



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers
pittsburgh chapter

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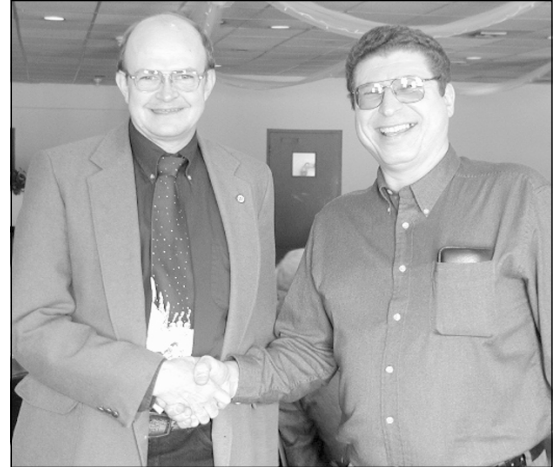
Last Meeting

The annual free lunch Christmas meeting was held at Gaetano's on December 18.

Besides the free lunch, the main event was the election of officers. Bob Jordan was elected as Chairman. Blake Richert as Vice Chairman, Paul Byers as Secretary and Paul Mastorakis as Treasurer. The nominating committee was Paul Mastorakis and Gary Stewart.

Sam Zborowski will now serve two years in the advisory position of "immediate past chairman."

There was further discussion about the purchase of a large screen projector. Blake Richert is to finalize purchase. Our next meeting is an evening meeting and will require an RSVP.



Bob and Sam after the transfer of power.

Next Meeting – (RSVP) Needed!!

Evening Meeting at the Art Institute

Our January meeting is an evening meeting at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. RSVP will be required for food planning purposes. Please send an email with number attending to Blake Richert at brichert@ctvn.org or call him at 412-824-3930

You can start arriving about 6:30 pm. Food will be served at 7 pm. Following dinner and a brief meeting there will be a tour of AIP's studios, labs, and suites. Doug Heaps, Academic Department Director for Video and Digital Media Production, will give us an overview of what they do at the Art Institute and how television fits in.

The school is located at 420 Blvd. of the Allies. Many may remember the building as the Equitable Gas building.

The Allies Parking Garage is located directly across the street.

Come off of the Parkway using the Grant street exit. From Grant Street make the left onto the Blvd. of the Allies. Come down the blvd about a block and a half and the Art Institute will be on the left side of the street, parking garage on the right.



The Art Institute is that tall building right across from the parking garage, very soon after you turn left onto the Blvd. of the Allies from Grant Street.

Next Meeting

Time: Thursday, January 15
6:30 P.M.

Program:

***All About AIP
and Television***

Place: Art Institute of Pittsburgh
420 Blvd. of the Allies
Pittsburgh

Lunch Fee \$7



Chairman's Corner

Are We a Dying Breed?

Bob Jordan, CPBE
bjordan@wpxi.com

Hello from the Chairman's Corner. Either I'm experiencing deja vu or I've been here before.

First of all, I want to thank Sam Zborowski for his insightful leadership. And second, I'd like to thank my employer, WPXI-TV (Frank and Glenn) for the time and support so that I might take on the assignment of Chairman of SBE Chapter 20.

When I first joined The SBE over 25 years ago, it was a thrill for a newcomer like me to be able to shake hands with the big guys in Pittsburgh broadcasting – people like Hank Keiser, Milt Augenstene, Roy Hoover, and Jack Cvetic, just to name a few, and to hope that some of their marvelous experience might somehow rub off.

But today when I look around the room at the monthly meetings, it's different. The faces, of course, are different, but what I don't see are all those Chief Engineers and their assistants from all the big stations. That's an observation, not a condemnation. It's just a whole different business. There are a lot of reasons for this and most of them have something to do with shrinkage. Those big stations aren't so big anymore. Our market is shrinking. Our share of the viewer's time is shrinking. Profits are shrinking. Staffs are shrinking. And time available for anything but what it takes to keep the station afloat is shrinking.

So what's the answer? First we have to determine what's the real question. If the question is how to get more people out to the meetings, experience has shown that when we

are able to offer a good presenter on a timely topic, more members are able to give it higher priority. But, if the question is how do we sustain the organization and its objectives, we must first ask how do we sustain the broadcast engineering profession? And this in turn raises more questions. Questions like how do we generate interest among young people in what we do? And even more basic questions like what exactly does a Broadcast Engineer do that's any different from any other technical field in which servers, automation, and out-sourcing are becoming the norm.

From my perspective, attracting those young people with a technical interest who aren't quite sure what they'd like to pursue, is the key. Over the next few weeks I plan to start contacting technical schools to see how that might be accomplished. And once I get a handle on the how to, I hope I can count on many of you to help with the execution. That might involve speaking to classes, participation in job fairs, or perhaps opening up your technical facilities for tours. As a kid, more than 40 years ago, I tagged along when my Dad's engineering society toured a brand new television station on Pittsburgh's North Side, and look what happened.



HDTV Implementation Goes Forward

John A. Luff
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It should be no surprise to anyone awake in our industry that HDTV is now widely available, and that consumers are increasingly aware of its potential. In addition to the terrestrial networks who

began limited service in November of 1998, numerous program services are now available on DBS from Echostar (Dish Network), and DirecTV. Those include Showtime, HBO, Discovery HD Theatre, HD Net, HD Net Movies, Starz HD, Cinemax, ESPN HD, INHD, The Movie Channel HD, and the new Cablevision network, VOOOM.

While much of this programming is done in quite ordinary facilities with minimal HD equipment, some are indeed quite sophisticated. Though ESPN has been on the air for months, their new HD facility goes on line in April as the largest HD facility in the world. Several of their networks will be done in HD and downconverted for other release. Clearly they are betting on HD as the future of sports television. Our company is involved in upgrading the Turner facilities in Atlanta, from which TNT-HD will launch before mid year. This operation will be entirely server based and highly redundant. Once they go on the air I will share pictures and details of a sophisticated facility with support for 7.1 channel Dolby surround (not a mistake...)"



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