

Section Meetings

Detroit December 11, 2001

The Detroit Section celebrated its 40th anniversary by inviting Founding Chair Bill Smith to reminisce about its formation in 1961. Smith recalled the huge need created by the automobile industry for using physical media to inform and teach both the internal and external phases of the industry. In his typical, always professional and modest, way, Smith made a special effort to recognize the past and present members who toiled with him to forge this SMPTE Section 40 years ago.

Twenty-three people were on hand to hear the evening's other speaker, Jim Hegadorn, Fuji Film USA, who discussed the Role of Magnetic Media in the Digital Broadcast and Post-Production Environment of the Future. For almost 50 years, tape has been the recording media of choice for acquiring, editing, and archiving video images. With the advent of the data age and the digital packetizing of audio, video, and control, tape has taken a back seat in the editorial world to file and data servers; however, it continues to be the most economical medium for long-term storage of video content. Fuji has been developing dual coating technologies for over ten years and has now announced its most recent "Nano Cube" technology, which promises even higher densities of data storage. Hegadorn predicted that early in 2002, an as yet un-named hardware manufacturer will use this technology in a new data storage format.—Mark Anzicek, Section Chair

Hollywood December 15, 2001

What better way to launch a holiday season than with a popular film featuring state-of-the-art technology. More



Jay Ballard demonstrates new material at the New York Section meeting.



Mike Chikuni, speaker at the New York meeting.

than 100 SMPTE members and their families were the guests of the Hollywood Section's annual holiday film screening. The movie was *Shrek*, the venue the Wells Fargo Theater at the Gene Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Griffith Park, Los Angeles. The print was kindly loaned by SMPTE Manager Marty Cohen, vice-president of DreamWorks SKG.—Alan Masson, Section Chair

Nashville December 13, 2001

Before introducing the first speaker of the evening, Section Chairman Mike Quinn presented a plaque to the host for the session, Dixie Parman of United Methodist Communications, citing her "over 40 years of service to the Nashville Section of SMPTE." During that time, Parman has served in numerous capacities, including membership on the board of managers, and has made invaluable contributions.

The evening's first speaker was Ron McCoskey, Dury's Downtown Pro Shop. McCoskey's career includes shooting news film for a local television station, working as a projectionist in local theaters, and selling photo equipment. Recently he has been shooting digital stills during the Tennessee Titans football games, beaming them over the internet immediately afterward. Using currently marketed pro-level digital still cameras, McCoskey discussed variations, pointing out, for example, that the



Program Chair Mike Strein (r) presenting plaque to Michel Proulx at the New York Section meeting in December.

number of pixels in a pickup chip is important, but so are lenses, chip quality, storage medium, speed of capture, file format, and software. End use and printer quality must also be considered.

Michael Gomez, a local photographer, followed by showing some of the enhancement software he uses, for example, test cards to set the white and color balance. He also demonstrated workflow management, including final preparations for products that go to his clients. An eye-opening demonstration was his display of print samples from some local professional labs; although each lab had received identical information, there were interesting differences in the prints.

Thirty-one people came to United Methodist Communications-Kingswood Studios to attend the meeting.—Buddy Gailey, Secretary/Treasurer

New York December 19, 2001

The December meeting, held at Communitek's facility, was attended by 55 people. The topics for the evening covered the buzzwords heard at the NAB2001: central casting (where a single hub serves many of the broadcast functions of several stations) and asset management.

The first presentation was Monitoring and Remote Control in a Central Casting Environment, by Michel Proulx, Miranda Technologies. While many companies have outlined advantages of central casting, such as pooling of resources and content, few have addressed monitoring and managing combined workplaces. Proulx explained how certain networking technologies can be used to control various types of distribution equipment and how streaming technologies can be used to monitor remote locations.

