



**Chapter 24, Inc.
Madison, Wisconsin**



Society of Broadcast Engineers

January 2000

TELECOM INDUSTRY NEWS

By Neal McLain

A HISTORY OF DANE COUNTY CABLE SYSTEMS PART 3: STAR CABLEVISION, MARCUS, CHARTER

By the time Charter Communications completes its pending acquisition of Bresnan Communications' cable systems, Charter will be the only cable television operator left in Dane County. This is the last in a series of three articles relating the history of the original cable companies that collectively became Bresnan and Charter. This article is devoted to the companies in and near Dane County that first became part of Star Cablevision, and then eventually became part of Charter.

CABLE VIDEO, INC.

Cable Video was founded in 1980 by Vern Bertrand. In the 60s, Bertrand had been Sales Manager at Video Systems, Inc., a video-equipment systems integrator based in Skokie, Illinois. After leaving Video Systems, Bertrand took up residence in Lodi, and served as sales representative for several video-equipment manufacturers.

During the 80s, Cable Video acquired and built cable television franchises in four municipalities:

- Village of Dane, Dane County
- City of Lodi, Columbia County
- Village of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County
- Village of Waunakee, Dane County

These communities were served from two headends, one in Dane (serving Dane, Lodi, and Waunakee) and one in Prairie du Sac. Extensions from both headends also provided service in several nearby townships. One such

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Y2K, THE DRILL

By Kevin Ruppert

Say what you want about Y2K, but it was an excellent drill. Before you turn the page, think about it for just a minute. When was the last time you checked ALL of the systems in your plant, forged relationships with the tech support departments at their manufacturers, or established new ones with companies that took over the product after the originator went out of business?

When was the last time you seriously exercised your generator during cold weather, or made up a plan to run the station on a portable Honda?

Y2K gave us all the chance to hone skills that were rusty or altogether forgotten about. (Remember DOS?) It also gave us an incentive to investigate new and innovative ways to do things that had been done one way for a long time. Maybe that change had to be made because the old system would no longer work at all once the date changed over to 2000. It gave us a chance to break old paradigms.

Another totally unexpected benefit of Y2K was the opportunity to give something back to the community. Our local newspaper ran an article about a group that feared the worse. They

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday,
January 19, 2000**

**ITU-R 601 Digital
Video Testing**

**Dutch Treat Dinner
at 5:30 PM**

**at Babes Bar & Grill
5614 Schroeder Rd.**

**Meeting and
Program
at 7:00 PM**

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stockpiled canned goods and other supplies. Now that the "event" is over, they are giving all of that food to local food pantries.

Many say that it was a waste of time and money. I disagree. Even though "millions" of dollars were spent by companies the world over, I think it was worth it. It gave us all a chance to see how dependent we are on technology, and to prepare to do without at least some of it.

It gave us an opportunity to remember how vulnerable we are to

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CHAPTER 24 OFFICERS

CHAIR:

Kevin Ruppert (WISC-TV)
W - 271-4321
kruppert@wisctv.com

VICE-CHAIR:

Tom Smith (WHA-TV)
W - 263-2174
smithtc@vilas.uwex.edu

SECRETARY:

Lloyd Berg (WKOW-TV)
W - 274-1234
lloydberg@earthlink.net

TREASURER:

Stan Scharch (WISC-TV)
W - 271-4321
sscharch@wisctv.com

COMMITTEE APPOINTEES

Program Committee:

Mark Croom	271-1025
Denise Maney	277-8001
Kerry Maki	833-0047
Steve Paugh	277-5139
Steve Zimmerman	274-1234

Membership:

Paul Stoffel
stoffel@vilas.uwex.edu

Sustaining Membership and Past-Chair:

Fred Sperry W - 264-9806
fsperry@ecb.state.wi.us

Special Events:

Vicki Kipp (ECB-TOC)
W - 264-9631
vkipp@ecb.state.wi.us

Certification and Education:

Jim Hermanson 836-8340
jmh@execpc.com
Tim Trendt (UW-Platteville)

Frequency Coordination:

Tom Smith W - 263-2174
smithtc@vilas.uwex.edu

National SBE Chapter Liaison:

Leonard Charles
W - 271-4321 FAX - 271-1709
lcharles@wisctv.com

December Business Meeting Minutes

Chapter 24 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers met on Thursday, December 21, 1999 at Engineering Hall, on the UW-Madison campus. There were fourteen members and two guests present; eleven held SBE certification.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Tom Smith at 7:05 pm. Minutes of the November meeting were approved as published.

