



USDTV FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY

By Tom Smith

USDTV has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy on July 6th in Delaware. USDTV was a provider of a low cost alternative to cable and satellite TV. They provide twelve channels of subscription television using excess capacity of local broadcasters DTV transmissions. USDTV was founded in 2003 and had 16,000 subscribers in four markets. The cost of subscription was \$19.95. USDTV started its service in Salt Lake City where it was headquartered and expanded to Albuquerque, Las Vegas, and Dallas. Last year, a number of broadcasters invested \$26 million in USDTV. They included the FOX Television Stations Inc., Hearst-Argyle Television Inc., McGraw-Hill Broadcasting, Lin TV Corp., Telcom DTV LLC and Morgan Murphy Stations. The company has assets of between \$1 million to \$10 million and liabilities of \$15 million.

Steve Lindsley, founder and CEO said that must carry issues on cable and lack of new broadcast partners was the cause of the need to file for bankruptcy. In filing for Chapter 7, the company will be sold or liquidated and Lindsley has said that there was an interested party. A creditors meeting was to be held on August 3rd and the new owners would be announced and operations be taken over by September 1st.

Broadcasting and Cable did an editorial that underscored the problem with USDTV filing for bankruptcy. The problem they stated that broadcasters had was coming up with a viable economic plan for their digital spectrum. *B & C* seemed to feel that multi-casting coupled with low cost programming was the way to go. Part of USDTV's problem according to *B & C* was the need for subsidizing the sale of the set-top box and a turnover of half of its subscribers yearly due to non-payment or dissatisfaction of the limited choice of programming.

USDTV had about 120 employees and nearly all were laid off. Even though
(continued on page 4)

Strategic Planning Meeting July 8: Special Report

By Barry Thomas, CPBE CBNT

The Society of Broadcast Engineers convened a meeting to establish strategic plans for the Society on July 8 in conjunction with a scheduled gathering of its executive committee in Kansas City, MO. The last meeting was five years ago and resulted in many services we now enjoy as a part of Society membership. Thirty-four members attended the meeting and represented 24 different chapters and included 11 of the 17 SBE Board Members, all national officers and three members of the national office staff.

The attendees represented the wide scope of opinions, geographic origins and backgrounds that comprise the SBE membership. Many chapters sponsored the travel for their representative and held their own discussions to prepare for the meeting. The time commitment for the attendees was significant since the session was scheduled from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, including a short break for a shared lunch. The result was a lively and productive discourse and a strong consensus on the focus of SBE in the coming years. The group was all smiles after a full day of collaborating. The result was countless, great, new

ideas for the future of SBE.

SBE hired an experienced meeting facilitator, Kristine Rahavy, to manage the meeting. Her skill was extremely effective in engendering discourse, articulating shared priorities and distilling the concerns of the attendees to salient thoughts and actionable steps. The meeting concentrated on a two to five year view in order to make the most realistic projections about the industry. Attendees were seated using a creative method of random placement that allowed the entire room to communicate productively. The gathering was

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Next Meeting:

**Wednesday,
August 16, 2006**

**Wi-Fi – Understanding
and Using Wireless
Ethernet**

**Dutch Treat Dinner
at 5:30 PM
Griff's Restaurant &
Frozen Custard
1233 McKenna Blvd**

**Meeting and Program
at 7:00 PM
WISC-TV Studio B
7025 Raymond Road**

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July Business Meeting Minutes

On July 18, 2006, Chapter 24 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers met at the offices of the Educational Communications Board. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM. There were 11 members present of which 8 were certified.

The minutes of the June meeting were approved on a motion by Leonard Charles which was seconded by Tom Weeden after Steve Paugh requested the a correction that the spelling of Statmon Technologies be made.

Treasurer Leslie Franzen gave the report on the balance in the Chapter checking account and Chair Cliff Groth gave a brief summary of the National Financial Report. Newsletter editor Mike Norton reported that the deadline for the August newsletter was midnight on August 4th and the folding party at WKOW would be on August 7th.

Steve Paugh reported that the program for this evening was changed due to the break down of the Orban demo truck and a death in the family of the representative from Statmon Technologies.

Secretary Tom Smith reported that he had received a call from the Chair of the National SBE awards committee on Friday, July 14th announcing that the Chapter had won awards for Best Newsletter in Class B and for Best Frequency Coordination Effort.

Sustaining membership Chair Fred Sperry reported that there were five sustaining member renewals bringing the total number of sustaining members to 22. The renewing sustaining members are Belden, Token Creek Productions, Roscor, Full Compass and Madison Video Repair.

Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith reported that Entercom had a couple of Prior Coordination Notification notices out for STLs for their Madison stations, and that the Telecom Act containing a law that would allow for unlicensed wireless systems on the TV broadcast bands had passed out of a Senate committee. It was noted that with summer recesses and the fall elections, the bill may not be passed this year. There was a brief discussion on the unlicensed systems on the TV broadcast band proposal and the bill.

National Liaison Leonard Charles noted that the July newsletter had all pertinent information on the National office. He did note that Megan Clappe was replacing Linda Baun who has started work with the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.

Certification Chair Jim Hermanson said that there were three recent recertifications and that the deadline for application for the November Certification tests was September 22nd.

In new business Cliff Groth started a discussion on certification procedures. The main issue was with the amount of paperwork needed for applying for recertification. Discussion centered on

(continued on page 7)

AMATEUR RADIO NEWS

By Tom Weeden, WJ9H

• An FCC that's still optimistic and enthusiastic about Broadband over Power line (BPL) met August 3 to consider and unanimously adopt a Memorandum Opinion and Order (MO&O) in response to several petitions for reconsideration of its BPL rules — including one from the American Radio Relay League. But one commissioner stressed that the FCC has an obligation to protect Amateur Radio operators from BPL interference and to respond promptly to interference complaints. The FCC suggested it was attempting to strike a balance between interference to licensed services and the BPL industry's needs.

"This rule making proceeding was initiated to provide regulatory certainty that will encourage investments in BPL, particularly so that consumers can reap the benefits," an FCC Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) official told the commissioners. "Equally important, the Commission sought to ensure that licensed radio services are protected against harmful interference." The OET said the Commission also wanted to provide guidance so compliance measurements "are made in a consistent manner with repeatable results."

The FCC adopted its current BPL rules — under a new Subpart G of its Part 15 rules governing unlicensed devices — in October 2004.

Commenting after the OET's presentation of the MO&O, Commissioner Michael J. Copps reiterated that the FCC must also ensure that BPL providers protect existing spectrum users from interference. "This applies with special force to Amateur Radio operators whose skills and dedication once again proved so valuable in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina," Copps remarked. "Amateur radio serves the public interest in so many ways that we must be always mindful of its needs." Copps said he believes the FCC's MO&O "strikes an acceptable balance," but added that the Commission "must be available and positioned to respond to interference complaints with alacrity. Amateur operators shouldn't have to wait for months to get complaints resolved — they deserve better."

As his predecessor Michael Powell did before him, FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin led the cheering squad for BPL, which, he said, "holds great promise as a ubiquitous broadband solution that would offer a viable alternative to cable, digital subscriber line, fiber, and wireless broadband solutions."

His Republican colleague Deborah T. Tate echoed Martin's enthusiasm, calling the FCC's goal of ubiquitous broadband deployment in the US "an exciting prospect." She went on to say that the FCC will continue to find an appropriate balance between regulation to mitigate potential negative 'side effects' that accompany BPL "and a hands-off approach that gives BPL the room it needs to develop in a free market." She said the MO&O "strikes the right balance with minimal regulatory burdens."

• A bill to enhance emergency communication at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) includes Amateur Radio operators as part of an overall effort to provide interoperability among responders. The 21st Century Emergency Communications Act of 2006 (HR 5852), an amendment to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, passed the US House on a 414-2 vote and has gone to the Senate. Its sponsor, Rep David G. Reichert (R-WA) — who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology — says his legislation is designed "to improve the ability of emergency responders to communicate with each other" — interoperability.

"Until the events of September 11, 2001, many people in this nation believed and assumed that first responders from different disciplines and jurisdictions could actually talk to each other," Reichert — a former police officer — told the House in support of his bill. "It wasn't happening. It is still not happening today. Unfortunately, that was not the case then, and, as demonstrated by the inadequate responses to Hurricane Katrina, that is not the case today."

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USDTV FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY (continued from page 1)

they continue to provide programming, their website stated that they were unable to take calls or answer e-mails concerning subscriber problems.

In visits to a couple of DTV forums on the web, the general consensus of the viewers forums was the possible loss of USDTV was a good thing as stations would not have an incentive to reduce bandwidth of their high-definition

signal. They complained about the poor HD pictures because of bandwidth loss due to bandwidth going to USDTV programming.

