



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers
pittsburgh chapter

January 2009

Volume 17 Number 1



Chapter 20 officers for 2008 at the Christmas Party at D'Imperio's



Chairman's Corner

New Beginnings

Paul Byers
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I hope everyone had a relaxing and enjoyable holiday season and that you are now ready to get back to work with a renewed sense of commitment and energy. Remember that this month's meeting will once again return to Alexander's in Bloomfield on Thursday, January 15th at 7:00 P.M. I hope to see you there.

I thought I would paraphrase and pass along an article I cut out of a trade magazine a few years ago that we all might consider as we make our New Year's resolutions.

By the process of discarding last year's calendar, many folks feel the urge to start life anew. It's as if a new calendar might give rise to an improved personality and an enhanced set of skills.

In truth, resolutions can be made at any time during the year, although most find it convenient to start on January 1st. Unfortunately, most New Year's resolutions fall by the wayside not long into the New Year. Common resolutions include making regular trips to the gym for achieving improved physical shape, adopting a diet to shed a few pounds, or even saying good-bye to a bad habit.

But what kind of New Year's resolutions makes sense for us broadcast engineers? Certainly, diet and exercise apply to all of us. But for a broadcast engineer, there is always the need to know more. No matter what the discipline. Only the most egotistical or self-deluded engineer would conclude that there was nothing more to learn. Creative engineers are searching for a better way, imagining solutions not there before. An engineer who accepts a design methodology "because it has always been done that way" has sadly closed

Next Meeting ...

Election of Officers

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The January meeting will be at Alexander's Restaurant on Thursday, January 15. Dinner will be at 7 P.M. in the downstairs private room, followed by the meeting. Come out by 6:30 PM and shoot the breeze

January Meeting Topic: TBD and Election of Officers

Due to the holiday shutdowns of most vendors in December, I was not able to line up a commitment for a speaker/program in time for the Newsletter deadline. I will continue to endeavor a worthwhile speaker and topic for this month's meeting and will advise via email and the web page what that is. My hope was to have a speaker on lessons learned to date in the BAS 2GHz transitions in markets that are already completed. We shall see.

However, a much more pressing matter is before us for the

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 2

New Beginnings

Continued from page 1

the door to change and has no need for a New Year's resolution.

For any New Year's resolution, there should be one guiding principle: that life moves forward (with us or without us). For an engineer (or any professional) this means growing every day. There is no limit to the knowledge that can be attained during a lifetime - even as our physical abilities start to wane.

Firms that practice mentoring programs, for example, understand the value in passing along the knowledge, skills, and wisdom of their "more seasoned" engineers to the younger members of their staffs. The opportunities for less-experienced engineers in such programs are obvious. But what is less apparent, however, is the benefits that these mentoring programs can bring to older engineers in that sense of pride and accomplishment that comes from sharing knowledge and wisdom with those who may benefit from it.

For a broadcast engineer, a New Year's resolution could be as simple as the resolution to get better as an engineer, family member, and friend. Sometimes the student becomes the teacher. Take the time to help a co-worker with a problem or spend a bit longer to help a customer understand a situation, and growth will come.

Happy New Year to all!



Last Meeting

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Our December meeting was held at D'Imperio's Restaurant in Monroeville on the 16th. We had a total of 20 people attend, including members and significant others. A delicious meal was had by all. Paul Byers, the chapter chairman was the presiding officer. The only business that was discussed was to put off officer elections until the January meeting.

FCC Report

Paul Byers

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FCC PROPOSAL FOR SOME ANALOG STATIONS TO BROADCAST FOR 30 DAYS AFTER TRANSITION ENDS TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND TRANSITION INFORMATION

The Commission has released a list of stations eligible to continue analog operation for 30 days after the DTV transition deadline in order to transmit information about the transition and emergency information. The legislation that allows this operation calls it Analog Nightlight Service (ANS). While eligible stations are not required to participate in the ANS program, it appears the FCC is eager to see participation by as many stations as possible. The FCC is required by law to implement the ANS program by January 15, 2009, and the NPRM, published in the Federal Register, has set an extremely short comment cycle - January 5 for initial comments and January 8 for reply comments.