It was reported that Chapter 24 has 23 Sustaining Members including the recent renewal of WISC-TV.

Mike Norton reported that the January Newsletter deadline will be Friday, 1/7/00, at midnight; with the folding party on Wednesday, 1/12/00, at 5:30 pm at WKOW-TV.

Jim Hermanson, Certification & Education, reported that the next local certification exams will be given in February; deadline for application is 12/31/99. The following opportunity for SBE certification will be at the NAB convention.

Tom Smith, Frequency Coordinator, made a report about recent frequency coordination efforts and issues.

Tom Smith read a letter from Kevin Ruppert thanking all who helped with the November meeting (student night).

Tom Smith read a letter from John Poray (SBE Executive Director) congratulating Chapter 24 for success of student night meeting.

Vicki Kipp reported on the recent field trip to Green Bay to tour the ABC HDTV truck.

Tom Smith reported that WHA-TV has an opening for an engineer.

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

The evening's program was presented by David Devereaux-Weber, engineer with the UW-Madison Division of Information Technology. It featured information on, and demonstrations of, streaming audio and video over Local Area Networks and the Internet.

Submitted by Lloyd Berg, Secretary

PROGRAM IDEAS?

Is there a topic you would like to see covered at one of our local Chapter 24 meetings? Or, better yet, is there a topic that you are qualified to speak on at an upcoming meeting? Please forward any ideas to one of the Program committee members or to one of the Chapter 24 officers.


Y2K, The Drill (continued)

"circumstances beyond our control". (We don't get an opportunity to use that phrase on the air very often anymore, do we?). The skills needed for surviving Y2K were very much like those needed to survive a severe winter storm, a skill that could prove useful in this part of the world!

I think that this was such a good experience that we should plan on doing it more often. Maybe every five years or so? (Okay, would you settle for every 10 years?)

Here's a thought for those of you who like to indulge in conspiracy theories. Maybe our government knew that Y2K would be a bust. Maybe they found this out with their super fast computers months ago, but let us all prepare for the worse anyway! After all, we no longer have air raid drills or "duck and cover" drills. Maybe this was one way that they could get us to be on our toes once again the way we were when the "red menace" was something to be concerned about.

Anyway, those are my random thoughts on the subject. Maybe you have some favorite Y2K stories that you would like to share with the readers of this newsletter. Maybe you can tell us about that piece of backup gear that management finally let you buy, only because of Y2K.



<p>Jim Rigsby Account Executive Private, State, Local Government</p>	<p>Alcatel Network Systems 2800 West Higgins Road Suite 825 Hoffman Estates, IL 60195 Tel: (847) 490 2076 Fax: (847) 490 2073 E-mail: james_a_rigsby@ aud.alcatel.com</p>
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<p>Jim Pianowski Central Regional Manager Western Area</p>	<p>Tektronix, Inc. Video and Networking Division 515 West Algonquin Road, Ste 100 Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005 james.j.pianowski@tek.com 800 458-7587 ext. 6797 Voice Mail 847 431-5755 Mobile 847 381-4738 Home 800 452-1368 Pager</p>
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Tektronix

AMATEUR RADIO NEWS

By Tom Weeden, WJ9H

• In a move that will streamline amateur radio licensing, the FCC has issued its long-awaited Report and Order on amateur licensing restructuring. Starting April 15, 2000, new licenses will be issued for only three classes: Technician, General, and Amateur Extra. Also, the 13 and 20 word-per-minute Morse code requirements will be dropped in favor of a single code speed proficiency test of 5 WPM.

"We believe that an individual's ability to demonstrate increased Morse code proficiency is not necessarily indicative of that individual's ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art," the FCC said in its Report and Order. Besides drastically streamlining the Amateur Radio licensing process, the FCC said its actions would "eliminate unnecessary requirements that may discourage or limit individuals from becoming trained operators, technicians, and electronic experts."

Although no new Novice and Advanced licenses will be issued after the effective date of the Report and Order, the FCC does not plan to automatically upgrade any existing license privileges. The American Radio Relay League had proposed a one-time, across-the-board upgrading of current Novice and Tech Plus licensees to General class, but the FCC declined to adopt the idea. This means that current licensees will retain their current operating privileges, including access to various modes and subbands, and will be able to renew their licenses indefinitely.

