



# CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers  
pittsburgh chapter

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## Special September Meeting

## NAB Coming to Pittsburgh!

Don't miss this one! RSVP ASAP.

Our September meeting will be September 6th, a week and a couple of days early, to allow us to host the "Taste of the NAB" Road Show. Larry Bloomfield has become well known for the "Taste of NAB" road shows which he has conducted for several years. Starting in May and extending as late as October, he packs his van with broadcast equipment supplied by supporting companies and schedules visits to dozens of cities across the country.

The "Taste of NAB" is scheduled for September 6th in Pittsburgh at Gaetano's Restaurant at 12 noon. In each program, Larry displays and discusses a wide range of audio, video and RF equipment, providing just a "taste" of what is displayed at the annual April NAB Convention in Las Vegas.

Omneon Video Networks, Sundance Digital, Larcon Transmitters, InPhase Technologies holographic storage system, ESE, AJA Video Systems converters, Riedel Digital Intercom, Henry Engineering, Leader, Tektronix, Orban, Modulation Science, and Leitch are some of the NAB exhibitors discussed.

Even if you went to the NAB, it's impossible to see all the exhibits. Here is a chance to get "Up close and Personal" with top TV and radio electronics manufacturers.

The whole program should take about 2 hours. There will be a cash bar (unless a sponsor picks it up), soft drinks and snacks, pretzels/chips. Extended lunch during the program starting at about 12:15.

RSVP to John Humphrey [john.humphrey@azcar.com](mailto:john.humphrey@azcar.com) or 724.873.0800

## Our Presenter is 2004 Educator of the Year

The 2004 SBE Educator of the Year Award went to Lawrence "Larry" B. Bloomfield of Florence, Oregon, our September "Taste of NAB" road show presenter.

Bloomfield has had a diversified career in broadcast engineering. He has served as a TV station chief, built an AM radio station and has been a contributing writer for industry publications. Since 1997, Bloomfield has published Tech-Notes, a free broadcast industry electronic newsletter with more than 1,100 subscribers that addresses the changing technology in broadcasting. Bloomfield also maintains the Tech-Notes website, where he shares industry technical news and other information.



Continued on page 4

**Mark your calendars now!!!**



**SBE Chapter 20 Expo  
October 20, 2005**

### *Next Meeting*

*Tuesday, September 6*

*12 noon*

*Come at 11:30 to shoot the breeze*

### *NAB Road Show*

*RSVP to John Humphrey*

*[john.humphrey@azcar.com](mailto:john.humphrey@azcar.com)*

*Ph. 724.873.0800*

At Gaetano's

1617 Banksville Rd.

Use the Rt. 19 South (Banksville Rd) exit  
when coming out of town.

Use the Greentree exit when coming in.

\$7 Lunch fee



## Chairman's Corner

# Riding the Explosion

Bob Jordan, CPBE  
bjordan@wpxi.com

**"Riding the Explosion"** is the theme of the 34<sup>th</sup> annual SBE Chapter 20 Regional Broadcast Expo. The transition from analog to digital audio and video is not just happening, it's exploding. The Saturn boosters have kicked in and there's no turning back. As industry professionals we can barely control it, much less stop it.

The explosion of Information Technology is being increasingly deployed in all aspects of production, broadcasting, satellite and cable distribution. Changes in hardware, software, and methodology are coming at us at an unprecedented rate. Increased demands require us to **"Ride the Explosion"** or be swept into the technology graveyard.

This year's SBE Chapter 20 Expo, **"Riding the Explosion,"** is your timely source for practical information, hands-on demonstrations, technical seminars, and full workshops.

Engineers, creative users, content producers, and distributors alike will find digital audio and video systems from today's leading manufacturers of professional equipment.

Technical seminars and workshops will cover all aspects of the broadcast, production, and distribution scene.

Come early for breakfast with industry observer and analyst Mark Schubert. In case you've never read "Mark's Monday Memo," he probably has the best grasp of anyone on where this industry is headed, so you're not going to want to miss a single word.

Please take note of our new venue — the Radisson in Greentree!

Our professional meeting planner and your Chapter Officers have been hard at work on this year's Expo for many months now with one fundamental objective — to make this one of our best shows ever. We're already nearly full on vendor booths; and we have a full schedule of speakers running in two rooms simultaneously.

And, as if that wasn't enough, we're going to be conducting two half-day workshops — one on ENG Safety, and one on Lighting for HD and Webcasting.

In spite of rising costs, we're still able to keep admission to the exhibits and the Technical Papers free. However, we are asking a very modest \$5 for the breakfast and \$20 for each of the special half-day seminars; \$40 for non-members. If you're not already an SBE member, you may want to consider joining before the show so you can take

advantage of this and many other benefits.

You can download a membership application from the National site at [www.sbe.org/](http://www.sbe.org/).

You can register for the Expo on-line today at [www.broadcast.net/~sbe20/](http://www.broadcast.net/~sbe20/), then check back occasionally and watch your mailbox for Expo updates.

**Mark your calendars now!!!**



**SBE Chapter 20 Expo  
October 20, 2005**



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## The New Playing Field

John A. Luff  
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You have probably read blurbs about the telco's getting into the video distribution business.

The dynamics are pretty interesting. Cable has franchise agreements to keep them "focused" on service to the communities they serve. When Verizon and SBC began to move into implementation they found legal barriers that included municipalities that required them to negotiate similar deals to what cable has done. SBC went to the Texas legislature and got a blanket exemption for the whole state, claiming they are a regulated common carrier and were just delivering more IP data over existing service. Suffice it to say it is much more than that!

