



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers
pittsburgh chapter

October 2009

Volume 17 Number 6



NAB Road Show's creator and presenter, Larry Bloomfield sitting next to a table of full of door prizes and exhibits at our September meeting. No, the Image Orthicon was not a door prize. In the background can be seen a copy of the original art work for the Monoscope Indian Head test pattern, signed by the artist in August of 1938.



Chairman's Corner

No Expo

Paul Byers
Executive Director of Engineering, WQED
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I'm sorry to tell you that for the first time in the past 37 years, Chapter 20 will not be hosting an Expo this year. Due to the challenging economy, we were not able to secure enough vendors to even come close to a break-even financial position. As you know, we depend on the revenue from this show to fund our monthly meetings and special programs and seminars throughout the year, so we may have to reevaluate those as well.

We are having an October meeting, though, so please plan on attending. This month we will again be at the WQED studios on October 15th at 7:00 PM. Dinner will be served and there will be a charge of \$10 to help defray expenses. Gil Hanna of Near Field Communications, Inc., will speak about "Migrating to HD Satellite Newsgathering." Please come early at 6:30 to shoot the breeze and remember to bring a friend or colleague.

We are also looking for your input as we plan for 2010 and beyond. Should we continue to hold monthly meetings or would you prefer every other month? What sort of topics do you find most interesting for these meetings? What can we do to increase attendance and membership? We will discuss these and anything else that is on your mind at this month's meeting as well.

I hope to see you on October 15th.



Next Meeting ...

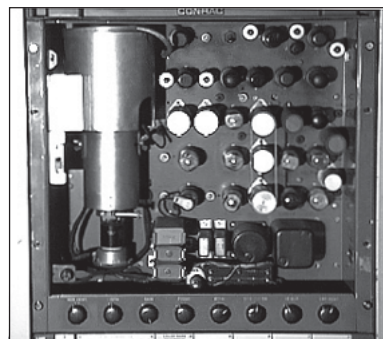
HD Satellite Newsgathering

Dave Kasperek
Director of Engineering, WTAE
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Migrating to HD Satellite Newsgathering: Do old transmission technologies still apply?

Join us for an informative meeting and presentation on new SNG technologies and managed satellite platforms. These new procedures and devices enable television stations and other users to operate automatic satellite uplinks without a dedicated technician or engineer on site by using cost-efficient MPEG-4 encoding. It also offers bundled, all IP, pay-as-you-go space segment for high-quality HD or SD newsgathering from the field.

The presenter will be Gil Hanna, the founder and President of Near Field Communications, Inc., a satellite and broadcast systems integrator located in Pittsburgh, PA.



A monoscope was a special form of cathode ray tube that was used to generate, rather than display, a video signal. Each tube was only capable of generating a single video signal, hence the name.

(See "Next Meeting" on page 3)

FCC Report

Paul Byers

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FCC TO END FREEZE

The Commission recently issued a Public Notice setting dates to end the freeze on applications for new and modified LPTV and television translator stations. Rural applications, for sites more than 75 miles from the reference coordinates of the 100 largest cities (listed in the Public Notice), will be accepted starting August 25, 2009. Applications will be accepted nationwide starting January 25, 2010.

Applicants may propose new digital stations, major changes to existing digital and analog stations, and digital companion channels for existing analog stations for which one has not already been proposed. An analog licensee may propose on-channel digital conversion or operation of a digital companion channel station, but not both. A digital companion channel for a Class A station will be licensed on a secondary, non-interference basis. No applications for new analog stations will be accepted.

Applicants for new stations must specify DTV core channels, from 2 to 51. An applicant for a digital companion channel may also specify channels 52 to 59 if it both certifies that no suitable in-core channel is available that would produce a digital service area comparable to the analog service area and also notifies all potentially affected 700 MHz band wireless licensees of its filing plans no less than 30 days before filing.

Applications for new LPTV and TV translator stations or for major changes are subject to a \$705 filing fee. There is no filing fee for digital companion channel applications. A noncommercial licensee that proposes to modify a station or build a new station for use on a noncommercial basis is exempt from the filing fee.

All mutually exclusive applications, whether commercial or noncommercial, will be resolved by competitive bidding using the FCC's auction procedures. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first served basis. There is likely tremendous pent-up demand after years under a filing freeze, so there will likely be many competing applications filed on each of the opening dates. All of the applications filed on a particular day will be considered to have been filed at the same time and to have priority over applications filed after that day. Based on past experience with the CDBS system when very large numbers of applications were filed on a single day, it would be best to prepare applications in advance and then file early on opening day in case problems develop.