A copy of the entire Report and Order (FCC 99-412) is available at http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/1999/db991230/fcc99412.txt

• 75 MHz of spectrum around 5.9 GHz has been reallocated to the new "Intelligent Transportation System" services aimed at improving highway safety. The allocation of 5.850 to 5.925 GHz includes the upper portion of a secondary amateur radio allocation (5.650 to 5.925 GHz) which is shared with government radar and non-government fixed satellite uplinks. The FCC said that proposed uses of this Part 90 service would include traffic light control, travelers' alerts, automatic toll collection, traffic congestion detection and electronic inspection of moving trucks. The commission has already allocated 5.725 to 5.825 GHz for high-speed wireless digital communications under Part 15.

(Excerpts from January 2000 "QST" Magazine and the American Radio Relay League's "The ARRL Letter")

Thanks to WKOW-TV for providing copying and folding facilities for the Chapter 24 newsletter!

Thanks to WISC-TV for maintaining the web server for the Chapter 24 Web page!





John Salzwedel
3893 Terrace Circle DeForest, Wisconsin 53532
Office: (608) 238-7575 Fax: (608) 238-4955
Web Page: www.tokencreek.com E-Mail: tcp@itisis.com

TELECOM INDUSTRY NEWS (continued)

extension provided service in the Town of Westport near Waunakee; as a result, Westport was served by two cable companies: Cable Video in the northeastern portion, and Complete Channel TV in the eastern and southern portions, near Madison and Middleton.

Another extension, from the Prairie du Sac headend, provided service to townships in three counties: Sauk (Town of Prairie du Sac), Columbia (Town of West Point), and Dane (Town of Roxbury). In order to provide service in West Point and Roxbury, Cable Video installed a trunk cable across the Wisconsin River. This cable, at the Highway 60 Bridge at Prairie du Sac, is still in service today (Figure 1).

Although Cable Video served Prairie du Sac, it did not serve Sauk City, Prairie du Sac's immediate neighbor to the south. Sauk City's village board subsequently awarded a separate franchise to U.S. Cable of Viking, and Viking built a separate headend at the village's water tower, less than two miles from the Prairie du Sac headend. The two villages have been served by different cable companies ever since.

Sauk City and Prairie du Sac had, of course, been separate villages since they were founded a century ago. In spite of several consolidation efforts over the years, they're still separate villages today (and yes, Sauk City is a village, not a city; see Figure 2). Although some municipal services are provided jointly (schools; police protection), other services are provided separately

(public libraries, water, sewer, electric power). So, even though both villages are served by the same telephone company (GTE), it's probably no surprise that they selected different cable companies.

In 1987, Cable Video sold all of its cable television systems to Star Cablevision of Fond du Lac.

NOR-COM VIDEO, INC.

Nor-Com Video was established as the cable television subsidiary of North-West Telephone Company of Tomah. In the 1980s, North-West Telephone provided telephone service in several Wisconsin communities, including DeForest.

During the early 80s, Nor-Com acquired and built cable franchises in several nearby municipalities:

- City of Adams, Adams County
- Village of Black Earth, Dane County
- Village of Mazomanie, Dane County
- Village of Mount Horeb, Dane County
- Village of New Glarus, Green County
- Village of Poynette, Columbia County
- City of Wautoma, Waushara County

Elsewhere in the Midwest, Nor-Com acquired franchises in three Minnesota communities, Caledonia, Northfield, and Red Wing.

Most of Nor-Com's systems were served by separate headends; however, some were fed from nearby communities. In Dane County, Black Earth was fed from the Mazomanie

headend via cable.

North-West Telephone subsequently sold all of its properties, both telephone and cable television. The Nor-Com cable properties were sold to Star Cablevision of Fond du Lac, and the telephone properties were sold to CenturyTel of Monroe, Louisiana.

TELEPHONE AND DATA SYSTEMS, INC.

In the late 70s, when Telephone and Data Systems decided to enter the cable television business, it was already a well-established telephone company with operations in several states including Arizona, Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Locally, it owned (and still owns) telephone exchanges serving Black Earth, Mount Vernon, Verona, and Waunakee. Its corporate headquarters office is in Chicago, and its operations center is here in Madison.

In 1976, TDS established a subsidiary known as Verona Cable Company (VCC), and applied for the franchise in the Village of Verona. Complete Channel TV also applied for this franchise, and the resulting battle raged on for five years. Because this battle involved so many other cable companies, bits and pieces of the story have already been told elsewhere in this narrative. Nevertheless, in the interest of setting down a complete record, here's the story.

