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Philadelphia Daily News

Blue Ridge Communications will be delivering faster internet speeds to businesses throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. Blue Ridge offers businesses seven options of internet speed.

"This plan has been in the works for a while," said Mark Masenheimer, vice president of Operations for Blue Ridge. "As summer draws to a close, we believe the timing is right to make this change as businesses start ramping up for back to school, which also means back to work for most," he added. "We are constantly listening to our customers, gathering important feedback on what they want and need to run their business right. "Reliability and speed at an affordable price is what they desire most and we believe these changes address those desires and then some." "For example, current customers that subscribe to our popular speed tier, Pro 30, and have the correct modem equipment, will see their download speed more than triple to 100 mbps while their upload speed increases four fold from 2 mbps to 8 mbps.

In some cases, business customers may require a new modem to receive the new speed. To help existing customers transition to the new speed Blue Ridge will be offering free modem upgrades at their retail stores to those that qualify. Blue Ridge will be contacting existing customers directly or they can log on to www.blueridgeforbusiness.com to learn more. New customers have the ability to purchase a Docsis 3.1 modem for \$79.95 directly from Blue Ridge or they can rent them for \$5.95/month. "A comparable modem at retail or online costs about \$150, we make them available at a significantly reduced cost and just pass those savings onto our customers," Masenheimer added.

"Blue Ridge is proud to be the internet provider for many businesses throughout Northeastern Pa. and it's a responsibility we take very seriously. Maintaining and enhancing our network so that our customers receive the best performance and reliability from us is our primary goal. "We continue to proactively invest in our infrastructure and are excited to make these changes for the commercial businesses we serve," Masenheimer concluded.

As the nation's 18th-largest cable company, Blue Ridge Communications is on the cutting edge of home entertainment and information services — providing northeastern and southeastern Pennsylvania with an array of services, including digital TV, high-speed

Checking in on
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wave'

**Philadelphia
Inquirer**

Editorial: Are you
sure your vote was
counted? If you
mailed it, don't be so
sure.

Internet, digital phone, Dream TV powered by TiVo and Smart Home services. – **Lehigh Times News**

It's not a secret that a significant portion of our lives – especially the working part of it – is heavily impacted by usage of broadband Internet. So when residents of our region don't have adequate Internet service, they are probably working at a competitive disadvantage professionally. And there are other disadvantages that many of us take for granted. "Would you consider buying a home or moving to a home that doesn't have broadband," Ronald Cowan, vice president of Geisinger Medical Center's IT department, asked rhetorically at a conference last week hosted by Rep. Tom Marino, a Cogan Station Republican, on poor rural Internet options.

Cowan added that Geisinger won't buy a clinic or a hospital where there is no broadband internet and its clinics have come to rely on patients having internet for communication purposes. We can't imagine Geisinger is an outlier. In fact, farmers, probably the last people most of us would consider internet dependent, are very reliant on reliable internet service. And our region represents the perfect internet storm. It is comparatively rural, relies heavily on agriculture and is pocked with internet dead zones.

The purpose of Marino's conference was to gain insight on the depth of the problem and embark on solutions. The congressman, who probably had an inkling internet access is a problem in much of our region, found out just how widespread the problem is. But that's only step one. A practical solution has to be figured out and then a plan has to be formed to solve a problem that is impacting much of the business and residential populous of our region. And it has to happen fast. – **Williamsport Sun-Gazette editorial**

A group representing the interests of Pennsylvania's rural and agricultural areas came out in favor last week of legislation meant to expand wireless access in those areas. The Pennsylvania State Grange said a piecemeal approach might be the only affordable way to get broadband access to Pennsylvania rural areas.

House Bill 2564 seeks to ease the approval of "small cell" facilities by setting standards statewide for them while still leaving the decision whether to approve them up to local officials. The bill's sponsor, state Rep. Frank A. Farry, a Bucks County Republican, said the legislation would "provide for the uniform, efficient, and predictable regulation of small wireless antennas to improve the provisioning and deployment of the next generation of high-speed wireless broadband" without changing existing law on cell towers." – **Reading Eagle**

Harold FitzGerald Lenfest, known to all as Gerry, had a remarkable career. By training he was an attorney whose practice occupied him for the first half of his career and eventually brought him to Triangle Publications.

That company may mean little to readers today, but when Lenfest arrived there as an associate counsel in 1965, it signified the vast holdings of Walter Annenberg, who preceded Lenfest in two pursuits that would dominate his later life, communications and philanthropy. When Lenfest died last week at age 88, he left behind legacies as a pioneer in cable television, particularly in Delaware,

Montgomery, and Chester Counties, where his primary group of stations, Suburban Cable TV, which also involved Lenfest's widow, Marguerite, were the first access many in the Delaware Valley had to cable in its infancy.

