



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers
pittsburgh chapter

January 2008

Volume 16 Number 1

Our 2008 Officers



Secretary Henry Lassige, Jr., Treasurer Henry Lassige, Sr., Vice Chair Dave Kasperek, Chairman Paul Byers



Last Meeting ... Christmas Party & Elections

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Our December meeting was the annual Christmas Party. It was attended by fifteen members and their spouses or guests. It was held at the Willow Restaurant on Camp Horne Road. Chapter 20 picked up the tab on a delicious meal. John Humphrey was the presiding officer. It was his last as Chairman.

Paul Byers was elected as the new chairman and Dave Kasperek was elected the new Vice Chairman.

Also, the dates for the 2008 Expo were announced. It will be held on October 1st and 2nd. Our next meeting is scheduled for January 17 and will be held at WPXI's new facility.

FCC Report

Paul Byers
pbyers@wqed.org

On December 31, 2007, the FCC released a Report and Order regarding the conversion to digital television. Some of the highlights are:

- * FCC Form 387 must be filed by February 18, 2008
- * Maximization applications may be filed after August 17, 2008
- * A .5 percent new interference standard to apply to applications for post-transition facilities
- * New PSIP rules
- * Clarification of station ID requirements

Read the entire 154 page document at www.fcc.gov.



Next Meeting ...

WPXI Tour

Dave Kasperek
WTAE
dkasperek@hearst.com

Don't miss what might be the best meeting of the year! A January Meeting: Tour of New WPXI HD Studio Facilities!

In 1957 television station WIIC began broadcasting from the Fineview hilltop area of the Northside. Five decades, a call letter change, and many generations of technology later, station management and owners agreed, the WPXI Studios would no longer serve because the business had outgrown the buildable space available on what came to be known as Television Hill. As a result, WPXI recently moved to their new home which is an impressive, state-of-the-art television production facility just a little further north along the I-279 Parkway.

Thanks to our gracious host, WPXI Director of Engineering Annette Parks, we have a rare opportunity to tour the first and as-yet only HDTV news production studios in our region. Moreover, we get an opportunity to see first-hand a major technical facility put together by local system integrator AZCAR. Come on out no matter how cold the weather.

If you only come to one SBE Meeting this year, this is the one you sure don't want to miss. (& the BBQ promises to be pretty tasty. too!)

Parking: use Visitors lot (clearly marked). Station security will make additional overflow parking available in employees lot after 6:30 PM as needed.

The Meeting will be at 7 PM Thursday January 17 in the WPXI Community Room, arrive as early as 6:30 PM to shoot the breeze. At about 7 we'll enjoy a catered dinner by Famous Dave's BBQ, conduct a brief business meeting, and then commence tours of the technical facilities with WPXI Engineering Staffers.



Chairman's Corner

Paul Byers
pbyers@wqed.org

Happy New Year to all from your newly appointed Chairman of SBE Chapter 20. I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday and are now ready for an exciting and productive year. Please join me in congratulating John Humphrey on a job well done as Chairman for the past two years. Among his many accomplishments were the much improved look of our web site (with excellent help from Gary Stewart, Bob Hoffman and Stephen Zelenko), increased revenues from the last two Expos (with excellent help from Joann Garvin) and two really good Christmas parties!

But now it's a new year with new challenges for all of us, professionally as well as for Chapter 20. On the professional side, we are busy converting our facilities to HD (both television and radio), dealing with 2 GHz. spectrum reallocation issues, and nervously awaiting February 17th, 2009 (It's sooner than you think). For Chapter 20, we need to keep the momentum rolling from the past two Expos, increase membership (please bring a friend or tell a colleague about the meetings), and offer interesting programs and seminars to build our knowledge bases.

Don't forget that this month's meeting on Thursday, January 17th will be held at WPXI's fabulous new facility located on the corner of Evergreen Road and Ivory Avenue. Come at 6:30 PM. A free dinner will be served with the meeting starting at 7:00, followed by the tour.

I would welcome and appreciate any comments or suggestions about how we can move our organization forward. Please send me an e-mail or, even better, show up for a meeting and let's talk about your ideas. I have already been approached by several people with some really good ideas about meeting topics, but I could always use your input.

Like everything else in life, the success of our Chapter depends on all of our efforts. And the best way for you to show your support is to attend the meetings. So mark your calendars for the third Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM, tell a friend and let's make this the best year ever for Chapter 20.

What do you need to learn something about?

Dave Kasperek
WTAE
dkasperek@hearst.com

As your new Chapter Vice Chair, my task is to hopefully arrange useful and compelling meeting subjects for our monthly meetings over my two year term of service. The SBE is one of the very few local, low cost venues any of us can take advantage of on a monthly basis where we have the opportunity to learn just a bit more of the ever changing technologies in our industry.

