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Former cable television executive and current philanthropist Jim Duratz had an emotional moment after receiving the Winslow Awards at the Meadville Country Club on Thursday. The ever-humble Duratz told the audience that if it were not for his wife's family, he would not have been there receiving the award.

"Thank you — thank you everybody," a humble Jim Duratz said quietly in accepting the 48th annual Winslow Award at the Greater Meadville Area Day dinner Thursday night. Duratz, 90, had his voice choke with emotion as he gave his acceptance speech before a crowd of about 200 at The Country Club north of Meadville.

A nationally recognized pioneer in the cable television industry, Duratz was general manager of Meadville Master Antenna Inc. cable television company, which was founded by George Barco and Yolanda Barco, Duratz's father-in-law and sister-in-law, respectively. Meadville Master Antenna was a predecessor company to Armstrong, the area's current cable television provider. "I accept this tonight on behalf of George," Duratz said at the close of his speech. "I was thinking tonight, if it wasn't for the Barco family, I wouldn't be here."

Given by the Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County, the Winslow Award honors an individual, group, business or industry that has made a significant contribution to economic growth in the greater Meadville area. The award is named for the late Dr. Harry C. Winslow, an area physician and business leader. The award was created in 1969 by the then-Meadville Area Industrial Commission, a predecessor organization of the currently Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County, to honor Winslow on his 85th birthday. His business interests included being chairman of the board of the former First National Bank of Meadville, a founder of WMGW-AM radio and a vice president and director of Conneaut Lake Park.

This year's award was presented to Duratz by Bill Hillgrove, the Pittsburgh-area sportscaster who was the guest speaker for the dinner. Hillgrove has known Duratz for decades through their mutual association with University of Pittsburgh. Hillgrove is the radio play-by-play voice of Pitt's football and men's basketball programs. The Barco and Duratz families have been big supporters of the University of Pittsburgh's educational and athletic programs, making millions of dollars in donations to its law school as well as donating to its athletic programs. George Barco and his daughter, Yolanda Barco, both were graduates of the University of Pittsburgh Law School and its law school building was renamed the Barco Law Building in their honor in 2003.

In his presentation of the Winslow Award leading up to the introduction of Duratz as this year's recipient, Hillgrove recalled a quote from the scholar and historian Albert Pike. "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains — and is immortal," Hillgrove said. Hillgrove said no matter the

and Kane plotted grand jury leak - and cover-up

organization, no matter how great its need, Duratz was always there to answer the call. "You've heard the Armstrong Cable catch-phrase —'One wire, infinite possibilities,' Let's change that to 'one gentleman, limitless generosity,'" Hillgrove said in announcing Duratz's name.

Duratz has been active in civic affairs serving on numerous boards and organizations — in business, public service and for philanthropic causes. Duratz has been a member of the University of Pittsburgh's athletics board of visitors; the board of advisors for its Titusville campus; and the Pitt Golden Panthers. Duratz has been a director and chairman of the Pennsylvania Cable Network, the public affairs channel operated by Pennsylvania's cable companies; and a director of the National Cable Television Center and Museum.

Among his many areas of civic involvement, Duratz served as a member of the board of incorporators of Meadville Medical Center; served as a director and participant in fund-raising activities for the Meadville-Western Crawford County Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Western Crawford County and numerous other organizations. He also chaired the "Campaign to do more for Premium Cancer Care" for the Yolanda G. Barco Oncology Institute, which is a Meadville Medical Center facility in Vernon Township. Duratz served on the boards of numerous economic development agencies such as the Meadville Redevelopment Authority, Crawford County Development Corp., Meadville Area Industrial Commission and Economic Progress Alliance of Crawford County.

Duratz also served as president of the Barco-Duratz Foundation, a private charitable foundation established in 1987 with a primary goal of advancing education. Asked by a Tribune reporter what drove him to be so generous both with his money and time, Duratz said it was because of his father-in-law, George Barco. "For George Barco, you had to work hard for him," Duratz said with a smile. "George always said 'You have to give it back'. When you have success, you have to give back." — *Meadville Tribune* **CONGRATULATIONS JIM...MUCH DESERVED!** Also see Erie Times-News

We all know, with everything going on in the world right now, our No. 1 problem: Internet providers and utility poles!

OK, maybe not. But if you were wondering to yourself, didn't Google Fiber announce like forever ago it would be in my home? Why is it not here yet, what could be taking so long? Let's nerd out on utility poles and perhaps a new way forward that makes sense.