In England, a subscription DTV service was tried first and failed; when a free multicast service was created, DTV took off with a sizable number of set-top boxes having been sold for the reception of the Freeview service. The

Broadcasting and Cable article quoted Lin TV CEO Vince Sadusky that it took a while to develop a web strategy and that "Anyone who says they've got the answer is lying" concerning DTV.

From Broadcasting and Cable (www.broadcastingcable.com), *the Daily Herald* (www.heraldsextra.com) and *the Deseret News* (www.deseretnews.com)

Strategic Planning Meeting (continued from page 1)

composed of small discussions and large group activities which allowed independent debate to occur, and emphasized the emerging and obvious priorities shared by the members. The result of the meeting was strong consensus and action items to improve industry involvement and service, and grow membership.

Ms. Rahavy will be providing a written report of the meeting outlining all aspects of the discussions and the results of the group's deliberations. The Strategic Planning Committee will meet after receiving that report and recommend further actions to the full SBE Board of Directors at the SBE National Meeting, September 26, 2006 in Verona, NY. In anticipation of that report the Executive Committee was able to identify at least seven immediate action items that will immediately result in improved service and activity.

No idea was too "off the wall" for facilitator Kristine Rahavy not to write on paper. At the end of the day, Over 280 ideas were displayed on the walls.

The most widely understood issue is that broadcast engineers and the Society specifically can do a better job in marketing themselves. To that end, SBE is expanding press release distribution to include major wire

services and working to increase the frequency of notices to publicize Society activities. SBE will also better publicize and explain the work of its important FCC and regulatory actions. SBE will work hard to explain and publicize the important work done to improve or protect the activities of the working engineer.

Most attendees related that SBE should be more involved in local and state associations. This is an area best managed by the individual chapters but SBE National understands there are things that can be done at the national level to encourage interactivity. SBE will be contacting the National Alliance of State Broadcasting Associations (NASBA) with the intention of discussing how SBE can serve and interface with the associations on an ongoing basis. Part of that discussion will be a reminder of the extensive education and certification services SBE provides.

SBE is preparing a "web toolkit" that will help chapters construct their own web sites that will support and improved the SBE brand throughout the industry. It is hoped that the result will be better and more recognizable chapter presences on the Internet.

Attendees also recognized the need to attract new and young talent to the

industry. The Executive Committee identified a few immediate actions to encourage participation by researching related Internet discussion groups on sites such as Yahoo and Myspace. SBE is also beginning to draft an independent study course outline for schools to use for a broadcast engineering curriculum.

SBE considers the meeting an exceptional success and has taken immediate steps to increase the forward momentum. You will see the results of these activities in Society services in the near term and ongoing.

Broadcasters Clinic Early Bird Registration

Attendees can now register for the 2006 Broadcasters Clinic, to be held October 24 - 26 at the Marriott West in Madison. The schedule including an array of topics, can be seen at www.sbe24.org.

A discount will be given for registrations received by September 4, 2006. For more information contact the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, or visit their website at www.wi-broadcasters.org.



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FCC Rulemakings

Compiled by Tom Smith

PROPOSED RULEMAKING

MB Docket No. 06-121
2006 Quadrennial Regulatory
Review-Review of the
Commission's Broadcast
Ownership Rules and Other Rules
Adopted Pursuant to Section 202
of the Telecommunications Act of
1996

MB Docket No. 02-277
2002 Biennial Regulatory Review-
Review of the Commission's
Broadcast Ownership Rules and
Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to
Section 202 of the
Telecommunications Act of 1996

MM Docket No. 01-235
Cross-Ownership of Broadcast
Stations and Newspapers
MM Docket No. 01-317
Rules and Policies Concerning
Multiple Ownership of Radio
Broadcast Stations in Local
Markets

MM Docket No. 00-244
Definition of Radio Markets

On July 24th, the FCC released the full report and order of the Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making concerning ownership rules of broadcast stations. The most interesting part of this order is that it is only 35 pages long including the Commissioner's comments and the standard legal notices that go in every notice. The actual discussion of the rulemaking is 16 pages. A press release, fact sheet and the Commissioner's comments were released on June 24th after the action on the order was taken. See last month's newsletter for the information.

The report and order focuses on ownership rules concerning local TV

ownership rules, local radio ownership rules, cross-media limits (joint broadcast/newspaper ownership), dual network rules and the UHF discount rules. Limits on the amount of stations that can be owned nationally are not addressed in the rulemaking. The main focus of the local TV and radio limits and the cross-media ownership limits seems to be on the fact that these rules were remanded back to the Commission by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in response to a suit from the Prometheus Radio Project on September 3, 2003. The case is Prometheus Radio Project et al. v. FCC No. 03-3388.