The second speaker, Mike Chikuni, Proximity Systems, emphasized how important it is for facilities to correctly manage and protect their graphical elements. A few examples are taking advantage of portability between graphical platforms, remote browse capability, intelligent searches, and automated backup, functions that sound simple and logical but are anything but in large, complicated, evolving environments.

In addition to these topics, SMPTE Governor Jay Ballard demonstrated a new test material, the Camalign chip chart.—Mike Strein, Program Manager, Television

Ohio December 6, 2001

For its first meeting of the new season, the Section joined Chapter 52 of the SBE (Society of Building Engineers) for a presentation on Broadcast Plant Emergency Preparedness—Today and Tomorrow. Section Chairman John Owen launched the discussion with an overview of disaster planning at the WBNS TV/DT plant in Columbus, where he is the chief engineer. He

showed the 40 members and guests a large notebook with photo and text descriptions of all the plant's equipment within their facilities: broadcast, office machinery, and room layouts, among others. Documentation binders like these, he explained, will provide benefits to the station, including post-disaster-recovery insurance claims, model line and infrastructure repair or replacement, and others. He also discussed some of the plant's ongoing operating procedures now in place, such as the screening of incoming mail.

Enlarging on this critically important topic was the evening's guest speaker, Donald P. Archibald, Gensler Co., an architectural design and planning firm in Chicago. Archibald distributed copies of "A First-Aid Questionnaire for a Broadcast and Technical Operations for a Disaster-Recovery Program," a booklet containing a number of checklists with photos, designed for consideration and discussion.

The final presentation by Ed Williams, DTV Strategic Services Group of Alexandria, VA's PBS, was narrated by Gene Batey in Williams's absence. It focused on the new emergency activation system (EAS), whose principal players include the FCC, as the broadcast rulemaker; the National Weather Service, leading the emergency preparedness communications services; and the SBE, speaking for the broadcasters and leading the process for system implementation at their plants.

In the discussion of EAS was the suggested use of Directed Channel Change (DCC), a new ATSC protocol standard within the DTV signal, which makes it possible to localize and target certain broadcast streams to specific groups of DTV receivers. In the future they will be able to have ZIP-Code-type digital address numbers programmed into them. These DTV receivers could then receive broadcasts targeted to groups of receivers in certain cities within an overall broadcast service area, even isolating the program stream still further to neighborhoods. They would be locally concerned announcements, advisories, etc., broadcast during an emergency or



Kim Strand, guest speaker at the November 27 meeting of the PCC Student Chapter.

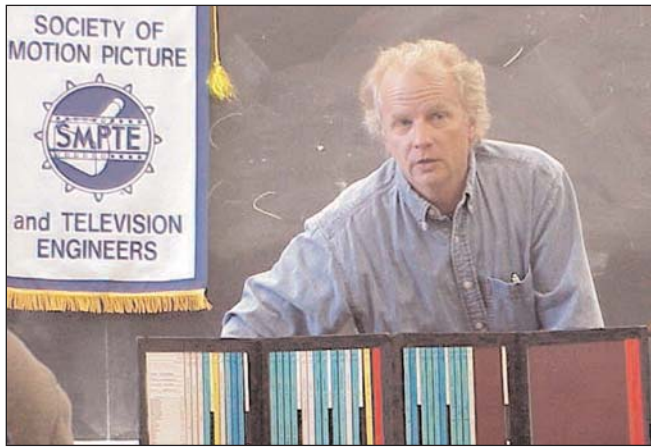
weather alert. DCC also makes possible special program streams for commercial advertisers as well. DTV broadcasters now, and in the future, can continue to use today's popular, conventional methods of voice-over and text crawl with tone alerting, but other options will be available.

All three presentations included interesting Q&A interactions between members and meeting presenters.—Gene L. Batey, Secretary/Treasurer

Pasadena City College Student Chapter November 27, 2001

Guest speaker Kim M. Strand, a two-time Emmy nominee music editor was introduced to the 30 students in attendance. Strand, who migrated from Minnesota to California to learn about film and television production, was encouraged to enroll in the radio and television program at Pasadena City College, where she earned her A.A. degree in telecommunications, radio, and television broadcasting.

