Section Meetings

Hollywood, March 20, 1990 — A presentation on video effects featured Bill Taylor (A.S.C.) and Syd Dutton, Illusion Arts, and Doug Smith, Apogee, Inc. Using film clips to demonstrate the before and after of matte paintings, miniature models, and motion-control photography, the trio showed the 250-member audience new techniques used in features such as *Star Trek V*, *Karate Kid II*, and *Coming to America*. The meeting was held at the Hitchcock Theater at Universal City Studios. SMPTE Governor Lou Wolf provided the theater for the Section meeting. — Milton R. Shefter (Secretary/Treasurer), Paramount Pictures Corp.

Houston, March 14, 1990 — Student productions and media programs were shown at the second annual Higher Education Showcase during the Houston Section's March meeting. Representative productions and descriptions of media programs taught at Trinity University, Sam Houston State University, and the University of Houston were featured. Sample clips included dramatic scenes, interviews, music videos, computer graphic openings, a magazine segment on bicycle racing, and a public service announcement on drinking and driving. The hit of the evening was a Claymation production, *Jack and the Beanstalk II*, produced by John Aden and John Streeter, University of Houston.

The meeting, held at the University of Houston, was attended by 25 people. Presentations by Dr. Suzanne Williams, Trinity University, and Dr. Robert Musburger, University of Houston, and tours of the school's film, audio, and video facilities rounded out the meeting. — Robert Musburger (Secretary/Treasurer), University of Houston.

Montreal/Quebec, March 13, 1990 — The use of a new digital video terminal, developed by Videoway and ACTV, their American partner, was the subject of the March Section meeting. Videoway and Videotron Plus are the first to broadcast interactive television through existing cable television networks. They presently broadcast 12 hours a day of interactive programming ranging from game shows, sporting events, live performances, and children's shows. Videoway is already exporting this technology to England where over one million homes are expected to benefit from this service within the next five years. The audience, which was limited to 45 people due to the size of the facility, was mesmerized by the new technology. The meeting was held at Videoway. — Rene Villeneuve (Chairman), CBC.

Nashville, November 29, 1989 — The Nashville Section's November meeting focused on the Ikegami HK-327 studio camera. Thom Calabro, Ikegami Electronics, talked about the camera's design and development. He said that it was designed for the highest picture quality and operability, with very few, if any, compromises. Fixed pattern noise, moiré, blemishes, and aliasing problems are ruled out. The camera utilizes the XQ3510 mixed field Plumbicon which is designed for a 16:9 aspect ratio and provides improved corner resolution in NTSC. The tube also offers magnetic focusing and electrostatic deflection. For improved operability, the camera has a lower center of gravity and a very low optical center. A skin detail feature allows specific detail enhancement, such as the softening of crow's feet in the talent's face. A soft detail feature reduces detail in highlights or lowlights.

Butch Smith, The Nashville Network (TNN), discussed the decision-making process that TNN used in selecting the camera. He said that the station wanted to maintain its high-quality picture without compromising resolution and signal-to-noise. He added that TNN's old TK-45s were running 52 to 53-dB signal-to-noise ratio, and the HK-327s measured 62.8 dB on the worst, and 63.7 dB on the best. This is unweighted signal-to-noise as measured on the Tektronix VM-700. He described custom modifications to the intercom and black stretch circuits. Following the presentations, the 28 attendees were given a tour of TNN, where the meeting was held. — Gene Parker (Secretary/Treasurer), WKRN-TV.

Nashville, February 15, 1990 — Film Now and in the Future was the topic of the February section meeting. Kathy Mazza, Eastman Kodak Co., began the program with a review of papers presented at the SMPTE fall conference. She then narrated a slide presentation entitled "Integrating the Technologies," which was followed by a discussion on some of Kodak's new developments, including the EXR color negative films and Keycode numbers for 16mm and 35mm films.

John Johnston, Eastman Kodak Co., spoke on the future of film in the era of HDTV. He discussed high-resolution images in video and the potential of film in terms of its resolution possibilities. He said that the needs of the HDTV industry should be met by integrating the best of both video and film technologies, noting that every new advancement in film is contained within the film product, whereas electronic advancements require new hardware. He then talked about the experimental high-performance HDTV telecine that was recently announced by Kodak. It is the product of a partnership between Kodak and Rank Cintel that uses two new linear array sensors, a xenon light source, and a high-speed digital processor. He also discussed Kodak's new Keycode system.

Following his presentation, a film commemorating 100 years of the motion-picture industry, *Pieces of Silver*, was shown. Also, a film demonstrating Kodak's new 7248 color negative film and a film made by Grenada Television on 7425 daylight negative film were presented. The meeting was held at United Methodist Communications, and the 34 attendees toured the facility at the end of the program. — Gene Parker (Secretary/Treasurer), WKRN-TV.

