

CEO

Barbara DeGarmo / barbara@bbcmag.com

PUBLISHER

Nancy McCain / nancym@bbcmag.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Masha Zager / masha@bbcmag.com

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

Steven S. Ross / steve@bbcmag.com

ADVERTISING SALES ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Irene Prescott / irene@bbcmag.com

EVENTS COORDINATOR

Dennise Argil / dennise@bbcmag.com

COMMUNITY NEWS EDITOR

Marianne Cotter / marianne@bbcmag.com

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Karry Thomas

CONTRIBUTORS

David Daugherty, Korcett Holdings Inc.
 Heather Burnett Gold, FTTH Council, NA
 Joanne Hovis, CTC Technology & Energy
 Michael A. Kashmer, Digital Broadband Programming Consultant
 W. James MacNaughton, Esq.
 Christopher Mitchell, Institute for Local Self-Reliance
 Henry Pye, RealPage, Inc.
 Bryan Rader, Bandwidth Consulting, LLC
 Craig Settles, Gigabit Nation
 Robert L. Vogelsang, Broadband Communities Magazine

BROADBAND PROPERTIES LLC

CEO

Barbara DeGarmo

VICE PRESIDENT, BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

Nancy McCain

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Robert L. Vogelsang

VICE CHAIRMAN

The Hon. Hilda Gay Legg

BUSINESS & EDITORIAL OFFICE
BROADBAND PROPERTIES LLC

1909 Avenue G • Rosenberg, TX 77471
 281.342.9655 • Fax 281.342.1158

www.broadbandcommunities.com

Broadband Communities (ISSN 0745-8711) (USPS 679-050) (Publication Mail Agreement #1271091) is published 7 times a year at a rate of \$24 per year by Broadband Properties LLC, 1909 Avenue G, Rosenberg, TX 77471. Periodical postage paid at Rosenberg, TX, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to **Broadband Communities**, PO Box 303, Congers, NY 10920-9852.

CANADA POST: Publications Mail Agreement #40612608. Canada Returns to be sent to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2.

Copyright © 2017 Broadband Properties LLC. All rights reserved.



Looking Forward

Whatever else happens this year, count on progress toward all-fiber networks.

For better or worse, 2017 is shaping up to be a year unlike any in recent memory. As of press time, it's unclear whether Australia is a friend or foe, whether the stock market is soaring or crashing, or even what the new administration's broadband goals are. (The **BROADBAND COMMUNITIES** Summit, still three months away, should shed some light on the last of those subjects.)

Nevertheless, I started the year, as I've done for several years, by asking industry experts what they expected to see in the world of broadband, and they gamely ventured some predictions. (See p. 44.) I think you will find them interesting and thought provoking.

One thing that struck me is, barring catastrophe, how little these predictions depend on politics, policies or the economy. The right kind of infrastructure program might speed up the trends experts identified, and the wrong kind of economic policy might slow them down. But the trends are what they are for underlying reasons that aren't easily altered.

DEMAND AND SUPPLY

A generation that grew up with technology is entering the workforce. Even those of us who grew up in the age of rotary phones have become dependent on the internet for life, work, study and play. Researchers at the University of Missouri found that smartphone users think of their phones as extensions of themselves

and suffer anxiety when they can't use them. People expect to be connected anywhere, anytime. And by the way, the days of TV broadcasters deciding what people should watch, and when, are over.

That's the demand side. On the supply side, manufacturers are creating paths to the all-fiber future – fiber to every home, business and lamppost. There are multiple paths, and providers follow them at different speeds, but that's because every locality and every network has unique circumstances and requirements. The endgame is the same for everyone.

Our experts envision an integrated, converged network that delivers to homes, businesses and cell sites the services appropriate for each – and that providers can add new services to as easily as smartphone users add new apps. Technologies such as NG-PON2 and software-defined access will make this dream a reality.

Supply and demand aren't simple lines on a graph. Serving millennial office workers in a metropolitan high-rise is different from delivering fiber to a farm. (And if the area you want to serve includes multiple business cases, be sure to read "Financial Modeling for Big Fiber Builds," p. 52.) But these underlying forces are real, and in the end, they are what drive the industry. ❖

Masha Zager

masha@bbcmag.com