We all know our beloved Nashville sits entirely on bedrock. So when it's time to outfit our internet and data infrastructure, it happens on the utility poles. It's the same reason we can't modernize to underground power any decade soon. Who owns the poles? Nashville Electric Service, of course (75 percent or so), and AT&T owns most of the rest (25 percent).

How the process works now on the utility poles: Before a new provider can get onto the pole, often the existing companies attached to the pole have to move to make room. Currently the different carriers (Comcast, AT&T and several others) each have to hire their own subcontractor to come out to a given pole and move their line, then the next provider, then the next until the last can attach. The average pole has three carriers, and there are poles in Nashville with as many as 14 carriers.

This process may last up to 180 days (and sometimes longer) and creates road closures, sidewalk closures and a construction zone for extended periods of time. New networks are deployed at a huge scale and there are thousands of poles that must be made ready in this way. The answer? One-Touch Make Ready.

"Make ready" is the process by which the communications company prepares the utility pole for a new attachment of fiber, cable or other equipment. Under a "One-Touch" policy

(also called "climb once"), the pole owner provides a list of approved contractors, with enough skill and expertise to do the make-ready work. A new provider can then use these contractors to come out to the poles once and move everyone into proper position. It's so obvious it's almost painful. We are trying to outfit Nashville for gig speeds with all three carriers, but we're doing infrastructure improvements like we're on a dial-up modem.

A One-Touch policy will reduce disruption on city streets, improve safety and speed up broadband deployment. It's fair and equitable to all providers; any provider attaching to the pole can make use of this process. And it respects the interests of companies already on the pole, which are appropriately notified and able to inspect the work and demand corrections as deemed necessary.

When there is a better answer out there that serves our citizens, let's make it happen. We can advance Nashville's internet infrastructure exponentially if we simply adopt One-Touch Make Ready. – **Nashville Tennessean (the writer is a Nashville-area government official)**

The days may be numbered for the Most Interesting Candidate for Pennsylvania Attorney General, comedian and pot activist N.A. Poe. But that does not mean Poe will go gentle into that good night during the effort to **boot him from the ballot.**

The state Democratic and Republican Parties filed legal challenges Monday to Poe's candidacy on the Libertarian ticket, noting that to be the attorney general in Pennsylvania, you have to be ... an attorney ... in Pennsylvania. Who knew? Alas, Poe has just a high school diploma.

Poe - real name Richard Tamaccio - told us Tuesday that he probably would be unable to put up the resources to fight in court. Because copious amounts of ganja can't buy you quality legal representation these days. But then, Larry Otter, the attorney for the Republican Party, suggested to Poe in an email that he should just pack it in already. "Larry, you seem like a straight guy so I'll be straight with you," Poe wrote back. "This is why I took the nomination, to get this suit filed. You've played right into our trap sir."

Otter, apparently not feeling trapped at all, responded with a version of Edgar Allan Poe's iconic poem "The Raven" - " 'Tis some visitor, I muttered, tapping at my courthouse door, only this and nothing more." The game of one-upmanship continued, with Poe referencing his 2013 federal conviction for smoking marijuana and scuffling with rangers at Independence Hall **during a rally.** "Larry, I've went toe-to-toe with federal prosecutors ... and laughed them off," Poe wrote. "So, if you think your curmudgeonly old ass is getting under my skin, you're dead wrong."

"I have been called worse by effete snobs," Otter replied. So, game on, it appears. – **Philadelphia Daily News**

VOICEMAIL OF THE WEEK: "Hi Rob. It's Kirk calling. Television news, as opposed to print news, has a tendency to, well, be much more grandiose in its reporting – that is, a lot more lies — and a lot more editorializing and an overwhelming amount of innuendo.

All of that aside, the thing that ticks me off the most is the moronic [jerks] who produce these television news programs and/or their station managers who insist upon running commercials. I'm sitting here watching WPXI news on Channel 11 where they hurry or cut an interview or cut short a story for a station break that turns out to be [expletive] commercials for their very [expletive] news I'm watching. Do you understand that, Rob? If you can print a response that would equal the passion I just put forth into one of your columns or articles I would greatly appreciate that.

Just simply convey to the [expletive] moron that while I'm watching their news broadcast not to have commercials come on extolling or urging me to watch their newscast because

it's [expletive] moronic. Only an [expletive], [expletive]-for-brains idiot would do something like that Rob, you see?" Kirk. – Rob Owen's "TV Q&A" column in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*



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