

PUCKETT KAREN A
Form 4
March 20, 2006

FORM 4

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

OMB Number: 3235-0287
Expires: January 31, 2005
Estimated average burden hours per response... 0.5

Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
PUCKETT KAREN A

(Last) (First) (Middle)
100 CENTURYTEL DRIVE
(Street)

MONROE, LA 71203

(City) (State) (Zip)

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
CENTURYTEL INC [CTL]

3. Date of Earliest Transaction
(Month/Day/Year)
03/17/2006

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) _____ Other (specify below)
President & COO

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
____ Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price
Common Stock	03/17/2006		M		50,000	A	\$ 28.34
Common Stock	03/17/2006		S		50,000	D	\$ 38
Common Stock					200	I	
Common Stock					510.86	I	
Common Stock					1,271.12	I	

As Custodian For Child
By 401(k) (1)
By ESOP (2)

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Common Stock 15.94 I By Stock Bonus Plan (3)

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 1474
(9-02)

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Security (Instr. 3 and 4)
				Code	V (A) (D)	Date Exercisable Expiration Date	Title Amount Number of Shares
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 28.34	03/17/2006		M	50,000	02/25/2004 ⁽⁴⁾ 02/25/2014	Common Stock 50,000
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 29.19					⁽⁵⁾ 07/25/2010	Common Stock 100,000
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 32.99					02/25/2003 ⁽⁶⁾ 02/25/2012	Common Stock 120,000
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 27.48					02/24/2004 ⁽⁷⁾ 02/24/2013	Common Stock 49,900
Employee Stock Option (right to buy)	\$ 33.4					02/17/2005 ⁽⁸⁾ 02/17/2015	Common Stock 75,000

Employee
 Stock
 Option \$ 35.41
 (right to
 buy)

03/15/2007⁽⁹⁾ 02/20/2016 Common Stock 75,0

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
PUCKETT KAREN A 100 CENTURYTEL DRIVE MONROE, LA 71203			President & COO	

Signatures

By: Kay C. Buchart, Attorney-In-Fact
 Date: 03/20/2006

__Signature of Reporting Person Date

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- ** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).
- (1) As of most recent statement available
- (2) As of most recent statement available.
- (3) As of most recent statement available.
- (4) One-third of the options are exercisable immediately, one-third are exercisable 2/25/05, and one-third are exercisable 2/25/06.
- (5) One-third of the stock options are exercisable 7/25/01, one-third are exercisable 7/25/02, and remaining one-third are exercisable 7/25/03.
- (6) One-third of the Stock Options are exercisable 2/25/03, one-third are exercisable 2/25/04, and one-third are exercisable 2/25/05.
- (7) One-third of the Stock Options are exercisable 2/24/04, one-third are exercisable 2/24/05, and one-third are exercisable 2/24/06.
- (8) One-third of the options are exercisable immediately, one-third are exercisable 2/17/06, and one-third are exercisable 2/17/07.
- (9) One-third of the options are exercisable 3/15/07, one-third are exercisable 3/15/08, and one-third are exercisable 3/15/09.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.