Once the Village Board had received two competing proposals, it set about the job of selecting the winning bidder. Each party claimed to have the superior offering.

CCTV was represented by Rod Thole, then the general manager, and David Walsh, an attorney with Walsh, Walsh, and Sweeney. Walsh was a well-known cable attorney at the time, representing CCTV and Total TV on a regular basis.

Thole and Walsh enumerated the

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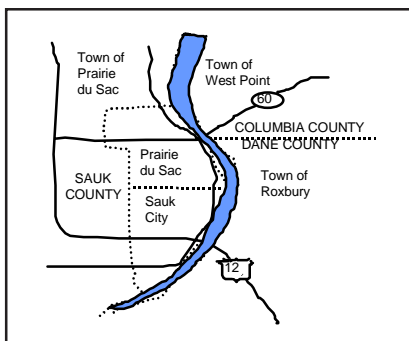


Figure 1. Sauk City and Prairie du Sac, circa 1982. Cable Video provided cable service to portions of the Towns of Prairie du Sac, Roxbury, and West Point from its Prairie du Sac headend.



Figure 2. Park entrance sign, Sauk City. Under Wisconsin law, Sauk City is a village in spite of the "city" in its name. Three other Wisconsin villages also share this distinction: Bay City (Pierce County), Junction City (Portage County), and Marathon City (Marathon County). But Cuba City (Grant County) really is a city.

TELECOM INDUSTRY NEWS (continued)

advantages of CCTV's proposal:

- CCTV would provide a wider variety of programming than VCC. CCTV's programming lineup included network-restoration offerings and late-night programming from WBBM-TV and WITI-TV.

- CCTV would provide superior technical quality because CCTV received local broadcast stations through direct electrical connections rather than off-the-air.

- CCTV would be able to start construction immediately, whereas VCC, as a subsidiary of TDS, would first have to obtain a waiver of the FCC's cross-ownership rules in order to operate a cable television system within its telephone service territory. Moreover, there was no assurance that TDS would actually get a waiver.

TDS was represented by Archer Taylor of Malarkey-Taylor Associates. At the time, Malarkey-Taylor was one of the country's leading cable television consulting firms, with expertise in both engineering and management. Martin Malarkey had been one of the founders of the National Cable Television Association and had served as its president for several years. Archer Taylor was well known and widely respected within the cable TV engineering community. Both men had been in the cable business since the early 50s.

With Taylor's assistance, TDS refuted every one of CCTV's claims:

- VCC would carry Rockford network stations, thus providing the equivalent of CCTV's network restoration service.

- VCC's picture quality would be superior, even if received off-the-air,

because it would not have to be transmitted by microwave from Madison.

- VCC would have no trouble getting a waiver of the FCC's cross-ownership rule because it intended to serve the entire telephone exchange area, not just the Village of Verona.

During public hearings, a third position was expressed by several residents — we don't need cable television anyway: "I can see those towers up in Madison from my front window so why do we need cable?"

After considerable deliberation, the Village Board awarded the franchise to Verona Cable Company.

TDS immediately filed a motion with the FCC requesting a waiver of the cross-ownership rule on grounds that it intended to provide cable television service throughout its entire telephone exchange area. Walsh, as CCTV's attorney, filed an opposition motion asserting (correctly, as it turned out) that TDS didn't really intend to serve the entire telephone exchange area, and that even if it did, it didn't have the local cable franchises authorizing it to do so.

All in all, it was an amazing display of legal firepower for a cable franchise in a community the size of Verona. But each side had a larger agenda in mind. TDS saw Verona as a key to its plan to become a nationwide cable television operator on the scale of TCI. CCTV (and its owners, TCI and Midcontinent) saw TDS as a well-funded potential competitor who could attack it in future franchise proceedings anywhere in the country.

The FCC sat on the motions for three years. By late 1980, the Village of Verona had become the City of Verona,

but the legal standoff was still dragging on. In an effort to get things moving again, the City issued another call for proposals, with the intention of issuing a second cable franchise. This time, three parties responded: CCTV, U.S. Cable of Viking, and Verona Cable Communications Group, a front name for the FCCG partners. TDS, of course, didn't have to respond because it already held a valid franchise.

The City awarded the second franchise to U.S. Cable of Viking. Viking proceeded on the assumption that it would begin construction in the spring of 1981 as soon as weather would permit.

