



# CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers  
pittsburgh chapter

March 2008

Volume 16 Number 3



*Dave Buck of Harris Corporation covered many of the issues facing broadcasters during this time of transition.*



## Last Meeting ... Harris Corp.'s Take on a Post-Analog World

Henry Lassige, Jr.  
KDKA-TV / WPCW-TV  
hllassige@kdka.com

Our February meeting was held at the McKnight Road Holiday Inn. Paul Byers was the presiding officer.

Business during the meeting included a vote to replace the old laptop computer that Joanne uses for the Expo. We also discussed the possibility of having Larry Bloomfield's *Taste of NAB* at one of our meetings, but no decision was made. We are also looking for ideas on a slogan for the 2008 Expo.

The program for the meeting was presented by Dave Buck and Chip Schneider from Harris Corporation. Their main topic was Harris's encoders including the Net VX /.

After the program, Vice Chairman Dave Kasperek talked about some of the issues facing broadcasters in HD tape and file formats.

<i>Chairman's Corner</i>	<i>p.2</i>
<i>FCC Report</i>	<i>p.3</i>
<i>Be Part of a Winning Team</i>	<i>p.3</i>
<i>Opportunities at WPXI</i>	<i>p.3</i>



## Next Meeting ... DTV & BAS Transition

Dave Kasperek  
WTAE  
dkasperek@hearst.com

### Roundtable Discussion

Rather than have a formal presentation from a guest speaker this month, we'll instead use the time to discuss engineering digital transition issues affecting local television broadcasters this year.

Many of us are already receiving a lot of phone calls from worried viewers. What do we tell them?

Likewise most of us are considering redundancy needs in our DTV systems. Let's use the time this month to compare notes and share ideas to help make our market transition to all digital broadcasting as successful as possible.

Also as you may have heard by now, the FCC has announced its intentions to require the 2GHz BAS transition completed by March 5, 2009. We have had our market's transition date moved twice now, but this time it appears to nearly coincide with the end of analog broadcasting so finding enough tower crews to do all the work may promise to be the toughest part of both transitions. Let's network, compare notes and share some wisdom for our mutual success!!

### Location, Location, Location

In our quest to find a good permanent location for our monthly meetings, we're again going to try a new location this month, Alexander's Restaurant. Alexander's is located at 5104 Liberty Avenue, three blocks northwest from the corner of Baum Boulevard and Liberty Avenue.

Coming from the east, take Fifth Avenue to S. Aiken Avenue. South Aiken becomes Liberty Ave. after you cross Baum Boulevard. Proceed three blocks on Liberty Avenue. Alexander's will be on your left.

Coming from the west, take Bigelow Boulevard to the Bloomfield Bridge. Turn right onto Liberty Avenue after crossing the bridge and proceed approximately 1/2 mile. Alexander's will be on your right.

There is on-street parking, as well as a pay parking garage next to the restaurant.



## Chairman's Corner

Paul Byers  
pbyers@wqed.org

Got cabin fever? Don't worry because Spring is just around the corner (if this newsletter reaches you after March 8th, remember that we are now on Daylight Savings Time.) and the next SBE meeting will give you a chance to get out of the house and have an evening of food and fellowship. The meeting will be held on Thursday, March 20th (which happens to be the Spring Equinox) at 7:00 PM at Alexander's Pasta Express on Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield. I hope to see you there.

This month I chose to fill the column with some unrelated ramblings on a few topics that either interest, confound, puzzle or amaze me in this wide world of broadcasting.

Did you know that WQED is the only television station in this market that decided to move back to its original analog channel in February of 2009? Why would they do that? If Longley-Rice is to be believed, the WQED digital signal on VHF channel 13 will travel farther with 19 kW ERP than it will with 1 MW ERP on UHF channel 38. Tremendous operational savings will be realized in not having to replace power tubes and in much lower electrical bills. On the other hand, will over-the-air viewers be able to pick up the WQED signal if they only have UHF antennas on their roofs? Does it even matter if 95% of the viewers are watching on cable? And what about mobile reception? Won't the hand held devices need longer antennas to pick up VHF? Stay tuned.

