"Our cable family was deeply saddened to learn Sunday of the passing of Irene Gans, an original officer of our Association, a cable pioneer and beloved friend to countless industry associates. With her husband Joe, Irene was instrumental in launching our great industry and deepening its Pennsylvania roots more than six decades ago. Her business acumen was matched with a grace and warmth that will never be forgotten by all who knew her. On behalf of the entire BCAP membership and staff, I extend our deepest sympathies to the Gans family. Irene will be greatly missed."

Dan Tunnell President



Irene Osadchy Gans, 88, a loving mother, grandmother and greatgrandmother, of Sugarloaf Township died Sunday afternoon at The Laurels surrounded by her loving family.

She was born in Hazleton, daughter of the late Sergei and Anna (Zapach) Osadchy. She was a member of St. John Bosco Roman Catholic Church, Conyngham, and a graduate of Hazleton High School, Class of 1945.

Irene was affiliated with her late husband, Joseph, in the cable industry, being pioneers in that industry starting many years ago. Irene was a member of the American Cancer Society, was an original member of the Pennsylvania Cable Television Association (PCTA, now BCAP) Board and the first secretary of PCTA and was an inductee into the Pennsylvania Cable Pioneers in Harrisburg. On May 15, 2000, at the Hershey Lodge Convention Center, she was honored by being the recipient of Pennsylvania Best 50 Women in Business Award.

Everyone loved Irene for her contagious smile, quick wit and ability to laugh through the tears. Through dedication to her community and the cable

industry, her legacy is visible across the state.

Irene was preceded in death by her late husband, Joseph S. Gans, in 2012; her brothers, Michael in World War II, Paul and Vincent Osadchy; and sister, Mary Martinkovic. She is survived by her two children, Joseph S. Gans III and his wife, Patricia, Mountain Grove; and Janice Gans Moisey and her husband, Robert, Sugarloaf Township; three grandchildren, Jennifer Moisey and her husband, Adam Hoover, Jeffrey Moisey and Joseph Gans V; and four great-grandchildren, Gianna Moisey and Joshua, Jacob and Brayden Hoover. Also surviving are her brother-in-law, Ted Gans and his wife, Betty Jane; sister-in-law, Lorraine Halko; sister-in-law, Rita Gans; and several nieces and nephews.

Irene and her family wish to express their heartfelt thanks for the care, compassion, friendship and love she received from Maylath Valley Health Systems, Dr. Michael Washinsky, Dr. Jodi Lenko and staff, Dr. Harsh Ghandi and staff and especially The Laurels Senior Living Community and all the nurses, aides and staff.

The funeral will be held Thursday at 10 a.m. at St. John Bosco Church, Conyngham. Friends and relatives may call Wednesday from 5 to 8 p.m. at Frank J. Bonin Funeral Home Inc., Hazleton. Interment will take place in Calvary Cemetery, Drums. Donations in memory of Irene made to the Helping Hands Society, the American Cancer Society or a charity of one's choice will be appreciated by the family. – Hazleton Standard-Speaker



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curtain on
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rules

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registration
eases
process for
voters

Twitter said on Tuesday its social network was suffering ongoing outages on computers and phones and it was working to resolve issues which have been widely reported across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and North America. Both Twitter's web and mobile services began suffering outages concentrated in northern Europe around 0820 GMT, with smartphone users receiving the warning: "Tweets aren't loading right now."

Users from Scandinavia to Saudi Arabia to South Africa reported outages. India and Russia also suffered performance issues, according to a Twitter technical site. Intermittent breakdowns later spread to the United States and Canada in the early part of their working day. Sporadic disruptions continued at 1420 GMT, six hours after they first began to spread. "Some users are currently experiencing problems accessing Twitter," a statement on the company's Twitter status website has read for several hours (status.twitter.com/). "We are aware of the issue and are working towards a resolution." A company spokeswoman had no further comment.

Services had been restored for some affected users, only to fail again later. Some Twitter features continued to operate normally for some users, while others suffered disruptions, according to Twitter's developer website. The on-again, off-again nature of the outages meant that the hashtag #twitterdown was trending as a topic while Twitter was down for many other users. – *Reuters*

It isn't easy to be a Mets fan in Iowa.

To watch the Amazin's barnstorm the U.S. last year in their once-in-a-generation march to the World Series, an Iowan had to buy a jumbo package of broadcasts including hundreds of games she didn't want -- and excluding dozens she did.

It's no mistake. Major League Baseball and the pay television industry generally limit fans to watching their local teams on regional sports networks, such as New England Sports Network or Yankees Entertainment and Sports Network. Viewers who live outside the home territory of their favorite clubs -- about half of all fans, by one count -- have to sign up for unwieldy Internet and satellite TV subscription services like MLB.TV and Extra Innings.

