



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

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Chairman's Corner

Expo Follow-up: We've Turned the Corner

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Well, the 2004 SBE Regional Broadcast Exposition is now just a memory. Our theme for the show was "Turning the Digital Corner," but we've also turned a corner in how we put on this annual event. The Pittsburgh Chapter of the Society of Broadcast Engineers has been putting on a regional "convention" for the past 33 years. That's probably longer than most of us have even been in the business. For all those many years the show has relied heavily on volunteers for its success.

This year it became obvious early on that we just didn't have enough volunteers to pull it off one more time. Our Chairperson made it known she couldn't put the same level of effort into it as last year, and nobody was stepping up to the plate, so the decision was made to get some professional help.

We interviewed three professional facilitators, and in the end chose Joann Garvin of Creative Convention Services. I have to say, from every perspective, we couldn't have made a better choice. Joann and her professional staff took care of printing, mailing, promotion, sponsorships, registration, signage, liaison with the Expo-Mart, security, vendor logistics, and providing follow-up information to vendors. Everything except finding speakers for the technical papers. She knows trade shows and meetings, not broadcasting, so we still had to do that. We also had things that we never had before like programs, handouts and evaluation forms.

We didn't know we needed help until late in the game, so Joann was not able to accomplish as much as she would have liked to. But the good news is, she's already agreed to do our 2005 Expo, and has in fact already started. We'll be meeting again soon to discuss what we need to do better or differently.

We had 280 preregistered, 329 actual attendees, and 41 vendors. Not too bad, all things considered. Throughout the day I made it a point to go around and talk to as many vendors as I could to learn what we did right, and what we need to do better. We got very high marks in organization, thanks to Joann, but we know we could have done better in the way of marketing. In spite of merging several mailing lists, there were still people who only found out by word of mouth. And somehow we didn't get the word out to many radio people. But we're confident

Last Meeting



Al Dripchak of Maxell at our September meeting.

About 20 SBE members and friends attended the meeting on September 16th at Gaetano's. Final plans for the annual equipment exposition were discussed.

Al Dripchak, Manager of Technical Support for Maxell Corporation of America, Fair Lawn NJ, spoke on DVD/CD Media. Al gave an overview of DVD and CD disks, the physical structure, the many different types and how they are made and recorded. This included discussions of the truth about the "plus" and "minus" format debates, quality issues and storage, usage and handling precautions.

Al also gave us a preview of future technologies.

***No Meeting in
October***

Next Meeting November 18

Flood Hits One Of Our Own

One of our local broadcast vendors was hit very hard by the recent flooding in our area. Sandy Riscoe, owner of The Media Stop, lost just about everything when 5 feet of water flooded the building she rents on Keystone Dr. in Carnegie. You may know her building as the former home of Alpha Video, owned by Henry Lassage. Henry sold the building two weeks before the flood. He provided the picture of the upper portion of Keystone Dr. taken during the flood. The building is down the road from this location in the deeper water.

Sandy had trouble getting out of the area as the water came up rapidly. It took her awhile to find an escape route that wasn't blocked. The only piece of equipment that survived the flood was a digital camera that was being tried out by a school and wasn't in the building.



*You couldn't get in during the flood,
and Sandy barely got out.*



Bev and Joann take a lunch break on set-up day.



*They guys from WNPB, Morgantown, WV,
travel up for our show every year.*

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that this will improve as we develop our own database, rather than relying on lists purchased from trade journals. We also plan to run ads in the trade journals next year.

Of interest was a surprising number of people, both vendors and attendees who, without being asked, expressed a preference for our former venue, the Sheraton North. The Sheraton has some unique problems, but we'll definitely look at how they could be overcome if we were to return there.

I also discovered that Tom McNicholl, Convention Chairman from the Syracuse SBE Chapter was in attendance at our show. Syracuse has been putting on a very successful show for about as long as we have, and we must have spent half an hour comparing notes. He had a lot of good recommendations, some of which were, in fact, things that Joann is already planning to put in place for 2005.

I want to thank our members, readers, and especially the vendors who supported this year's show. In the very near future we'll be getting started with planning for 2005. With enough advance work and the professional help of Creative Convention Services, I honestly expect we can look forward to the best Chapter 20 Regional Broadcast Exposition ever.

The most significant thing all of you can do to help is to give us feedback. We already know a lot of what needs to be addressed, but please give us your input. We're looking at, and questioning things like location, cost of booth space, recognition for longevity, incentives, door prizes, and sponsorship opportunities. And how about a breakfast or luncheon with a noted speaker? Or maybe bringing back the golf outing? There are many possibilities, so let us know your thoughts and ideas. Feel free to e-mail me at bjordan@wpxi.com.



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