As the Commission notes, licensees of existing LPTV, TV translator, and Class A television stations may currently file applications for on-channel digital flash cut conversion at any time. There is no filing fee for flash-cut applications.



Bob Hoffman, Bob Worek, and Sam Zborowski look over the display equipment at the NAB Roadshow on Sept. 3rd.



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Musings of a Consultant

NAB

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The food was free at the NAB Roadshow on the Sept. 3rd at WQED

Though it will be little solace considering the cancellation of our Fall Expo this year, others haven't done so well lately either. NAB was down 21% to only 83,000 this year. IBC, recently completed in Amsterdam, was down 8% to 45,000. Sony and other major players pulled out of IBC this year.

Can this mean trade shows are become less important, or is this simply the economy killing attendance? Perhaps "both" is the obvious answer.

Believe it or not, many trade groups are considering "on line expo's," essentially highly complex webinars where attendees can remain in their offices and get a pretty reasonable experience. But it is not the same as going to the Brazilian Steak House in Lost Wages... (Google: "VirtualEvents365").

Next Meeting ...

Continued from Page 1

Gil's career has spanned over 27 years in the industry, from operating and managing transportable and flyaway satellite uplinks to complete systems design and integration. Gil has provided field engineering and uplinking services from all over the world, and was involved in many 'firsts' in the newsgathering field, including telephones and IP over satellite and digital video uplinking. He has worked for companies such as Wold Communications, Inc., NETCOM, Inc., IDB Communications, Inc., Synergistic Technologies, Inc., AZCAR USA, Inc., and GlobeCast North America, Inc.

In addition to Gil's presentation, we want to reserve a little time for discussion of the impact of no SBE Expo this year. Our finances are affected, as is the future of our chapter.

Also with this meeting, the E Board has approved raising the cost of the dinner fee at monthly meetings to \$10 effective with the October meeting. This is part of the result of no Expo this year.

Meeting Details:

When: 7 PM Thursday, October 15
Where: WQED-TV Studios,
4802 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh PA 15213

NAB Meetings On Line

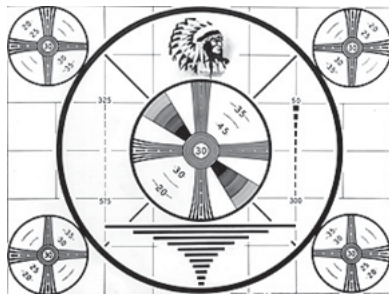
The SBE recorded two of the meetings held at the 2009 NAB Show: The annual membership meeting on Apr 21 and the SBE EAS meeting on Apr 20.

Both are now posted as podcasts on the SBE website.

Links to these podcasts are on the SBE home page.

Thanks to Chriss Scherer for this info!

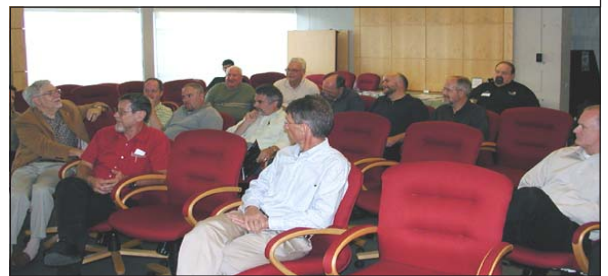
Probably the most famous American B&W test pattern is the so-called "Indian Head" monoscope pattern. This pattern was



originated by RCA in 1939; it was designed to be generated using a special tube called a monoscope, a CRT which had a metal plate target on which the pattern was printed. The black lines of the pattern would interrupt current flow as the pattern was scanned to provide the desired video output. These tubes could only handle black and white - no shades of grey hence they had to be simulated either with a halftone dot pattern or with patterns of fine lines.

Next Meeting

- Date:** Thursday, October 15
- Location:** WQED
4802 Fifth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(Park in the lots on either side of the building after 6P.M.)
- Time:** 6:30 PM gather and shoot the breeze
7:00 PM Dinner
- Program:** Migrating to HD Satellite Newsgathering
Gil Hanna
Near Field Communications, Inc.
- Dinner Fee:** \$10



Twenty-four members and friends showed up at the NAB Road Show at WQED on September 3rd.