The Friday before Viking planned to start construction, TDS received its waiver from the FCC, began construction immediately, and worked furiously through the weekend. By Monday morning, it was too late for Viking to do much except complain and threaten to file suit. Eventually, the two companies joined together in a sort of shotgun wedding: TDS finished the construction of the distribution system, and Viking built a microwave link to provide signals from its main headend in Stoughton.

Two years later, Viking's parent company, U.S. Cable Corporation, signed agreements to sell its Viking subsidiary. Under these agreements, Complete Channel TV acquired all of Vikings's wholly-owned cable television properties and its AML microwave network — essentially everything that U.S. Cable had owned except its interest in the Verona system. TDS acquired U.S. Cable's interest in the Verona system.

At this point, TDS owned the cable distribution network in Verona, but it didn't own a headend: it was still

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5727 Tokay Boulevard
Madison, Wisconsin 53719

(608) 274-1234
Fax: (608) 274-9514



Daryl Snowden Paul Jensen

Office 608-884-8205 Office 608-255-0529
Fax 608-884-6021 Fax 608-255-2599
Mobile 608-751-8284 Mobile 608-235-8559



Belden Wire & Cable Company
4218 South Regal Manor Court
New Berlin, Wisconsin 53151

Phone: 414 827 0270
Facsimile: 414 827 0374
Phone Mail: 800 241 7564
Box 2611

Jan Reesman
Sales Representative <http://www.belden.com>

TELECOM INDUSTRY NEWS (conclusion)

receiving signals from Viking's old Stoughton headend. And that headend was now owned by its old rival, Complete Channel TV. CCTV had already announced its intention to dismantle it as part of its plan to integrate the old Viking network into its own network.

Given the history of the relationship between CCTV and TDS, this could have been an explosive situation. But in the two years since the last divisive franchise battles in Verona, things had settled down. New managers had taken over at both companies: Richard Wegner was general manager at CCTV, and Conrad Marks was in charge of all of TDS's cable operations. Wegner and Marks were old friends: they had worked together at Viking Media Corporation back in the 70s when the Carleys still owned it.

The whole issue was resolved in one meeting: TDS would build a new headend, and CCTV would keep the Stoughton headend alive until TDS' new headend was on line.

A few weeks later, TDS cut the Verona system over to its new headend. Seven years after it first applied for the Verona cable franchise, it had finally achieved its original goal: it owned 100% of the cable television system in Verona.

Two years later, it sold it to Star Cablevision.

STAR CABLEVISION GROUP

And that brings us to Star Cablevision. Although Star was not one of the original Dane County cable operators, it acquired several cable systems in the county through acquisitions. By 1988, it had purchased the cable television assets of Cable

Video, Nor-Com, and TDS.

Star had been founded several years earlier by Donald G. Jones of Fond du Lac. At the time, Jones was a principal in several other communications properties, including KFIZ (AM), Fond du Lac, and WLIP (FM), Kenosha. Jones acquired the cable franchise in the City of Fond du Lac in 1979, and entered the cable business under the name Lakeside Cablevision. During the 80s, the company was renamed Star Cablevision, and began acquiring other cable systems. Over the next several years, it became one of the largest cable companies in the Midwest.

By 1990, Star owned approximately 375 cable systems in Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, serving almost 230,000 basic subscribers. Besides the properties it had acquired from Cable Video, Nor-Com, and TDS, Star also owned several other Wisconsin properties. A partial list includes Algoma, Boscobel, Brillion, Brodhead, Burlington, Cuba City, Darlington, Mauston, Medford, Minocqua, Monroe, Montello, Muscoda, Necedah, Neillsville, Omro, Park Falls, Palmyra, Poynette, Prairie du Chien, Sheboygan, Spencer, Two Rivers, Viroqua, Wautoma, West Bend, and Whitewater.

Several of these properties (Cuba City, Darlington, Muscoda, Whitewater) were among the cable franchises originally obtained by Niall Communications Group. That name has appeared elsewhere in this narrative: Niall's partners, Jack O'Neill and George Walker, were among the original applicants for the franchise in the Town of Fitchburg (see FITCHBURG in last month's article).

In addition to his various media interests, Jones was active in political

affairs on behalf of the Republican Party. During George Bush's presidential campaigns, Jones was Wisconsin's only member of Bush's "Team 100": a person who had, as an individual, contributed \$100,000 to the Republican National Committee ("Newt's Captain in Cyberspace," The New Yorker, August 7, 1995, pp. 25-26).

In the early 90s, Jones began selling off his cable properties. Most of them, including all of Star's Dane County properties, were acquired by Marcus Cable.