The "triple play," voice, video and data, has been the holy grail for cable and telco's for years. It is why AT&T wanted TCI as part of their empire, though the strategy didn't work so well for them. Our company is involved in the implementation of a nationwide roll out of IPTV for a major telco (I can't say who, but it isn't Verizon...). The logistics are pretty interesting: thousands of acquisition servers managing content for the entire distribution system in one site in Kansas. A 2048x2048 routing switcher. A monitoring system that can look at

signals as they are delivered to homes in California from half way across the country. SNMP on steroids looking at hardware in over a dozen states in real time.

Of course the programmers are the final gate keepers that control what gets distributed. You might think they would be happy to get new sources of revenue, but since telco's essentially replace other distribution media, it is a hard sell. Add to that the fact that many program distributors have significant ownership by broadcast and cable companies and the playing field is at best full of pot holes.

Keep tuned for more on their progress in the business of IPTV, including a paper at the Pittsburgh Expo this year.



*Steve Sloan at the June meeting of SBE Chapter 20.*

## LAST MEETING

Glenn Romsos  
gromsos@comcast.net

Chairman Bob Jordan opened the June 16th meeting by clarifying a statement regarding vendor space at our upcoming Expo which appeared in the last issue of the Chapter Twenty News. Chairman Jordan discussed other plans for the October Expo.

Our guest speaker in June was Steve Sloan, director of broadcast sales for Triveni Digital. Steve's presentation discussed how television broadcasters could use surplus bandwidth on their DTV transmissions to enhance the bottom line.

Technology continues to improve our ability to compress the program content for DTV transmission, which in turn provides more bandwidth for other purposes.

The challenge for broadcasters is to develop cost effective business plans for this surplus bandwidth. Some of the examples Steve offered included; Video on Demand (VOD) ethnic programming, corporate training, digital signage, digital cinema and emergency management. Steve noted that digital signage is becoming popular in many businesses to display the latest weather, sports or continually updated product information.

Mr. Sloan also showed how the various Triveni products can be used in all aspects of content distribution. Triveni has equipment that can be utilized by; content developers, distribution to the broadcasters, within the broadcast system and also decoders at the final destination.

## SBE Expo to Feature Seminars

A special feature of this year's SBE Expo will be two half day seminars.

One is on ENG Safety by Mark Bell:

Mark Bell has been in various technical support roles during his 30+ years of work in television engineering/broadcasting. He serves as a contributor to Digital Television magazine, where his articles regarding many notable parts of our industry appear monthly. His four part series on ENG Safety in 1994, which exposed the need for safety training, is one of his more recognized accomplishments. "ENG Safety Newsletter" and "ENG Safety Memo" are comprehensive means of educating and reminding all station employees about ENG Safety. Mark Bell has amassed what might be the largest collection of ENG safety material in his years of research of ENG accidents. He will present his ENG Safety Awareness seminar at the SBE EXPO in October. All levels of news and engineering employees should be invited, as the presentation has something of interest for all.

The other seminar will be on lighting for HDTV and Webcasting. More info to follow.

You can sign up for the seminars on the Chapter 20 web page.

## Tower Crew Rides a Different Kind of Explosion

Did you ever wonder what it would be like to be on a tower when it was hit by lightening? These guys can tell you.

Because of a major transmission line failure in late June, WPCB required the services of a tower crew. The crew from Edmiston Tower got caught on the tower during a violent thunder storm on Monday, July 25. Six men were trapped at the 800 foot level of the tower during the severe storm that suddenly hit that afternoon.

They knew they were in trouble when they started hearing static electricity snapping all around them. Then the first lightning bolt hit the tower and the rain and wind started. Three of them were actually on the antenna and the other three were right below the antenna when it started. All six were able to move down below the Tee Bar where they could get some protection from the violent wind and rain by getting between the wave guide and the tower. Two of the men lost their hard hats right before it started to hail. They said that every time lightning hit the tower the wind and rain would turn warm for a second. They think the lightning hit the tower three times, and while they did feel the shocks from the lightning, it did not hurt them. As soon as the storm lightened up they climbed down as quickly as they could.



*Devin Dickert, Culver; Danny Deneen, Altoona; Scott Campbell, Holidaysburg; Mark Mallin, Nanty Glo; Mat Vance, Altoona; Tom Black, Westover, were all on the tower. Jonathon Irving, Ebensburg, was on the ground at the time.*

## Mark Schubin to Keynote SBE Expo Breakfast

A special feature of this year's SBE Expo will be a special breakfast keynote speaker, Mark Schubin.

You never really know EXACTLY what Mark will come up with in a presentation. That, of course, is part of the fun! One thing you can be sure of; it will be interesting and thought provoking. Mark always has a strong position on EVERYTHING. As an engineer, writer, historian, teacher, forensic analyst, consultant, expert witness, researcher, and judge, Mr. Schubin has his finger on the pulse of the industry, particularly the DTV Transition. He regularly takes issue with the FCC and the CEA, providing insightful counterpoints. He is a Fellow of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, a multiple Emmy award winner, and a recipient of many other honors. His clients range from Sesame Street to IBM to the Metropolitan Opera to Hong Kong's STAR-TV. He also

### Bloomfield continued from page 1

Bloomfield is a Senior member of SBE, having joined in 1996, and is an active member of Chapter 76 in Eugene, Ore.