of family farmers. Because farming involves a lot of hard work, my Dad had my brother and I helping him from a very early age. I helped feed and care for the cattle and hogs. I worked in the fields plowing, planting, and harvesting. Since there is always something that needs to be done on a farm, I always had chores to do after school.

JM: Is the farm still in the family?

BC: Yes, my brother still farms.

JM: Were you involved in 4-H or FFA?

BC: I was a member of the Columbus Grove Livestock 4-H Club for eight years. And, believe it or not, I was selected one-year as the Junior Fair king of Putnam County. Once a king... now a mere state representative!

JM: What was your project?

BC: I had several projects over the years, including steers, field crops,

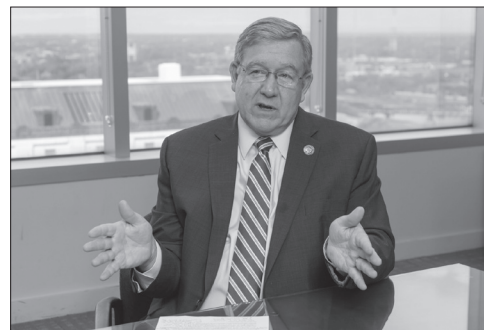
Fast Facts:

Favorite Ohio Sports Team – Ohio Northern University Polar Bears

Legal Mentor – That's a tough one. I've been fortunate to have many along the way. Allen County has many very professional lawyers I could look up to, respect, and learn from when I was practicing law in Lima. However, at the top of the legal mentor list would be the late Chief Justice Tom Moyer. He had just an admirable quality. He had a great legal mind, but he was also approachable and exhibited humility. He had high ethical standards. He always worked to bring people together, and he modeled civility.

Legislative Role Model – Again, there were many, but perhaps the most influential was former Senate President Dick Finan. When I first became a member of the Senate, I noticed that he was a person who got things done. He was involved in a lot of complicated issues. He knew how to move legislation along.

Currently Reading – "The Last Days of Night" by Graham Moore. It's historical fiction with some suspense and it provides an interesting take on the fierce competition between Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse to dominate the new business of providing electricity to the public on a large scale. It seems an appropriate read, considering the controversial electric utility issues before the House Public Utilities Committee that I now chair.



photography, electricity, and some others. I also belonged to the 4-H Tractor Club and Leadership Club. 4-H is more than just livestock at the fair.

I was also selected to attend the Ohio 4-H Club Congress, which is a mock legislature. Traditionally, it was held in the chamber of the House of Representatives. However the year that I was chosen to attend, the legislature met in session on the Club Congress dates, and we didn't get to use the Statehouse. Consequently, I was never actually in the Statehouse until the year before I was elected to the Senate.

JM: Tell us about your family. How did you and your wife meet?

BC: Unknown to us at the time, Libby and I were both involved in the College Republican club on our respective college campuses – she at Ball State in Indiana and I at Ohio Northern University. We first met in going to a national convention of College Republicans. A fellow was running for National Chairman who knew both of us, separately, from campaign workshops he conducted. The convention was in Missouri. I was the state chair from Ohio and several Ohioans were planning to attend. So, I got a call to see if we could stop by Indiana and pick up the Indiana state chair who was also a delegate but didn't have a way to get to the convention. We agreed to do that,

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and at the agreed meeting place in Indianapolis, I first laid eyes on Libby. We went to the convention, elected our candidate as national chair, and five years later we were married. That was 39 years ago this past summer. And the person who properly claims credit for bringing us together is Karl Rove, who needs no introduction.

JM: You and Libby have two grown sons and some grandchildren?

BC: We do, and we are very proud of them. Our oldest son, Matt, works at Battelle and Ryan is at the Ohio Board of Regents. Our granddaughter is 11 and our grandson is five. They are both very energetic.

JM: Both of your sons were Eagle Scouts? That's quite an accomplishment. Tell us about that.

BC: Scouting is a great activity. It's one of the activities our sons were involved in. The real credit goes to Libby. She was the main driver in getting and keeping them involved. She was a merit badge counselor and volunteered in many other ways. As many parents find, we had to give Matt and Ryan some extra encouragement to complete the final requirements to earn Eagle Scout. When they turned 16, a precondition to being able to get their driver's license was to complete their remaining requirements to becoming an Eagle Scout.

JM: You have the very unique distinction of having served in all three branches of government between your service at both the local and state government levels. How did you get involved in public service?