MLB says the system prevents the teams in big markets from gobbling up all the TV deals and starving small-market teams, ensuring more games, more competition and more choices for fans. Now, the league will have to defend that logic in a trial starting Tuesday in federal court in Manhattan, in which Comcast Corp. and DirecTV LLC are also among the defendants. The plaintiffs argue that MLB is illegally restraining competition by limiting the markets in which its 30 teams can make broadcast deals.

MLB has already lost a bid to get the lawsuit thrown out on the basis of a special antitrust exemption it enjoys. If it loses the case as well, and fans everywhere can follow their favorite teams without paying for games they don't want, it would change the way Americans watch baseball, and the industries that have grown up around their devotion. A defeat could also accelerate cord cutting, or subscriber losses, at the cable and satellite TV companies.

U.S. District Judge Shira Scheindlin is overseeing the antitrust case, filed in 2012. In her only other big sports antitrust case so far, in 2004, Judge Scheindlin ruled against the National Football League and was reversed in federal appeals court by Judge Sonia Sotomayor, later appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the baseball case, for which Scheindlin has certified a class of fans as the plaintiffs, the judge in 2014 ruled that the antitrust exemption -- which MLB won in a 1922 Supreme Court decision and has cherished as a legal ace in the hole -- doesn't extend to broadcast contracts. That should make MLB think twice about battling the lawsuit to the bitter end,

some lawyers following the case said. "Judge Scheindlin has already made her feelings really clear," said Robert Jarvis, co-author of a textbook on baseball and the law. "She believes that baseball is violating antitrust law and that consumers have been injured. I really believe that when push comes to shove this case will settle."

The league "seems to be fighting against a reality that's already here," said Galen Clavio, director of the National Sports Journalism Center at Indiana University's Media School. The suit was filed along with a case against the National Hockey League, which the NHL settled in June by agreeing to provide fans with single-team packages at a discount of at least 20 percent off the bundled package for the next five years. It has already prompted changes in the way Major League Baseball does business. In court papers, the league in December disclosed that it will offer single-team packages for sale on its MLB.TV Internet streaming service starting next season, though it didn't give prices or other details.

Baseball fans have long complained they can't watch all the games they want to watch (it's the plaintiffs' expert witness who says half of fans live outside their teams' home markets) and are forced to pay too much for the baseball they get. To them, MLB is defending a decades-old system that is outdated and anti-consumer in the Internet age.

Comcast, for example, owns regional sports networks in Chicago, Philadelphia and other cities and has spent billions of dollars for the exclusive rights to broadcast baseball games in those markets. MLB ensures that only subscribers to the Philadelphia regional sports network can see Phillies games played in the team's territory. It does so by "blacking out," or blocking, those games from local subscribers of MLB.TV and Extra Innings, a satellite service that sells a multi-team package.

As that Mets fan in Iowa is painfully aware, there are no major league teams based in her state, yet six teams hold broadcast rights there, three of them in the National League: the Chicago Cubs, the St. Louis Cardinals and the Milwaukee Brewers. A Mets matchup with any of those teams gets blacked out in her package. On any given evening, she could be missing young flamethrowers like Matt "the Dark Knight" Harvey, Jacob "Degrominator" deGrom, Noah "Thor" Syndergaard and Steven (nickname pending) Matz.

MLB declined to comment on the case. In court filings, Comcast and DirecTV said they are simply following the rules created by MLB that divide games into territories. The league warns that a ruling against it could further enrich the already wealthy teams and imperil the humbler ones, making the game less fair and less fun to watch.

While antitrust law encourages Coke and Pepsi to battle it out in the marketplace even if one of them perishes, a professional sports league such as MLB may coordinate to guarantee on-field competitiveness and its overall financial health, said Elai Katz, head of the antitrust law practice at New York's Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP. "You don't want all revenues to go to the Yankees and the Dodgers," he said.

If the league forges ahead with the trial and appeals if it loses, it may be less about this particular case than about trying to knock out Scheindlin's ruling and solidify its antitrust exemption. Because the fans seek an order requiring MLB and the broadcasters to change the system but, Scheindlin decided, can't seek damages, she will hear the trial herself, without a jury. It is expected to last more than two weeks. Possible witnesses include Commissioner Robert Manfred and former Commissioner Bud Selig. – **Bloomberg**

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A former Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice convicted of using state-paid staff for campaign activities says the state violated her constitutional rights. The state found in November that the 2013 convictions for Joan Orie Melvin were constitutional. The Marshall woman responded to that finding on Friday in federal court documents. The response says there are no rules requiring judicial staffers to account for their time and that how they spend their time can't be considered a misuse of state resources.

Melvin is seeking to overturn her convictions due to alleged prosecutorial misconduct, improper withholding of evidence, and illegal search and seizure of her emails. The Allegheny County District Attorney's Office declined comment. A hearing in the case hasn't been scheduled. – **Associated Press**



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