At this juncture we race headlong toward the end of full-power analog TV broadcasting in the U.S. As a result many of us find ourselves planning and preparing for the change. But despite our need to complete these plans soon, it seems no one has all the answers yet to plan for issues that are certain to arise from this change. (Congress, the FCC and the GAO seem frantic to determine whether the rules they created are going to cause yawns or screams of outrage from the viewing public.)

So, it seems to me topics associated with this particular issue may be the most useful and top of mind for many local broadcast professionals this year, and possibly next. But to make sure the topics we arrange in the upcoming SBE meetings are useful and compelling enough to make it worth our members' very valuable time, please, let me hear from you. What would you find a meeting worth attending for? Contact me at dkasperek@hearst.com with any comments about subject matter, time of day, location etc. Each month we'll try to strike a balance that appeals to the majority of members.



Chapter Twenty News is published monthly
(except July & August) by

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P.O. Box 16312
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Musings of a Consultant

John Luff
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“As I write this, the New Year just turned, and I managed to log onto the NTIA web site and request a Coupon for a Converter Box. That made me think of what is changing in barely 400 days, in a practical sense, other than power bills will go down. For one thing, sales of 16:9 sets are bound to go up, and picture quality as delivered to the home SHOULD improve. One area where standards are trying to anticipate the market is in display formatting. The Active Format Descriptor (AFD) has been implemented from the studio all the way to the home set. It allows the display to know the INTENDED aspect ratio and centering of the picture. It should prevent postage stamp sized pictures and unnecessary stretching or swaths of black screen.

At CES (next week as I write this) several manufacturers have announced they will be showing sets which implement AFD. Of course I am willing to bet most broadcasters have other things on their minds... like towers, antennas, transmitters, etc. But if we are to make it simple for the viewer to display multiple aspect ratios we need to look hard at implementing AFD and carrying it all the way to the DTV encoder. Take a look at SMPTE 2016 or the ATSC and SCTE web sites for more details.”

2008 EAS RMT's

supplied by Matt. Lightner

MONTH	DAY	TIME	METHODOLOGY
JANUARY 17	THU	9:05 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
FEBRUARY 21	THU	4:55 A.M. NIGHT,	EMnet
MARCH 20	THU	9:15 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
APRIL 17	THU	12:35 A.M. NIGHT,	EMnet
MAY 15	THU	10:05 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
JUNE 19	THU	4:50 A.M. NIGHT,	EMnet
JULY 17	THU	10:15 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
AUGUST 21	THU	12:45 A.M. NIGHT,	EMnet
SEPTEMBER 18	THU	11:05 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
OCTOBER 16	THU	4:40 A.M. NIGHT,	PPTN BACK UP
NOVEMBER 20	THU	11:25 A.M. DAY,	EMnet
DECEMBER 18	THU	4:45 A.M. NIGHT,	EMnet

Any questions regarding EAS tests should be forwarded to:
Matt Lightner

Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters Engineering

Email: Matt@LightnerElectronics.com

Emnet: PA.008

Phone: 814-239-8323

At the Christmas Party...

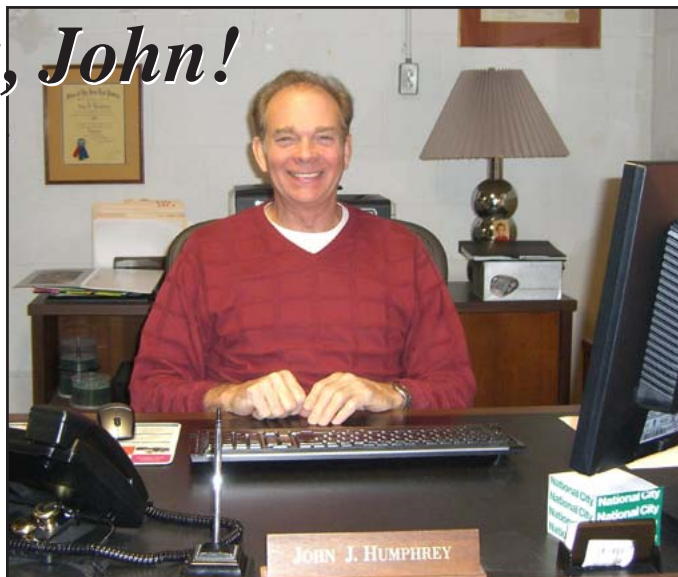


We had our own private dining room at The Willow.



The entertainment for the evening was a roving magic show by Master Magician Chuck Caputo.

Thanks, John!



Thanks, Annette!

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Next Meeting

Date: Thursday, January 17

Tour of WPXI's New Facility

Location: 4145 Evergreen Road, Pittsburgh 15214

Phone: (412) 237-1100

Time: 6:30 PM Gather and shoot the breeze in the WPXI Community Room

7:00 PM Dinner by Famous Dave's BBQ followed by tour of the facilities

Directions: See the Chapter web site for a map and directions. www.sbe20.org

Parking: For parking, use Visitor's lot (clearly marked). Station security will make additional overflow parking available in employees lot after 6:30 PM.