

Chicago Section Holds Eighth Annual All-Day Meeting — May 7, 1983

By Ann Brack



Section Chairman Michael Bailey delivering opening remarks.

Intent on learning all they could about the latest advancements in film technology and how they relate to the video world, 150 attendees gathered for the eighth annual All-Day Meeting, organized and hosted by SMPTE's Chicago Section. Featuring national speakers, the Chicago Section selects a Saturday in May (this year, May 7) and packs it with lectures, demonstrations, and a very sociable luncheon. This year's event included nine seminars.

Judith A. Schwan, assistant director of Kodak research laboratories, explained Kodak's new breakthrough in silver halide technology, the fast pace at which electronics technology is progressing, and what that means for the future fusion of film and electronics. "Just how soon these innovations become reality is open to speculation," Schwan said.

As an introduction to Kodak's newest high-speed films, Schwan explained the relationship between speed, grain, and sharpness of film as being interrelated like the sides of a triangle. Up to now, if chemists were to increase the speed of a film, there would be a

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Chairman
Chicago Eighth Annual All-Day Meeting

General Chairman: Michael H. Bailey, Allied Film Laboratory, Inc.
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Sponsors: Joseph J. Pusateri, Douglas Film Industries
Hotel Arrangements and Banquet: George Halonen, George W. Colburn Laboratory
Registration: Scott Kieffer, Victor Duncan, Inc.
Session Chairmen: Edward Blasko, Eastman Kodak Co.; John Ehrenberg, BHP, Inc.



Judith Schwan, speaker.



Robert Ringer, speaker.



Frank Reinking, speaker.



Irwin Young, speaker.



SMPTPE President Leonard Coleman (L) with Chairman Michael Bailey.



John Ehrenberg, sessions chairman.

loss in the quality of grain and sharpness. But with the development of new crystals, which are tablet-like in appearance, Kodak's new films have more latitude overall. This innovation has not yet been incorporated into motion-picture film, but is available for still photography, Schwan said.

Regarding film and electronics, Schwan noted that in computer terms, today's color film has resolution equivalent to 3.5 million elements, or 52 million bits of information. It has been said, noted Schwan, that a picture is worth 10,000 words, "but in this computer sense, it is worth more like 1.5 million words."

She also explained Kodak's experiments with encoding information on a magnetic stripe on the film, which could contain slating information, scheduling for dailies and printing, and storage and editing instructions. "The magnetic stripe is such that it will not interfere with the film emulsion or the quality of the visual image," Schwan said.

Robert Ringer, Ringer Video Services, gave a presentation clarifying the process of transferring either 24 or 30 frames/sec from film to video. Video covers 60 fields/sec, while, until recently, film covered 24 frames/sec. Through the magic of Rank Cintel, when transferring film to video, the *A* frame is swept three times, the *B* frame is swept two times and so on, the machine alternating the sweeping of each pair of frames in a 3:2 pattern. The only way to convert back to film from tape is to throw away the correct fifth frame, cautioned Ringer. "If not lined up right, there can be complete confusion of frames," he warned.



Edward J. Blasko, sessions chairman.



Michael Bailey speaking at luncheon.



Some members of the committee (L-R): George Halonen, Edward Blasko, Hal Miller, Scott Kieffer, Michael Bailey, Joe Pusateri, and Norman Thelen.

Transferring from 30 frames/sec film to video and back again is much simpler in that each frame is only swept twice. "But if you're making 30 frames/sec, you have to make a commitment to 30 frames/sec," Ringer said.

Frank Reinking, Eastman Kodak's product development group, discussed the new Eastman color negative films, including 7291, 5294, and 7294. A sampling of some of the pros and cons of each film was taken by Reinking himself, in addition to a selection of producers around the world, interviewed by Kodak. With film 7294, the granularity decreases as the exposure increases, the cumulative effect being an improvement in color reproduction and improved black reproduction. Reinking noted an intercatability between 7294 and 7293. With 7291 there is less color saturation, but better speed balance and increased shadow detail, he said. Comparing film 5247 with 5294, he noted that 5247 shot at EI (Exposure Index) 125 gives film quality slightly improved over that of 5294. Reinking said that when light is available, he would still opt for 5247. Both 5247 and 5291 are "normal" films, not regarded as high-speed, as is 5294. High-speed 5294 provides good balance with lights and shadows, holds flesh tones and deep reds, and gets good sharp images even under soft lights.

Irwin Young, Du Art Film Laboratories, Inc., New York, gave a practical discussion and demonstration of negative film exposure. He noted that since the introduction of high-speed films, cinematographers have much more latitude shooting at high-exposure ratings in low-light situations but "the concept of how to rate the film gets to be questionable," he said. Quoting an *American Cinematographer* article, Young noted that, even with the advances in Kodak films 7291 and 7294, "One thing you do need is light in the shadows; not much, but enough just so they don't go milky."

Quoting one filmmaker responding to the debate on speed and/or index ratings, Young quipped, "An index of 5000 might give an acceptable print if you filmed a polar bear on an ice slope on a bright, cloudy day." The good news is that Kodak 5294 shot at EI 1000 is excellent for night scenes. It provides rich black tones when underexposed.

Young also pointed out that grain is a very significant factor in how film is rated, and that 35-mm films and



Past Chairmen (L-R): Edward Blasko, Jack Behrend, Michael Bailey, Matt Herman, Chuck Zichterman, George Halonen.



Attendees at All-Day Meeting.

16-mm films should be rated differently.

In comparison of films 5247 and 5291 between ratings of 100 to 125, as the film was underexposed a shade at a time for each stock, 5247 proved to hold detail better with light, while 5291 proved brighter in shadow areas. Comparing 7247 and 7291, Young noted that 7291 proved much brighter, and held colors better even when underexposed with soft light present. Even at normal exposure, 7291 came across with warmer tones.

Jimmy Smyth, president of Optimus, Inc., Chicago, discussed the all-encompassing capabilities of video post-production houses these days as well as the immense capital investment it takes to open and run one. (He has \$4 million invested in Optimus.) He also pointed out the changing perspective of video post-production as viewed in the whole video production picture. A case is currently pending before California courts in which a video post-production house is being considered the major contractor for the job, said Smyth. That should be of particular interest to both video houses and independent producers.

Charles Nairn, Com Tec, Detroit, reviewed helpful do's and don'ts for

sound recording. Too often, sound is the motion-picture stepchild, he said. Nairn pointed out that the irony is "sound is important, otherwise we wouldn't have talking pictures."

Some of his tips were: "Make sure your technology is up to date. A Nagra IV is preferable to a Nagra III. Alignment tapes do not live forever. Get new ones every so often. Your clients may voice a preference for transferring to acetate tape stock, because they like to tear it with their hands," Nairn said, "but, analyzing sound quality, polyester-based stock is better."

Ear protection is very important for soundmen. Your ear's response to high frequencies depletes as you get older, "So if you're 60 years old and someone who's 20 says something about high frequency, trust them," Nairn said.

As part of a panel discussing shooting film at 30 frames/sec, Murray Allen, president of Universal Sound Recording, Chicago, said that it was about time cinematographers had a choice of two film speeds. After all, audio men have upped the tally for sound speeds to a dozen or more. On a more serious note, Allen did explain that 30 frames/sec film provided extra visual and audio clarity.