BC: I guess it started fairly early. My parents used to talk a bit about current affairs around the dinner table, and I remember them listening to the news on the radio. They also subscribed to newspapers and magazines. I read parts of them and a lot of it was just interesting. However, it was my eighth grade history teacher who planted the seed that it could be more than just an interest. It was a presidential election year, and we had a mock election for president. Sometime later that year she made a point of saying to me that she noticed I seemed to have a real interest in government and politics and asked if I had thought about that for a career? Well, no, I hadn't. It never really dawned on me that that was something a farm kid could do. So, that seed of an idea she had planted grew. Later, other teachers encouraged that interest and so when it came time for college, I decided to major in political science, and my interest grew and grew. After law school, I took a job with the Lima City law director, as both assistant law director and city prosecutor. I found the public service part – protecting the public, helping people, working to improve things that needed changing – made me feel good about what I was doing. Then, I was encouraged to run for county commissioner. I was successful in that election against an incumbent. Four years later I was encouraged to run for the state Senate seat against the incumbent. I won that race, too, and things just took on a life of their own after that.

JM: Did you ever think you would end up with the resume and record of accomplishment you have?

BC: I've always believed that if one does a good job at what you have, opportunity will come; doors will open. Of course, you have to be aware and watch for opportunities, too. Some of the best opportunities come unexpectedly. I never intended to run for county commissioner, that was not something on my mind, but I was convinced that I could really make a positive difference in our community, and that time of serving as a commissioner turned out to be a really valuable experience about how local government

operates and all the services local government provides. Then when I became a state senator, I found I had an expertise that many of the other members didn't have. That allowed me to provide a much larger input into policy making.

When term limits became a reality and my service in the Senate came to an end, I had to figure out what I wanted to do. I had continued to maintain my Lima law practice while serving. I had become frustrated with some of the decisions in the Ohio Supreme Court during this time, and I believed that my experience in the legislature would be useful as a judge to properly decide cases about the meaning of the law. So, I successfully ran for a seat on our District Court of Appeals when a judge retired, and four years later, I ran successfully statewide for an open seat on the Ohio Supreme Court. These were all great experiences, and I believe that I contributed to the public good with my service.

JM: How has the Statehouse changed from when you first arrived?

BC: I've found that every branch of the government has a different personality. The executive, whether Governor or President, who is responsible for implementing and enforcing the law, has a take charge, let's do it now, just "get 'er done" attitude. In contrast, the court system, by its function, is very deliberative, seeks to ensure that all sides are heard before a decision is made, and is fact-based and prefers to follow precedent and leave policy-making to the other branches. The legislature is deliberative, as well, but not in the same way. As a policy-making branch, the members are always looking for problems to solve, finding the options for solving those problems, debating the proper choice, and then putting that choice into statute. And there are differences between the House and the Senate in the legislature. The House is a bigger body – three times as large as the Senate. So, it takes more interaction, more compromise and refinement to get something passed. There are more moving parts to keep track of.

Overall, I have found that the legislature has changed significantly in some ways. First, the turnover is much greater now than when I first became a legislator. While there was always a significant change in members, that change has now become a churning. The result is, that while there are many capable members with impressive backgrounds who work hard, it still takes time to gain in-depth knowledge of many public policy issues and understand the important nuances that might not be readily apparent. By the time members have developed an in-depth expertise on policy issues to be able to actively formulate new policy and pro-actively shape the policies to hold up in the long term, a member will likely have reached their term limit, and when they leave the legislature, the knowledge and skills they have developed go with them. Consequently, legislators are more dependent on third-party information, knowledge, and expertise.

One of the things that is the same is the willingness of members to work across party lines when necessary for the public good. When there is a problem the legislature must deal with, I find, unlike Congress, members actually try to come together to solve the problem. If agreement can't be found to solve the whole problem, then there is a willingness to solve at least the core of the problem and not just kick the can down the road as the federal government seemingly has a propensity to do. One other change is a noticeable increase in size of the biennial state budget bill. The use of the budget bill to enact often unrelated policy changes has ballooned. The budget bill used to be about 1,000 pages, and I could go through it in an afternoon and get a good sense of what was in it. The current budget bill ended up at 5,000 pages. This bad practice is sorely in need of restraint.

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Capital Update

Legislative Update

Broadband Expansion Legislation: Rep. Rick Carfagna, R-Genoa Township, introduced House Bill 281, which would create the Residential Broadband Expansion Program (RBEP) to be administered by the Ohio Development Service Agency (DSA). The program would award matching grants for “last mile” expansion in municipalities and townships. Under the bill, the program would be seeded with a \$2 million appropriation from unexpended and unencumbered cash in DSA funds. Project sponsors (i.e., local governments) would be able to apply for a grant to provide broadband service within the municipality or township to cover a “broadband funding gap.”

The Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association’s board formed a broadband working group, comprised of OCTA member companies subject matter experts, to study the bill and to provide input on the legislation. The OCTA continues to work with Carfagna on his legislation. The bill can be found here: <http://bit.ly/OhioHB281-132ndGA>

On Sept. 6, Sen. Joe Schiavoni, D-Boardman, along with Sen. Cliff Hite, R-Findlay, introduced a bill (Senate Bill 199) to create a grant program to expand service in rural areas. This program would be funded by \$50 million a year from Ohio’s Third Frontier bond program. Political subdivisions would be eligible for the grants, as would private companies and non-profits. Grant amounts would be up to \$5 million. Also, \$1 million annually would be set aside for the state to contract with an entity to collect data (such as Connect Ohio). The bill can be found here: <http://bit.ly/OhioSB139-132ndGA>

Additionally, Rep. Ryan Smith, R-Bidwell, and Rep. Jack Cera, D-Bellaire, recently introduced House Bill 378, which is identical to the Schiavoni/Hite bill. Smith has told us that he intends for this bill to begin discussions on the topic and does not expect legislation this session.

The OCTA broadband working group will also be reviewing these pieces of legislation.

Threatening Utility Workers: Republican Reps. Jeff Rezabek of Clayton and Dave Greenspan of Westlake introduced House Bill 276 to expand the offense of aggravated menacing to prohibit threatening a utility worker with the intent to obstruct the operation of a utility. The bill as introduced includes “cable” in the definition of “utility.” We were concerned that this could cause confusion as cable is not considered a utility for regulatory purposes; as such, the OCTA has prepared an amendment to clarify this issue. The amendment is to be included in a substitute bill that the sponsors are working on. Assuming this change is made, the OCTA supports this legislation.

Lang Appointed: Republican Margaret Conditt of Hamilton resigned from the Ohio House on Sept. 8, to spend more time with her family. She has been replaced by George Lang, R-West Chester, as representative for the 52nd District. Lang was sworn in during the session on Sept. 13. Lang served as a trustee in West Chester Township for several years.

Hite Resigns: Findlay Republican Cliff Hite resigned from the Ohio Senate on Oct. 17. In a brief resignation letter, he stated he wanted to focus on his health and spend more time with his family. The Senate Republican caucus will appoint a replacement. Hite had been expected to run for re-election next year in northwest Ohio’s 1st District.



Rep. George Lang

PUCO Update

FirstEnergy Pole Rates: FirstEnergy (FE) has now filed the final tariff sheets in the 2015 pole attachment docket (15-975) in accordance with the PUCO’s ruling in July 2017. Each of its electric distribution utilities appropriately reflected the effective date of April 12, 2017, for its new pole attachment sheets, which includes the rates. This was the last step in this docket.

New FirstEnergy Pole Attachment Filing: In May of this year, FirstEnergy (FE) filed new tariffs under the new commission procedure governing pole attachment tariffs. This new filing occurred while the previous rate docket (see above) was still pending.

The OCTA reviewed the new rates and determined that they were correctly calculated. Under the new PUCO procedure, the rules were to become automatically effective on July 25. However, the PUCO suspended the tariff to give itself more time to more closely review the FE filing. FirstEnergy has now withdrawn these tariff filings and has refiled new tariffs in a new docket. The OCTA is currently reviewing the new filings.

Retail Rules: On Aug. 9, the PUCO issued an entry adopting revised retail rules affirming an early April decision. The OCTA had disagreed with the April adoption of rules that the OCTA believed were not based on statutory authority given to the PUCO. The OCTA is concerned that the proposed rules would put Title II type regulations on currently unregulated providers and technology.

With the Aug. 9 decision, the rule making process would have moved to its next phase, but the Consumer Groups filed an unexpected and last-minute request for rehearing which has delayed the process. On Oct. 4, the PUCO dismissed the Consumers’ request.

Next, the PUCO will sometime in the near future file the proposed rules with the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR), a legislative panel that has some limited authority over proposed rules. Also coming into play now is the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) run by the lieutenant governor’s office. CSI can make recommendations to JCARR and to the promulgating agencies on the rules if they prove to be too burdensome on business.

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Continued from Page 4 - PUCO Update

The OCTA signed a letter, joined by the Ohio Telecom Association (OTA), to CSI arguing these proposed rules present an undue burden to business and hinder economic development, are overly difficult and expensive to comply with, and that the PUCO lacked authority to promulgate them.

The OCTA will soon meet with the CSI office and will begin educating members of JCARR on our position. In the meantime, these rules have yet to take effect.