And with that, we end this narrative. The subsequent history of Star's Dane County cable systems, once they became part of Marcus Cable, was reported in last month's article.

AND SO THE BATTLE ENDS

And so the great franchise battles of the early 80s fade into history. The four companies that fought it out in Fitchburg and Verona have all sold out:

- Complete Channel TV, Inc. became part of TCI, which then sold it to Bresnan.
- Fitchburg Cable Communications Group (which also called itself Verona Cable Communications Group) became part of Jones Intercable, then Jones Crown Partners, then Crown Media, then Marcus, and finally, Charter.
- TDS' subsidiary Verona Cable Company became part of Star Cablevision, then Marcus, then Charter.
- U.S. Cable of Viking became part of Complete Channel TV, which then became part of TCI, then Bresnan.

By the time this story ends a few months from now, they'll all be part of Charter Communications.

And Sauk City and Prairie du Sac will finally have the same cable television company.

Disclosure: I have been employed by two of the companies named in this article: Complete Channel TV (1976-1979 and 1983-1986) and Niall Communications Group (1979-1981).



Visit Chapter 24 On the Web

<http://www.sbe24.org>

Steve Paugh is the editor for the Electronic Version of this Newsletter, uploaded monthly onto SBE Chapter 24's web page.



FCC Rulemakings

Compiled By Tom Smith

PROPOSED RULEMAKINGS

MM Docket No. 99-262; FCC 99-389
Establishment of a Class A
Television Service; Comments
Suspended

The FCC has suspended the filing of comments in the matter of the establishment of a Class A Television service. This action was in response to legislation passed by Congress and signed into law that was titled the Community Broadcasters Act of 1999. This law requires the FCC to establish regulations by rulemaking within 120 days of the signing of this Act to create a Class A Television Service. The service is for low power TV stations that meets certain criteria as dictated in the Act. The criteria set in the legislation more closely limits the provisions of the rules for Class A TV service than the notice of rulemaking did. Because of these limitations, the FCC suspended comments on the issue.

The suspension became effective on December 14, 1999 with the comment period originally set to end on December 21, 1999. The notice was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on December 22, 1999 on pages 71,712-71,713.

CS Docket No. 99-363; FCC 99-406
Implementation of the Satellite
Home Viewer Improvement Act of
1999: Retransmission Consent
Issues

This rulemaking is the result of the Satellite Home Viewer Act of 1999 which allows satellite and other multichannel video providers to carry local TV broadcast signals that due to

compulsory licensing provisions of the copyright law were previously prohibited. The provisions of the Act seeks to place satellite carriers on a equal footing with cable operators by making broadcast programming available to satellite subscribers, thus adding to the consumers choice of video service providers.

The Commission requests comment on the process for negotiating retransmission consent between broadcasters and video providers. The FCC is suggesting the use of the cable retransmission and must-carry process in the Cable Act of 1992 as a model. Must carry rules with satellite providers will be subject to a later rulemaking, as that part of the Act does not become effective until January 1, 2002.

The Act requires that broadcasters negotiate in good faith with satellite and other video providers concerning retransmission consent and must-carry, and the FCC seeks comments on what defines good faith negotiations. Comments are sought on both the actual negotiations and the handling of any fee differences that stations could charge different video providers.

The Act also prohibits stations from entering into exclusive contracts with video providers. A station must make its signal available to anyone. The FCC is seeking comments on the what activities would constitute engaging in exclusive agreements and language describing such actions.

Comments were due on January 12, 2000 with replies due on January 19, 2000 for the Exclusivity and Good Faith parts of the notice. Comments

on the Retransmission Constant Process are due on February 1, 2000 with replies due February 20, 2000. Comments from the public on the entire notice are due on February 1, 2000 also. The notice was adopted on December 21, 1999 and released on December 22, 1999. It was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on December 29, 1999 on pages 72,985-72,992.

MM Docket No. 99-360; FCC 99-390
In the Matter of Public Interest
Obligations of TV Broadcast
Licensees

The FCC has issued a notice of rulemaking concerning the public interest requirements for DTV stations. This notice deals with a large number of issues, including a number which are resurrected from the past and were eliminated by past deregulation. Many of the proposals were based on recommendations by the Presidents Advisory Committee on the Public Interest Obligations of Digital Broadcasters and from a petition from the group People for Better TV.