A friend told her about music editing and how it involved a blend of creativity and technical music applications. She felt this was a perfect job and with hard work and perseverance got into the industry as a music editor. Strand shared a video presentation of 101 Dalmatians that illustrated the responsibilities of a music editor, who arranges the recording sessions for the composer and implements all the technical details to ensure that musicians



Guest speaker Paul Snider addressing the students at the December 4 meeting of the PCC Student Chapter.



Student Chair Kassa Zakadi (l), Hollywood Section Chair Alan J. Masson, and SMPTE President John L. Mason at the December 11 meeting of Pasadena City College Student Chapter.

are synchronized with the visual footage.

Strand explained that there are no courses that teach music editing: it is a combination of on-the-job experience and understanding music composition, film production, and post-production. She suggested enrolling in every course available that involves nonlinear editing, to ensure the greatest possibility of securing employment.—Kassa Zakadi, Student Chapter Chairperson

Pasadena City College Student Chapter December 4, 2001

With 35 in attendance, our noon meeting commenced with the introduction of guest speaker Paul Snider, director of the primetime television show “7th Heaven.” Snider attended Los Angeles City College and Cal State Northridge University, where he majored in radio, film, and television programs. He had aspirations of becoming a cinematographer, but his opportunities came in the area of directing. He shared his experiences as a set production assistant, 2nd assistant director, and 1st assistant director and gave a rundown of a normal production day and the teamwork necessary to get things accomplished.

Snider concluded by stressing the competitiveness of the entertainment industry and the importance of being on time. He added, “Don’t become discouraged, be persistent and you’ll accomplish your goals. Take advantage

of the television studio at Pasadena City College and make your mistakes here. Mistakes won’t be tolerated when you are employed on a production.”—Kassa Zakadi, Student Chapter Chairperson

Pasadena City College Student Chapter December 11, 2001

With 37 in attendance, the meeting began with the presentation of a plaque to Professor Jerry Finn, who established the PCC Student Chapter in 1981. SMPTE President John L. Mason also presented Professor Finn with a SMPTE Presidential Proclamation for distinguished service locally, as well as nationally, in the area of education.

The meeting resumed with Mason and his colleague, Alan Masson, both of Eastman Kodak’s Motion Picture Division, elaborating on technical and engineering topics. The Motion Picture Division has three segments: feature film, television, and commercials, which are targets for employment after college. Mason advised, “You have to know someone [who will] give you an opportunity. Your student chapter allows you to enjoy the benefits of SMPTE and to meet the people that can help you get into the industry. Please take advantage of all your resources here at PCC, especially Professor Jerry Finn.”

Mason and Masson then extended an invitation for our student chapter to

hold a meeting at Kodak, where we will be treated to some demos and visual presentations.—Kassa Zakadi, Student Chapter Chairperson.

Twin Cities October 13, 2001

The meeting drew upon a number of acronyms and their meanings for its content, with Jay Burdsal, North Central Technologist for Leitch Technologies, offering a concise overview of the advanced authoring format (AAF), media exchange format (MXF), and how they had evolved as outgrowths of object media format (OMF). The talk began with a comprehensive overview of popular terminology employed in server and digital asset management discussions. Burdsal then segued into the question of why we even need an overview of AAF, how it evolved from OMF, and how AAF differs in file format and application from MXF. OMF’s genesis from the Apple Bontos technology (ca. 1992) was discussed.

Next, Burdsal shifted to Microsoft’s Open-DML and Media Authoring Exchange Format (1998) and Grass Valley Group’s GXF (which has become a *de facto* SMPTE standard). Summarizing, Burdsal offered a file structure and applications overview of AAF and MXF. The program was a good primer for attendees who had heard of AAF and MXF but did not know much beyond their names.—James L. Miller, Section Chair