

# SEPTEMBER 2019 CEA NEWS

ESTABLISHED 1911

## ELEVATORS/ESCALATORS IN THE NEWS



### Elevator Phone Phreaking

Welcome to the harmless and not so harmless fun of hacking elevator call boxes. Inside the Hidden World of Elevator Phone Phreaking. The first time I called into an elevator, I picked up my iPhone and dialed the number labeled on my list as the Crown Plaza Hotel in Chicago and immediately heard two beeps, then a recording of a woman's voice, who told me to press one to talk. When I did, I was suddenly in aural space filled with the hum of motors and the muffled twanging of steel cables under tension. "Hello, can anyone hear me?" I asked the void. The void did not respond. I hung up and tried another number on my list: A Hilton hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After just one ring I heard a series of four tones and was immediately listening to the inside of another elevator. I heard a chime; perhaps a signal that it had reached a floor, followed by the rumble of what might have been a door opening. "Hi, is anyone in here?" I asked. This time I heard a few muffled voices, and then a woman answered: "There are people in here, Yes." Sounding a little more excited than I intended, I asked if anyone was in an emergency situation, a strange question I felt compelled to lead with, to make sure I wasn't tying up the elevator's phone line when the occupants might need it.



I got no answer except what sounded like the rumble of the door opening and closing again. So I stayed on the line. A few seconds later, the elevator chimed, and I heard the noises of new people entering. I greeted them as I had the first passengers, but they didn't seem to hear me even after several attempts. "Turn it over," I heard a woman's voice say in a Midwestern accent. "The lady at the desk just said to hold it," a man said. I realized I was listening to a couple trying to figure out how to use their keycard to unlock the button for their floor of the hotel. I felt a transgress excitement, a sense that I was eavesdropping on a conversation I shouldn't be hearing, and I instinctively hung up the phone. This was my introduction to the illicit thrill of elevator phone phreaking. I had learned about this hobby and received my list of working elevator phones. America is largely left wide open to any caller who can determine their numbers.

### WIRED



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

EVENT	LOCATION
Thursday <b>October 3rd</b> CEA Meeting <b>Oakbrook</b> <b>KONE Spares</b> Speaker	
Thursday <b>November 7th</b> CEA Meeting <b>Oakbrook</b> <b>INPRO</b> Speaker	
Wednesday <b>December 4th</b> CEA <b>Annual Christmas Party</b> TBD	
Thursday <b>January 2nd</b> CEA Meeting <b>Oakbrook</b> <b>Cancelled</b>	

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