Locally, Lenfest and his company rivalled Ralph Roberts's Comcast, which, of course, became one of the largest communications juggernauts in the United States. Lenfest sold Suburban for about \$1.2 billion in 1999 to AT&T, which then sold it to Comcast in 2000 for \$6.7 billion. Lenfest made good, productive, and laudable use of his wealth, constantly being a benefactor to institutions and categories of giving others ignore. Interviews I had with Lenfest over the years, and mostly in the last century, had at first to do with the burgeoning of cable TV and the growth of Suburban and later to do with his charitable initiatives and pursuits.

Like Walter Annenberg, whose life might be considered more checkered. Lenfest made contributions to Philadelphia, its culture, and beneficent entities surrounding it that will last long past his lifetime and long past those of most of you reading these words right now. The law begins the story. Communications is the overarching subject of it. Philanthropy on a magnificent scale caps it.

Lenfest, born in 1930, earned his law degree from Columbia University. He had been born in Florida but spent his life before college in Scarsdale, N.Y. and Flemington, N.J. He worked for a law firm before coming to Triangle and Annenberg. The year Lenfest arrived was an interesting one for Triangle, a year of change. Triangle gained its financial steam from TV Guide, a publication that was an essential part of each household when television became a main source of news and entertainment in the 1950s. TV Guide was a staple. It was only part of Annenberg's holdings. Major among them were two Philadelphia dailies, The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Philadelphia Daily news, and Philadelphia's ABC affiliate, WFIL-TV, Channel 6, now known as WPVI-TV, the most watched local major market television station per capita in the world.

Neither the Inquirer nor Channel 6 were what they would become under Annenberg and Triangle. Their later emergence, the Inquirer as a property of Knight-Ridder, and Channel 6 as WPVI as holding of Capital Cities, was a few years in the offing when Lenfest came to Triangle. Trust laws accounted for some of the divestment, time and the river for the rest, but the Annenberg empire was divided, and as associate counsel, Lenfest must have been instrumental in guiding the sales that eventually made the Inquirer and Channel 6 dominant over the communication entities that were market leaders in 1965, The Evening Bulletin and Group W with Channel 3.

In the process, Lenfest mastered the communications industry. He remained with Triangle once Knight-Ridder and Capital Cities were taking its former properties to new heights. In 1974, he struck out on his own with Lenfest Communications, which led to Suburban Cable, The Lenfest Group, and oodles of good works.

Lenfest's gifts to the Delaware Valley are many and many-faceted. The arts certainly benefited from his largesse. He and his widow, Marguerite, have endowed several institutions, particularly in music and the fine arts, that will guarantee their existence far into the

future. These gifts include a \$63.6 million endowment to Curtis Institute of Music, which allowed for more scholarships, more faculty, and new building; significant funding to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where Mr. Lenfest was a former chairman of the board; and benefits to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, where Marguerite Lenfest is a board member.

History was another interest. Philadelphia is the site of some of the most remarkable events and milestones in America's story. To launch the recent addition to the city's cultural treasures, the Museum of the American Revolution, Lenfest made a \$40 million challenge grant. He also gave \$500,000 to the National Museum of Jewish History and donated \$5.8 million to the SS United States Conservancy. To advance higher education, Lenfest gave \$33 million to his undergraduate alma mater, Washington and Lee University, and more than \$100 million to Columbia University. Lenfest College Scholars grants \$12,000 to high school juniors in Pennsylvania. The Lenfests have also endowed a College Prep Scholarship.

Conservation was another interest. In 2007, Lenfest donated more than 1,000 acres of land to create the ChesLen Preserve in Newlin Township, Chester County. An early contribution was to Abington Hospital, where the Lenfest Pavillion is scene on Old York Road. In 2016, Lenfest provided the funds to form the Philadelphia Media Network, which now owns Philadelphia's daily newspapers and their website. Its purpose is to insure Philadelphia has local newspapers. Lenfest is reported have given more than \$1 billion to various causes.

Gerry Lenfest had a brilliant career in several fields. Locally, his legacy to the community is incalculable. Except for the Annenbergs and Haases, it is difficult to think of families and individuals that match it. Lenfest always seemed so vital, it is difficult to think of him as gone. His wife keeps up the Lenfest charitable tradition as does his son, Brook, chairman of NetCarrier, Inc., based in Lansdale. He is also survived by H. Chase Lenfest, Diane Lenfest Myer, and four grandchildren. – **West Chester Daily Local News**