Nashville, March 22, 1990 — Digital audio production with the Synclavier was discussed by Hollis Hoffer and Matt Morris of Aesophagus Press. Hoffer defined the Synclavier as a "word processor of musical sounds" and talked about the

Attendees observe a playback of a student production at the Houston Section's Annual Higher Education Showcase held during the March meeting.

various storage media, stating that "an 80-Mbyte Winchester disk equals 80 seconds of recording time. The music tower contains 16 Mbytes of ROM, 32 voices, 200 tracks, and has a 450-note capacity. It has a MIDI interface and can hold 5½ hours of storage on an optical disk." The Synclavier allows for nonvolatile editing, as compared to editing tape and a razor blade. The post-production system provides for a universal transfer in the digital domain between various digital signals. He then demonstrated how the product sound effects can be matched to a video through the use of a time code with several videotapes that were controlled by the Synclavier.

Morris then discussed the Synclavier from a composer's standpoint. It has a 200-track sequencer and 2.1 Gbytes of storage on an optical disk. He then provided a demonstration using two Synclaviers linked together, controlling a synthesizer. A cymbal sound was analyzed and modified.

The meeting, which was held at MPL/Postmasters, was attended by 18 people. Following the presentations there was a question-and-answer session and a tour of the facility. — Gene Parker (Secretary/Treasurer), WKRN-TV.

Pasadena City College Student Chapter, March 13, 1990 — Diana Weynand and Shirley Craig, Weynand Associates, explained their role in providing specialized training for people in the video and film industry. They shared with the Section members copies of company-produced books and workbooks that cover computerized videotape editing, videotape operations, post-production, and news editing. Interior shots of various control rooms and edit bays were illustrated via chalkboard illustrations and 35mm slides. The pair also gave tips on getting a job and working in the network, corporate, and smaller markets. The 30 attendees participated in a discussion following the presentation. — Gerald A. Finn (Faculty Advisor), Pasadena City College.

Pasadena City College Student Chapter, March 27, 1990 — Jim Johnston, first assistant property master for Carsey-Werner, discussed a typical work week in the life of the television series "Grand." A former Pasadena City College student, Johnston defined the roles of a set master, a property master, and the property department. He also explained how a script is blocked, using a marked script from "Grand" as an example. He shared several tricks that are used to effectively dress a set, such as marking the furniture to insure continuity. During his presentation, Johnston stressed the importance of good work ethics in a job performance. The meeting was held at the Pasadena City College and was attended by 27 people. — Gerald Finn (Faculty Advisor), Pasadena City College.

Attendees listen to a presentation on broadcasting during emergency earthquake situations at the San Francisco Section's March meeting.

San Francisco, March 22, 1990 — An account of how engineering staffs and broadcasters coped with last year's earthquake in San Francisco was the topic of a symposium entitled "Bay Area Broadcasters vs. the Great Earthquake of 1989." Since television cameras were preparing to broadcast the World Series baseball game between Oakland and San Francisco when the quake occurred, this was perhaps the first earthquake to be broadcast "live" over national television. Initially, many television and radio stations lost power as a result of the earthquake, then one by one, during the following minutes and hours, they reappeared on the air. Seven of the area's principal engineers discussed how they performed under these extremely difficult conditions.

Steve Moreen, KPIX-TV, said that it was a stressful situation that took its toll on employees. "Teamwork was needed and the technical staff responded like champs," he said. Because their video monitor is fed by Viacom cablevision, which went down, the staff thought they were off the air even though they were not. The station now has a monitor connected to an antenna on the roof which, despite the poor reception in the area, provides assurance that they are on the air. During the ten hours following the earthquake, KPIX-TV operated on emergency power provided by two 155-W generators. "The station also had a 110-kW generator at the Sutro transmitting tower and a 100-kW generator at the El Cerrito earth satellite station," he said. "The satellite station provided a major uplink out of town for the next five days and also served KGO-TV."

Lou Bell, KNTV, San Jose, reported that the station suffered extensive damages at a cost of half a million dollars or more. At the Loma Prieta site the TV antenna and tower were damaged and are currently being replaced. Bell said that all equipment that was not tied down fell onto the floor. "Diesel fuel tanks fell off their stands, contaminating the soil, and required expensive removal. The new fuel tanks are mounted on hardened concrete bases and are double-walled. Double-containment piping carries the fuel to the generator," he said. "Mistakes were made in earthquake preparation, so now new planning is in process. Management needs to support preparation with funds. Disaster planning is one of our greatest challenges."