The FCC has listed four categories of issues concerning the proposed public interest obligations for digital broadcasting. The first category pertains to the new opportunities of digital. Should any obligations be evenly applied to all the digital services or just the primary program channel. The Commission is asking if requirements for childrens programming, public service programming, and political advertising should be applied equally to each channel in the multicast mode or should the requirements be considered for all programming in total that is transmitted over the whole DTV channel. The FCC would like comments if information on data channels should be included in the obligations.

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7847 BIG SKY DRIVE
 MADISON, WISCONSIN 53719
 (608)833-0047 • FAX(608)833-5055



JAMES F. DOHERTY
 Traffic Supervisor
 Satellite & Video Services

Norlight
 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

275 NORTH CORPORATE DRIVE
 BROOKFIELD, WI 53045-5818
 414.792.7708 FAX: 414.792.7717
 e-mail: jfd@norlight.com

Tom Sibenaller
 Sales Representative

ROSCOR

Roscor Wisconsin
 W6428 Schilling Road
 Onalaska, WI 54650
 phone: 608-784-6702
 fax: 608-785-0505
 e-mail: tsibenaller@rosacor.com

FCC RULEMAKINGS (continued)

The Second category concerns responding to the community. Emergency information to the community is one issue in this category. Should stations be required via their DTV data streams and their web sites on the internet to supply emergency information to the neighborhood level. Closed caption and descriptive video obligations are also discussed. The section of the community concerns that may have the most connection with past regulation is what is called disclosure obligations. This concerns a stations public file and what is required to be placed in it. The FCC has a number of proposals including adding new categories of information, such as diversity issues and the use of ascertainment or surveys of community needs. Ascertainment was eliminated in the 1980's and the People for Better TV would like broadcasters to conduct them again. The FCC also suggested the broadcasters make their public files available on their websites and by other electronic means.

The third category is disability and diversity. The use of new methods of closed captioning and descriptive video were discussed, as was increasing broadcasters obligations for providing these services. Increased access to the media by diverse groups in this country was another issue raised. Besides requiring broadcasters to show in their public file what programming they have provided to serve these groups, the FCC is proposing that one of the returned analog channels in each viewing community be reserved for non-commercial use with the station including programming for minority and other underserved groups.

The last category is political discourse. There are a number of

proposals in this category. One is that broadcasters provide five minutes each evening for political discourse for 30 days before elections. Broadcasters would be able to choose formats. A second proposal would require broadcasters to provide twenty minutes of airtime for candidates for 30 days before a general election in even number years and for 15 days before a general election in odd numbered years. Broadcasters would be prohibited from adopting blanket bans on the sale of airtime for political adds.

There are a lot of issues in this notice of inquiry and they could have a larger impact on shaping DTV and possibly all of broadcasting. Comments are due on March 27, 2000 and replies are due on April 25, 2000. This notice was adopted on December 15, 1999 and released on December 20, 1999.

FINAL RULEMAKING

CS Docket No. 98-201; FCC 99-276 Satellite Delivery of Network Signals to Unserved Households for Purposes of the Satellite Home Viewer Act.

The notice revises the rules concerning the testing of signals at a viewers home to determine if they are eligible to receiver network TV service via broadcast satellite, instead of receiving it from a regular broadcast TV station. Viewers are restricted from receiving the signals from ABC, CBS, FOX, and NBC from DirectTV and Echostar if they are within a stations Grade B coverage, unless there is some obstruction that prevents reception. Stations may use a form of the Longley-Rice method or field measurements to determine eligibility.

In this notice, the FCC rejected modifications to the Longley-Rice

method of prediction as requested by DirectTV due to insufficient details. The FCC did clarify the test methods to be used at a viewer's home.

Tests may be conducted with dipole or multi-element antenna with known gain. The test must be done at five locations at least three meters apart with the antenna at height of 20 feet. The same locations should be used when testing multiple signals. Antennas should be pointed to maximize signal. The antenna is to be horizontally polarized with shielded cable used and properly matched. The field strength meter should have a bandwidth of 200 kilohertz to one megahertz. A written record is required of the calibration and description of the equipment, the results of the measurements, description of the site such as foliage, terrain, weather, and obstacles and time and date of test. The FCC also states that the weather while testing should not be inclement or changing such as when a front moves through.

These rules were adopted on October 5, 1999 and released on October 7, 1999. They became effective on December 30, 1999 when they were published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on Pages 73,429-73,434.