The FCC has tentatively concluded that stations technically eligible to participate must file "Legal STA" requests through the CDBS electronic filing system no later than February 10, 2009. Each station planning to participate must also file an electronic update to the analog shut-off section of its FCC Form 387 DTV Transition Status Report.

The legislation authorizing the program permits continued analog operation on Channels 2 through 51 through 11:59:59 p.m. on March 19, 2009. It limits broadcast material to emergency information (in both English and Spanish) and information about the fact that the digital transition has taken place and what viewers can do to restore their television service.

The FCC has fleshed out the legislative language with tentative conclusions (1) that advertisements will not be permitted (there is no mention of underwriting for public television stations); (2) concerning specific information that

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



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should be permitted regarding the digital transition and contact information consumers can use to find help; and (3) that stations may use a “slate” with text and audio of the text, a video loop, video live action, or any combination thereof.

The NPRM includes tentative technical standards that would allow stations not listed in Appendix A to propose participation in the program. Comments are invited on whether those technical standards appropriately balance the interest in serving vulnerable populations and in protecting DTV service.

The Order states that stations not on the initial list but that are interested in participating should file an “Engineering STA” request through CDBS and file comments on the NPRM, although given the extremely short deadline for comments it does not seem likely that many licensees could evaluate their situations, decide to participate, and file in time.

Stations that oppose such requests on interference grounds must file objections as reply comments.

The FCC has urged stations not on the preliminary list to determine whether they could participate without causing harm to other stations’ DTV service, or at least to coordinate with other stations in their service area to share the costs of ANS operation. Because Congress clearly wants as broad participation as possible in the program, and because in 74 out of 210 Designated Market Areas no stations have been tentatively identified as eligible, it would not be surprising if these unrealistically short deadlines were extended.

The Commission has also asked for comment on what its role should be in identifying those areas where ANS is not available and on possible ways to allow some kind of ANS without interfering with DTV service, for instance on Low Power Television stations.

Election of Officers

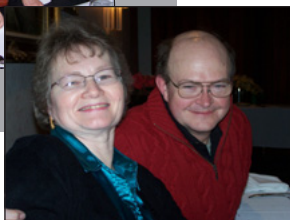
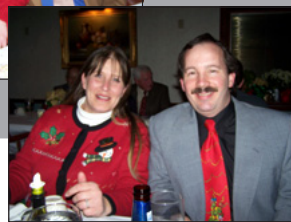
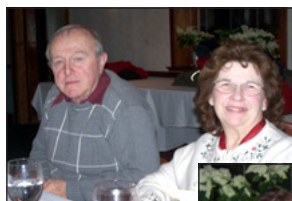
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meeting and that is the nomination and election of a new chapter secretary and chapter treasurer. Neither job need be particularly time consuming but both are vital to the continued normal functioning of the chapter. For these reasons, regardless of any technical topic we may find for presentation at the January meeting, it is far more important we find the replacements for these offices at this meeting. Both Henry Lassige Sr and Jr have fulfilled their obligations well and served the chapter for the last two years. Now we need members to step up and take on the next terms. Your chapter cannot help to support your careers in broadcasting if you cannot help support the chapter. Please strongly consider whether you can serve and even if you cannot, at least come out to help nominate and vote for new officers at the January meeting.

We’re again meeting at Alexander’s Restaurant this month. Alexander’s is located at 5104 Liberty Avenue, 3 blocks northwest from the corner of Baum Boulevard and Liberty Avenue.

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

Coming from the west you would 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. Phone number for the restaurant is 412-687-8741. There is on street parking, as well as a pay parking garage immediately adjacent to the restaurant.



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Pittsburgh Chapter
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Next Meeting

Date: Thursday, January 15

Location: Alexander's Restaurant
5104 Liberty Avenue,
3 blocks northwest from the corner of Baum Boulevard and Liberty Avenue.

Time: 7:00 P.M. Dinner & meeting downstairs in the private meeting room
6:30 P.M. To shoot the breeze

Program: TBA (See next meeting article on page 1)
Election of Officers