What's the hardest part of the conversion from analog to digital? You may say it's the build-out of your transmission plant or re-wiring your master control room or replacing all of your studio cameras or any of a thousand other things that we've had to do over the last 5 or 6 years. For me it's trying to solve the aspect ratio puzzle. If I produce a show in HD do I down convert it to my analog channel in letterbox or 4:3 edge crop? And if I edge crop, how do I treat my HD graphics? Do I need two sets of graphics, one for HD and one for SD? When I need to up convert 4:3 legacy footage for an HD program, do I stretch it or center cut it or pillar box it? And how about the viewers at home? Do they choose Full, Zoom or Wide

Zoom in their TV menus? What do they think when they see an up converted letterbox spot on their 16:9 sets with a black edge on all four sides? It's maddening but it's something we will have to live with for a long time and there is no good solution.

Is HD Radio ever going to catch on? Will it go the way of AM stereo? Does anyone reading this column own an HD radio? Clear Channel thinks it's a good idea and is investing \$1 billion to convert about a thousand stations to prove it. BMW is now offering HD radios as standard equipment in all models. Just about every FM station in this market is broadcasting an HD signal and a few AM's are also coming on. The benefits of HD Radio such as multicasting, elimination of multipath and pristine sound quality are obvious, so why aren't people listening? When will GM, Ford and Chrysler start installing HD radios in their base models? The FCC is now proposing that broadcasters be allowed to increase power on their HD channels by 10 dB, which should help to fill in some of the coverage gaps and a bandwidth increase to 128 kbps and beyond will allow more high quality services. Add to that real time traffic reports, surround sound, store and replay, on demand capabilities and a "buy" button and you really have a viable product to compete (at least locally) with XM and Sirius.

Remember that March is membership renewal month. Please plan to attend this month's meeting and let me know if you like the new location. We are trying to find a place to call "home," so we need your input.



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

Society of Broadcast Engineers  
Chapter 20  
P.O. Box 16312  
Pittsburgh, PA 15242-0312

Web page <http://www.sbe20.org>

Chairman- Paul Byers	412-622-1530
Vice Chair- Dave Kasperek	412-244-4615
Secretary- Henry Lassige, Jr.	724-258-5416
Treasurer- Henry Lassige, Sr.	412-429-2000
Frequency Coordinator- Otto Schellin	412-237-1184
Expo Planner- Joann Garvin	724-843-7501
Certification- Tom Skubel	412-244-4435
FCC Committee- Paul Byers	412-622-1530
Newsletter Editor- Gary Stewart	412-824-3930
Newsletter DTP- Jean Stewart	412-678-9211

# FCC Report

Paul Byers

pbyers@wqed.org

At its December meeting, the FCC adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Localism. If passed, the new rules will apply to all broadcasters, which could place significant burdens on stations.

Some of the proposals on which the Commission asks for comments are as follows:

The Commission thinks that all stations should be required to establish community advisory boards to advise the stations on issues of importance to the community.

The Commission wants to mandate that all stations be manned during all hours of operation.

The Commission wants to revert to the pre-1987 requirement that each station maintain a main studio in its community of license.

The Commission wants to adopt rules that permit more LPTV stations to achieve Class A status.

The Commission wants to prohibit or require disclosure if radio stations use "voice tracking", meaning using an announcer from outside the local market to seem as if the announcer is local.

There are many more proposals in this Rulemaking that are worth paying attention to, since they could impact your station's bottom line. To see the full text of the NPRM, go to [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov).