The court ruled that that the FCC rules allowing for greater local ownership limits for TV and radio and newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership were valid, but they questioned the methods the Commission used to arrive at the numbers they used to set the limits. The Commission asks for more guidance on coming up with limits that will satisfy the Court. The court felt that the rules should deal with audience reach more than based on a portion of the number of stations in a market.

The other two parts of the rulemaking questions asks if the Dual Network Rule and UHF discount should be continued. Currently the owners of ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC can own a second broadcast network as long as it is not one of the other of those four. The Commission asks if this rule was still necessary as result of new completion. The UHF discount rule says that the audience a UHF station counts for half the amount as that of a VHF station. That means that because the audience is less, one could own stations in more markets before reaching the 39% national audience cap that sets TV ownership limits.

One may need to get a copy of the Prometheus decision to address some of the questions that the Commission raises in the report and order.

The Commission in its release said that the comment period would be 120 days. They have set the comment period from the date the report and order was released, July 24th with comments due on September 22nd and reply comment due on November 21st. The interesting thing about this comments period that both the comment and reply periods are both 60 days. Normally the reply period is half of the comment period. The FCC has also waived the EX Parte Sunshine Prohibition by accepting comments that were filed between the June 24, 2006 meeting where the issue was taken up the July 24th release of the report and order. They had received numerous comments during that period and stated that in order to assemble a full record they would accept those comments. The FCC also has a web page on the ownership rulemaking that can be accessed for a link on the FCC home page.

WT Docket No. 06-150; CC Docket
No. 94-102, and
WT Docket No. 01-309
Service Rules For the 698-746, 747-
762 and 777-792 MHz band,
Revision of the Rules to Ensure
Compatibility with Enhanced E 911
Emergency Calling Systems:
Section 68.4 (A) of the
Commission's Rules Governing
Hearing Aid-Compatible
Telephones

The FCC is seeking comment on if they should change rules concerning the spectrum that they will recover after the transition to DTV. This is in preparation for the auctions that Congress has ordered for 2008.

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FCC Rulemakings (continued from page 5)

The Commission is asking for comment on if the spectrum blocks should be modified, power limits adjusted or license terms and renewals changed. The Commission also asks if the geographic service areas to be auctioned should be changed. Currently the FCC auctions license areas either based on six large areas covering several states or 734 smaller markets covering parts of one or more counties. Most of the remaining auctions in this band are currently based on the six large areas. The Commission also wants to know if they should set benchmarks for construction of the systems after the licenses are issued.

The part on hearing aid and 911 compatibly relate to the use of these bands for phone service.

Broadcasters should be aware of any changes to the rules to these bands, as digital broadcast services are allowed in the 698-746 Band as Qualcomm is doing with their video service on Channels 55 nationwide.

The Notice was adopted on August 3rd with a press release issued that day. The report and order is not out yet, nor has the comment period been set.

RM-11338

Petition for Rulemaking of the National Association of Broadcasters to Permit AM Radio Stations' Use of FM Translators

The National Association of Broadcasters has filed a petition with the FCC to allow AM stations to use FM translators, which is not presently allowed. There have been previous requests for permission to allow AM stations to use FM translators, which have been rejected.

The NAB is proposing the AM stations be allowed to use FM translators as long as the 60 DBU (1 mV) contour of the FM translator does not extend past the 2 mV/m contour of the AM station or a circle with its center at the AM transmitter and a radius of 25 miles. The main purpose of these translators would be to fill in areas that the AM station has difficulty in serving due to interference or shielding. The NAB noted that there were increasing sources of interference to AM stations that they were unable to overcome. It would also help stations that operate with very low power limits during pre and post sunset and critical hours particularly after the changes in daylight savings time that start next year.

The NAB has also asked that the program origination restriction on FM translators be modified to allow daytime stations to operate an FM translator at night with programming that they would normally carry if they could operate at night. This would allow a station to carry a local high school game live instead of delaying it until the next day or not carrying it at all.

The NAB noted that the rules would be similar to that for FM stations in the commercial band, which only allow translators within their 60 dbu contour for the purpose of filling in problem areas and not extending coverage.

The NAB recently opposed a petition to allow FM translators to originate programming (RM-11331 Miller Communications, Inc.) and said that proposal would be creating a new program service, where a daytime AM station would be an enhancement to an existing service.

The petition was filed on July 14th and comments are due on August 24th.