From the FEDERAL REGISTER
(www.access.gpo.gov) and FCC
Notices (www.fcc.gov)

SBE RESUME SERVICE

Want to get your resume out to employers? Participate in SBE's new Resume Service, available to SBE members only free of charge. Call the SBE National Office at (317) 253-1640 or e-mail Scott Jones at kjones@sbe.org for a Resume Service participation form.

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SBE Short Circuits – January 2000

By John Poray, CAE
SBE Executive Director

2000 BRINGS NEW LEADER SKILLS SEMINARS

After three years of sponsoring five-day Leader Skills seminars for broadcast engineers, the Society of Broadcast Engineers, in cooperation with instructor Richard Cupka, will modify the program for 2000.

The program will essentially be split into two parts. Course I will be held over three days, June 7-9 in Indianapolis and will provide the essentials to understanding leadership styles of yourself and others. It will provide the technical individual the basics on how to manage other people successfully. Course II, to be held August 16-18, also in Indianapolis, will pick up where Course I left off, going into further depth and providing the participant with a solid foundation to manage others.

The cost for each course is \$425, which includes instruction, materials and refreshment breaks. Transportation, hotel and meals are additional. Those wishing to attend Course II must have attended either Course I or any of the SBE or NAB sponsored Leader Skills programs held since 1965. Registration Forms will be available in the March issue of the SBE SIGNAL, from the SBE National Office or through the SBE web site, www.sbe.org, after January 15.

SBE MEMBERS GET DISCOUNT ON NAB SPRING CONVENTION

Once again, SBE members will be able to register for the NAB Spring Convention in Las Vegas at the NAB Member rate, a savings of \$330. NAB has begun sending registration

materials for the April 2000 event. They also have on-line registration available at their web site: www.nab.org. If your station is not a member of NAB, be sure to take advantage of this great SBE member benefit. The savings are equal to SIX times the cost of ONE year of SBE membership!

AS 2000 BEGINS, MILLENNIUM PROJECT ENDS SUCCESSFULLY

Since early in 1999, SBE has been offering an opportunity to engineers with lapsed certifications to have those certifications restored without taking a test. The Millennium Project ended on December 31. During that time more than 60 people took advantage of the offer.

If you have questions about recertification, contact your local Certification Chairman, or Certification Director, Linda Godby-Emerick at the SBE National Office. You can also get information on recertification at the SBE web site, www.sbe.org.

REGIONAL SBE CONVENTIONS COMING UP

A number of SBE chapters offer opportunities to attend a regional SBE convention or conference near home. Most of these events are very inexpensive or free, and take minimal time away from your work and free time.

Coming up February 29 – March 1: Great Lakes Broadcasting Expo Lansing Center, Lansing, Michigan
Contact: Michigan Assn. of Broadcasters (517) 484-7444.
Engineering sessions organized by Chapter 91, Lansing, MI.

Questions and comments about SBE may be e-mailed directly to Executive Director, John Poray at jporay@sbe.org.


Jon Gedymin *Reginal Sales Manager Broadcast Video*

617 Lake Road
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
Tel 800.477.6111 ext 2263
Fax 414.569.0966
jgedymin@pinnacleSYS.com

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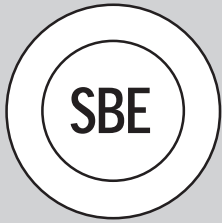


FIRST CLASS MAIL

Newsletter edited on Pagemaker 5.0 by: Mike Norton
Contributors this month: Lloyd Berg, Kevin Ruppert, Neal McLain, Tom Smith, and Tom Weeden.
Thanks to Leonard Charles for his work on the Chapter 24 WWW page.

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JANUARY MEETING and PROGRAM



**Society of Broadcast Engineers
CHAPTER 24 MADISON, WISCONSIN
Wednesday, January 19, 2000**

Testing ITU-R 601 Digital Video Systems

Jim Edwards of Tektronix will be on hand to give a presentation on testing component serial digital video. There will also be a demonstration of some digital monitoring equipment.

**Dutch Treat Dinner
at 5:30pm**

**at Babes Grill & Bar
5614 Schroeder Road**

**Meeting and Program
at 7:00pm**

Visitors and guests are welcome at all of our SBE meetings!

2000 UPCOMING MEETING/PROGRAM DATES:

Day	Date	Program
Thursday	February 24	To Be Announced

Program Committee:	Kerry Maki 833-0047	Denise Maney 277-8001	Steve Zimmerman 274-1234	Mark Croom 271-1025	Steve Paugh 277-5139
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