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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TCT Celebrates 47 Years of Service to Neighbors, Friends and Family

Tri-County Telephone Association, Inc. Celebrate 47 years of service during its Annual Meeting of Members, held Tuesday, March 16th at Centre High School. TCT provided a meal prior to the business meeting, where 271 voting members re-elected Dean Miller for District 1, Anita Hummel for District 2 and Linda Wessel for District 5. Newly elected for District 2 was Kenny Stroda, who replaced out going Board member and Vice-President, Mark Reidy.

The evening began with a presentation by Abilene High School Senior, Courtney Wilson, who attended the 2009 Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour of Washington D.C. Wilson's slideshow included photographs of historic landmarks, monuments and the Capital Building. Each year The Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour brings together over 100 high school juniors and seniors, from rural America, to participate in an educational and entertaining tour of the nation's Capital.

TCT Board of Directors Vice-President, Mark Reidy, introduced six high school students, each who received TCT Scholarships of \$1,000 a piece. Students must be a graduating high school senior, maintain a 2.5 GPA and have a parent or legal guardian with TCT local telephone access, in order to be eligible for a TCT Scholarship. One scholarship is awarded for each of the five TCT voting districts in addition to one "at large" scholarship from all remaining applications.

This year's winners were:

District #1: Jamie Ross daughter of Alan & Wendy Ross, Council Grove High School
District #2: Shelby Deines daughter of Jeff & Gayla Deines, Centre High School
District #3: Stephen Kaiser son of Dawn and David Kaiser, Centre High School
District #4: Greg Harris son of Kevin and Rose Mary Harris, Chapman High School
District #5: Derrick Matthews son of Danny & Shari Matthews, Council Grove High School
At Large: Kris Wittman son of Randy & Ann Wittman, Council Grove High School

TCT Board of Directors President, Dean Miller reported on recent TCT projects, including Fiber to the Home. Miller stated that TCT and its subsidiaries currently provide service for 3,514 residential phones, 1,238 business phones, 2,255 DSL accounts and 1,147 IPTV accounts. Miller also reported that TCT paid \$864,349.73 in property taxes to eight different counties, the majority of which went to Morris County at \$582,600, Dickinson County at \$194,700 and Marion County at \$59,000.

Tri-County Telephone Association, Inc., C.E.O., Dale Jones, followed Mr. Miller by welcoming members and thanking the employees for their hard work over the past year. Jones then



presented a power point presentation recounting TCT's accomplishments in 2009 and highlighting TCT's plans for 2010. The Kansas Fiber Network, Fiber to the Home, TCT's Community Development Initiative and TCT's Cellular progress, were all topics covered in Mr. Jones' presentation.

Several independent Kansas telephone companies have come together to form the Kansas Fiber Network, or KFN. By combining their efforts KFN hopes to consolidate and lower costs through long distance and broadband. "Sharing these services will allow TCT to lower the cost of providing services, and consequently allow TCT to pass that savings on to patrons", said Jones. "We hope to see KFN operational by the end of 2010." added Jones.

TCT's Fiber to the Home project was the next topic of Mr. Jones' presentation. According to Jones, this two phase project started in 2005, when fiber was laid on the main lines. The second phase started in spring 2009 and will bring fiber to patron's homes and businesses. According to the National Fiber to the Home Council, there are currently only five million households receiving internet, telephone and/or cable television services over direct fiber connections. The entire project will cost fifty-four million dollars and take about four years to complete.

Jones then commented on TCT's Community Development Initiative, which was put into place the summer of 2009. "This initiative was designed to help promote healthy lifestyles for current customers and businesses and help support infrastructures that will attract new residents and businesses to TCT service areas." Jones said. Groups have been formed in Woodbine and Hope, with plans to hold meetings in White City, Dwight, Burdick and Lost Springs. TCT is also working with existing groups in Council Grove, Tampa and Lincolnville. The program is working with groups like The Kansas Sampler Foundation, The Flint Hill Tourism Collation and The Kansas PRIDE Program to help promote growth in the area.

Jones then updated members on the progress of TCT's Cellular project. Jones touched on TCT's dealings with Crossroads Wireless, and also reported that he was optimistic about other TCT Cellular options on the horizon.

Juggler and comedian Richard Holmgren of Salina's *Flying Debris* then delighted the crowd with a juggling act, which included audience participation.

Outgoing board member Mark Riedy was recognized for his years of service to TCT. Riedy has served on the Board of Directors for 12 years. During that time Riedy held the office of secretary for four years, treasurer for four years and vice president for two years.

TCT Marketing Director, Scott Bankes announced the winners of the prize drawings. Cash prizes totaling \$1,150.00 were awarded, along with a flat screen HD television.

Miller closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and by saying that TCT is looking forward to another great year, filled with the growth and success of the communities they serve.