



NEWS RELEASE

Johnny Hebert and R.L. Hargrove, Jr. Retire from CenturyTel Board; Greg McCray Elected Director

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MONROE, La.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 13, 2005--CenturyTel, Inc. (NYSE:CTL) shareholders elected Greg McCray of Wheaton, Ill., to the board of directors during the company's annual meeting of shareholders Thursday. Retiring from CenturyTel's board are long-time directors Johnny Hebert and R.L. Hargrove.

Hebert has served on CenturyTel's board since 1968, when the company was incorporated as Central Telephone and Electronics. He has served on numerous committees including audit, nominating, insurance evaluation, shareholder relations, compensation and risk evaluation.

During his 37-year tenure, shares of CenturyTel common stock first began trading on the New York Stock Exchange, the company has been included in the S&P 500 Index, and has grown from serving 10,000 telephone customers in three states to providing local, long distance, Internet and broadband services to customers in 22 states.

Hargrove has served on CenturyTel's board since 1985, and as an executive officer from 1975-1987. He has served on multiple committees including shareholder relations, executive, audit, nominating and corporate governance.

During his tenure, CenturyTel grew through numerous acquisitions and internal revenue growth, experienced multiple stock splits, and expanded service offerings to include high-speed data and broadband Internet, wireless and video.

"Mr. Hebert and Mr. Hargrove have made numerous contributions to CenturyTel during their time on the board," Glen F. Post, III, chairman and CEO, said. "Their dedication, insight, unfailing integrity and leadership have been invaluable to CenturyTel, our employees and our shareholders. They have played a large role in building our company's principles and character which continue to guide our company's progress. We want to express our deepest appreciation and best wishes to them upon their retirement from CenturyTel's board."

McCray is CEO of Antenova Limited, a British company that develops and markets antenna components used within cellular handsets, PDAs, laptop computers, modems and other devices. He is the former president of McCray Consulting, a technology consulting company; CEO and director of Pipinghot Networks, a broadband fixed wireless access equipment developer; and senior vice president and general manager of customer operations for Lucent Technologies among other ventures.

"Greg has outstanding engineering, strategic development, marketing, merger and acquisition, and management experience and expertise," Post said. "He brings a strong background in communications network infrastructure design and technical product support to CenturyTel . We are very pleased to welcome Greg to CenturyTel's board of directors."

CenturyTel, Inc. (NYSE:CTL) provides a full range of local, long distance, Internet and broadband services to consumers in 22 states. Included in the S&P 500 Index, CenturyTel is a leading provider of integrated communications services to rural areas and small to mid-size cities in the United States. Visit CenturyTel at www.centurytel.com.

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