The amended rules and all filings in this docket may be reviewed here: <http://bit.ly/PUCO14-1554-TP-ORD>

Carrier-to-Carrier Rules: On Jan. 18, the PUCO issued staff proposed changes to the rules for comment. On April 19, the PUCO issued an Entry adopting the rules. Overall, the OCTA is very pleased with the final rules issued by the PUCO.

The rules are now before JCARR for review. Once this review is completed, the rules will become effective and the OCTA will so advise you.

The rules may be found here: <http://bit.ly/PUCO16-2066-TP-ORD>

Continued from Page 3 - Face to Face

JM: Through the years, you have developed a reputation as someone with a strong work ethic, the type of legislator who rolls up their sleeves and dives into complex issues. What are some of the most challenging or complex public policy issues you've been involved in at the Statehouse?

BC: There are several. School funding is one of those. We have one formula that is supposed to distribute state funds in a way that ensures to each of Ohio's 611 school districts adequate funds to provide each student a quality education. Considering the different property tax bases and the types of districts – urban, suburban and rural – it's a complex and on-going challenge. But, it's important to keep working to improve the way we fund the education of our children. Workers Compensation, when I first came to the legislature, was totally dysfunctional. Employers would call me and relate that one of their employees had been injured on the job, that their claim had been pending for six or nine months without a decision, that the claim was legitimate and that it was creating an enormous hardship for the employee. Could I help move it along? After a number of years and many reforms, we were able to get the system working again. Fortunately, the system has continued to improve. Tort reform, changing our state's liability laws, was another important challenge. I served on a number of tort reform taskforces while in the Senate recommending changes, and over the years, our liability laws have been brought more into balance.

JM: This summer, you were named chairman of the House Public Utilities Committee. What are some of the issues you will be tackling in the months ahead?

BC: I think electricity is front and center. The way electricity is provided has changed dramatically from where it was when I served in the Senate. With deregulation in the electricity generation market, there's a need for fine tuning. That's the interesting part of serving on the public utilities committee – there is always something changing, or in need of change, and action of the legislature relating to telecommunications, gas, and electricity policy affects everyone. It's important to get it right.

JM: Taking a longer-term view, what do you see as some of the major state-level policy issues facing the utility and telecommunications industries over the next few years?

BC: I would say that setting the framework so that new and emerging technologies that can serve and benefit the public can be deployed with reasonable timeliness is what our long-term focus should probably be.

As chairman of the committee, I want the committee members to be well informed before making decisions. We need to look for the facts before we begin to form our opinions and develop policy. To the extent that I can lead that as chairman, all points of view will be able to have their voices heard, to express their position, and to provide their information before policy changes are made.

JM: Any advice for the cable industry?

BC: I'm not an expert in the cable field so I hesitate to offer advice. However, I am a consumer, and so, I can speak as a consumer who wants to be provided with good programs and reliable service at a reasonable cost. I know there are a lot of challenges for the cable industry, including streaming video, more high definition broadcast channels viewers can receive, and so on.

Ohio Cable★PAC Ohio Cable Political Action Committee

Company Participation

(January 1 – October 6, 2017)

Company	Amount Raised	Goal
Armstrong Cable	\$2,496	\$2,496
Buckeye Broadband	\$1,798	\$10,972
Comcast	\$2,750	\$1,430
Cox Communications	\$860	\$1,500
G.L.W. Broadband	\$400	\$400
MCTV	\$20,500	\$2,750
Suddenlink	\$0	\$1,400
Total	\$28,804	\$20,948

Individual Contributions

June 17 – October 9, 2017

Armstrong

Dru Sedwick
Buckeye Broadband
Jeffrey Abbas
Mike Bilik
Laurie Cichy
Brad Mefferd
Jessica Pitzen
Sarah Riedeman
Charles Riley
Nicholas Vitou
James Wolsiffer

MCTV

Katherine Gessner

OCTA

Jonathon McGee

Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing

Brad Carman

Precision Broadband Installation

Chris Steininger
Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease
LLP
Gretchen Petrucci
Michael Settineri
Todd Snitchler



Cable Calendar

Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association 2017 Annual Meeting

www.octa.org/annualmeeting

When: November 8–9

Where: Copious
Columbus, OH

NARUC 129th Annual Meeting

www.narucmeetings.org

When: November 12–15

Where: Hilton Baltimore
Baltimore, MD

SCTE Penn-Ohio Chapter Training Seminar

www.pennohioscte.org

When: November 1

Where: TBD
Pittsburgh, PA

ALEC State & Nation Policy Summit

www.alec.org

When: December 6–8

Where: Omni Nashville
Nashville, TN

NCSL Capitol Forum

www.ncsl.org

When: December 10–13

Where: Hotel Del Coronado
Coronado, CA

www.octa.org

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