Dave Phillips, KGO-TV, said the station had three 225-W generators on the roof of the building and a 10,000-gallon fuel tank on the side of the building, which provided good emergency power; however, the phone lines were out. "Fortunately, we have digitally sequenced, addressable control from all of our mountain tops," he said. "Each mountain top is individually controlled and puts the control out over the pro channel so we can get away from dependence on their phone lines." The station also sent camera crews out on ENG trucks so that equipment was available on both sides of the bay and positioned to feed news back to the station. This is a costly system, but proved to have merit. Although KGO-TV lost its wire phone, it was able to contact a sister station in Houston and establish wire communication. Phillips pointed out that there was no air conditioning or air movement and windows could not be opened. "Both people and equipment suffered as temperatures in the newsroom rose to 95°. Air conditioning needs to be considered for emergency power requirements," he said. "The station operated for 3½ days on emergency power. The care of people is also very important. They need to be fed as well as housed. Cots, food, and water need to be on hand."

The new student chapter at Napa Valley College recently held its first meeting. Seated from left are Jon M. Gulfo, Ann Grant, Vernon L. Kipping, and Gary Vann. Standing are Ken W. Graham (left) and Charles Hintz.

Roy Trumbull, KRON-TV, said the station overrelied on existing commercial power grids, which became unavailable from Tuesday evening to Friday evening — one small generator powered some of the racks. An ENG truck provided power, and cables were run to a master control where a camera was set up with a microphone and lights. The station was able to operate for four hours using one transmitter. A makeshift studio was set up in the parking lot, and a dumpster served as a shelf to hold equipment. One problem was a lack of outlets to plug a cannon connector into the equipment on the transmitter site. A cable was made up by soldering and this problem was surmounted. A pictorial map of the Bay Area served as a graphic tool to show sites of new action. Because of power generation limitations, only vital equipment was operated. For the future, KRON plans to install a new generator. Although this is a costly investment, Trumbull said that emergency contingencies need to be considered and alternate transmitter sites are being studied.

Bill Ruck, KNBR (the primary Emergency Broadcasting System for San Francisco) and KFOG-FM, stressed the importance of simplifying emergency plans. A problem he experienced was that he was shortstaffed since many of the station's personnel were at Candlestick Park covering the World Series. "The biggest problem we had was that the switchboard operator failed to realize that to get back on the air after the power failure, he needed to simply hit a button on the console because the emergency power generator came on when the commercial power failed. It was further discovered that it was possible to simulcast both KNBR and KFOG-FM from the transmitter site, which was very useful." During the emergency, EBS was used by Alameda County and San Francisco to summon all fire and police personnel to report for duty. San Francisco Mayor Agonos also wanted to make announcements on EBS and a Motorola transmitter was used. However, this equipment is intended only for intermittent use and therefore has to be keyed every 90 seconds. Another major problem was that stations were uninformed on such events as road closings. The public officials' staffs failed to supply that information. In addition, Ruck recommended that a structural engineer be consulted for appropriate seismic bracing of equipment, stairways should be well lit, and a water booster be available for drinking and plumbing needs.

Ken Manley, KTVU-TV, said that there was a power failure at the transmitter sight and an ENG truck was used in a successful first attempt at returning to the air, in spite of audio problems that were experienced. Power loss was attributed to a failed switch on the generator in the basement, and it took two hours to bypass the switch because the generator was not interlocked properly. In addition, the diesel overheated due to a head gasket failure. He recommended that equipment be checked every day to avoid problems during an emergency.

Stu Casteel, Hewlett-Packard, presented a videotape documenting the extensive damage sustained by his facility. The damage was so great, the company had to abandon the building and move operations. He noted that equipment on shelves or in racks fell to the floor, but equipment on wheels just rolled around and sustained no damage.

The meeting was held at the studio of KPIX-TV and was attended by 90 people. In addition, an estimated audience of 200 to 300 people watched via satellite. Viewers reported in from outside locations such as New York, Florida, Michigan, Nebraska, and Western Canada. Section Chairman Peter Hammar closed the program with a question-and-answer session.

During the meeting, the formation of the new student chapter at Napa Valley College was announced, and Gary Vann, the faculty advisor, was introduced. SMPTE Governor John A. Carlson presented a plaque to Vann and to student chapter officers, Chairman Jon M. Gulfo and Secretary/Treasurer Ken W. Graham, commemorating the designation as a student chapter of the SMPTE. — Vernon L. Kipping (Secretary/Treasurer), consultant.

Section Chairman Peter Hammar moderates a question-and-answer session at the San Francisco Section's March meeting.