FINAL RULEMAKING

ET Docket No. 04-37; 03-104 Amendment of Part 15 Regarding New Requirements and Measurements Guidelines for Access over Power Lines Systems; Carrier Current Systems; including Broadband over Power Line Systems

On August 3rd, the FCC adopted and affirmed a number of rules allowing for Access Broadband Over Power Lines. The FCC denied a request by the amateur radio community to prohibit BPL operations until further study and exclude BPL from Ham bands. They also denied requests from broadcasters not to use frequencies above 50 MHz, from the aeronautical industry to exclude frequencies reserved for certain aeronautical operations on certain low voltage lines, and requests by the gas and petroleum industry to be considered public safety entities.

The FCC reaffirmed its emission limits for BPL service including a reduction of 20 db below normal part 15 emissions, a July 7, 2006 deadline for equipment certification with some grandfathering of older equipment, and a requirement to provide a public database 30 days before operations are deployed. The FCC adopted changes regarding protection of radio astronomy stations and for continuing protection of aeronautical stations that are relocated.

A press release and the Commissioner's comments were release with the full report and order to be released later.

From FCC releases (www.fcc.gov), the NAB (www.nab.org) and Radio World Online (www.rwonline.com)

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

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



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July Business Meeting Minutes (continued)

recertification intervals, if the National could setup a web based account, so only new information would be need to be added at recertification time and generally making filing easier.

Ideas were requested for the Broadcast Clinic Program as well as for future monthly meeting programs.

Cliff reported on a recent article in Radio World on the SBE. Leonard Charles noted that the new EAS plan for the State of Wisconsin was posted on the Chapter Website.

The meeting was adjourned and Cliff Groth presented a demonstration on HD radio using both a HD radio and HD monitor.

Submitted By Tom Smith, Secretary

Chapter 24 Seeking Editor

Could you be the next newsletter editor? Are you an aspiring technical writer that can explain the technology? Chapter 24 is seeking a volunteer to become the next editor of the award-winning Chapter 24 newsletter. Good PC skills are helpful and experience with PageMaker for Windows a plus.

Please contact the Chapter Chair for more information.

Amateur Radio News (continued from page 3)

Reichert told his colleagues that the inability of first responders to communicate with each another effectively led to the loss of many lives along the US Gulf Coast last year. "This is simply unacceptable," he said.

His measure also would require the DHS to strengthen its efforts to improve emergency communications. HR 5852 calls for Amateur Radio operators to be part of a "Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group" (RECC Working Group) that would be attached to each regional Department of Homeland Security office. The RECC Working Groups would advise federal and state homeland security officials.

In addition to radio amateurs, membership in the RECC Working Groups would include state and local officials, law enforcement, first responders such as fire departments, 911 centers, hospitals, ambulance services, communications equipment vendors, telephone, wireless satellite, broadband and cable service providers, public utilities, and broadcasters.

(Excerpts from the Amercian Radio Relay League web site, www.arrl.org)

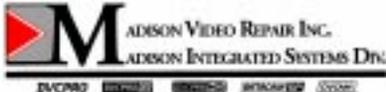
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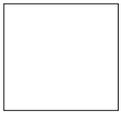


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SBE Chapter 24 Newsletter
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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Thanks to Leonard Charles for his work on the Chapter 24 WWW page.

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AUGUST MEETING and PROGRAM



Society of Broadcast Engineers CHAPTER 24 MADISON, WISCONSIN Wednesday, August 16, 2006

Wi-Fi – UNDERSTANDING AND USING WIRELESS ETHERNET

This month's program will be a discussion of Wireless Ethernet, aka "Wi-Fi." Jim Hermanson will discuss Wi-Fi's use, RF, and security considerations. Attendees will learn how to optimally configure Wi-Fi equipment and use security, with simple techniques and tools. Jim is a Microsoft Certified Professional, recently earned three IT certificates at MATC, is A+, SBE CPBE and CBNT certified, is employed as a staff engineer for Television Wisconsin, Inc and as an IS Technical Services Professional for the Wisconsin Department of Administration/DET, and serves as Chapter 24's Certification/Education chair.

Dutch Treat Dinner at 5:30 PM
Griff's Restaurant & Frozen Custard
1233 McKenna Blvd (across from Elver Park)
(no reservation - just gather together)

Meeting and Program at 7:00PM
WISC-TV Studio B
7025 Raymond Road

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

2006 UPCOMING MEETING/PROGRAM DATES:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>
Thursday	September 14, 2006	Dane County Airport Tour
Wednesday	October 25, 2006	Broadcast Clinic
Tuesday	November 14, 2006	WireCAD

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