## Opportunities at WPXI

An **SNG ENGINEER** is needed at WPXI-TV. The ideal candidate will be responsible for: driving SNG vehicles to locations, coordinating remote broadcasts with News, and performing light maintenance on vehicle and equipment. Broadcast maintenance and IT experience are strongly desired. Skills should include: good working knowledge of digital broadcast systems operations, operation of large vehicles combined with knowledge of DOT rules and regulations, valid driver's license with no at fault citations, good navigational skills, able to work well under time constraints of news operation, ability to focus under pressure in a rapidly changing news environment, and able to make decisions quickly and accurately while successfully coping with a variety of circumstances. SBE certification and/or FCC license preferred. Please send cover letter and resume to: Frank Bobro, Engineering Manager, WPXI-TV, 4145 Evergreen Road, PA 15214. Email: [job080305@wpxi.com](mailto:job080305@wpxi.com)

WPXI-TV is looking for an **experienced maintenance technician**. The successful candidate will have a strong background in the operation, maintenance and testing of UHF, VHF, microwave transmitters, and related RF systems. Responsibilities will include operation and maintenance of: Analog transmitters, Digital transmitters, Analog, and Digital microwave systems, Remote control systems, Automation systems, Studio robotic systems, Microwave and satellite ENG trucks. IT experience is essential. Knowledge of FCC Regulations is required. Must be able to work with minimal supervision, nights, and weekends. Degree in Electronic Engineering or equivalent and FCC General Class License or SBE certification preferred. If you are up for the challenge and ready to embrace new technology send cover letter and resume to: Annette Parks, Director of Engineering, WPXI-TV, 4145 Evergreen Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15214 Email: [aparks@wpxi.com](mailto:aparks@wpxi.com)



## Be Part of a Winning Team

The annual SBE membership drive is from March 1 to May 31. Earn a \$5 credit toward your annual dues for each new member you sign up, and entry in a drawing for prizes.

### GRAND PRIZE

Trip to the 2008 SBE National Meeting in Madison, WI from October 14 – 16

Airfare (from within Continental US) and two nights hotel accommodations at the Madison Marriott West. Free registration and National Awards Dinner Ticket

### OTHER PRIZES

(2) Eton E1XM AM/FM/Shortwave/XM ready Radio

Courtesy of Westwood One

Apple IPOD Nano Courtesy of ADC

Antenna Engineering Handbook courtesy of McGraw-Hill

Digital Signage Broadcasting by Lundstrom Courtesy of Elsevier

HD Radio Implementation by Thomas Ray Courtesy of Elsevier

Basic NEC with Broadcast Applications by JL Smith Courtesy of Elsevier

Directional Antennas Made Simple by Jack Layton

The Public Inspection File by Jack Layton

NAB Engineering Handbook Courtesy of National Association of Broadcasters

Telos ProFiler Automated Program Archiver software Courtesy of Telos Systems / Omnia / Axia

Heil Sound Fin Courtesy of Broadcast Supply Worldwide

Yamaha AV Receiver RX-V661 Courtesy of Neural Audio

\$100 Gift Certificate to L.L. Bean Courtesy of Shively Labs

\$100 Gift Certificate to Amazon.com Courtesy of Dielectric

\$75 Gift Certificate to Powell.com Courtesy of du Treil, Lundin & Rackley, Inc.

(2) Logo Polo shirts Courtesy of Kathrein Scala

(1) Logo pull over fleece Courtesy of Kathrein Scala

Logo Golf Shirt Courtesy of Continental Electronics

(2) 1 GB USB Drive Courtesy of Broadcast Electronics

(5) White ball cap Courtesy of Broadcast Electronics

(5) Logo T-shirt Courtesy of Broadcast Electronics

(25) Adjustment Tweaking Tools Courtesy of Continental Electronics

MORE TO COME!



*After the main presentation, Dave Kasperek talked about how Hearst is setting standards for file sharing*

*"Freelancers John Belch, who works with EVS servers, and Tom Ryan, who works in ENG and design, were first timers at our February meeting."*



Society of Broadcast Engineers  
Pittsburgh Chapter  
P.O. Box 16312  
Pittsburgh, PA 15242

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
N. VERSAILLES, PA  
PERMIT NO. 01



## Next Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, March 20

## DTV and BAS Transition Roundtable Discussion

Be prepared to share your ideas!

**Location:** Alexander's Pasta Express, 5104 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh  
Phone: 412-687-8741

**Time:** 6:30 PM Gather and shoot the breeze  
7:00 PM Dinner

**Directions:** See the Next Meeting article on page one for directions.

