



Society of Broadcast Engineers Newsletter

Chapter 24
Madison, Wisconsin

February 2007

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Next Meeting

Thursday, Feb. 15

RF Path Predictions & Nominations

SBE member Tom Weeden, WJ9H, will demonstrate how to predict and analyze RF paths using a freeware program, RadioMobile, written by a Canadian amateur radio operator. Using public domain databases you can predict your coverage area. Tom will show you how to use it for broadcast applications and the originally intended amateur applications.

Parking is limited at the WMTV studios and we are not to park in the reserved spaces normally occupied by the news vehicles. Park on Forward Drive if all of the WMTV public spaces are occupied.

Dutch Treat Dinner 5:30 p.m.
Babe's Bar & Grill
5614 Schroeder Road, Madison

Meeting & Program 7 p.m.
WMTV Studios
615 Forward Drive, Madison

Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 15: TBD/
Nominations

Wednesday, April 11: TBD/
Elections

Wednesday, May 16: TBD

New DTV Bill Introduced *Bill requires consumer education about switch to digital broadcasting*

By Tom Smith

NOTICE

This television has only an analog tuner and will require a converter box after February 17, 2009, to receive over-the-air broadcasts with an antenna because of the nation's transition to digital broadcasting. The TV should continue to work as before with cable and satellite TV services, gaming consoles, VCRs, DVD players and similar products.

For more information, call the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-225-5322 (TTY: 1-888-835-5322) or visit the Commission's digital television Web site at www.dtv.gov.

*Proposed wording of Digital Television
Consumer Act of 2007 notice*

A new DTV consumer education bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Joe Barton (R-Texas) with Fred Upton (R-Michigan) and former Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Illinois). The bill, "Digital Television Consumer Act of 2007," is similar to bills introduced in the last session of Congress.

The bill would require all retailers that sell or rent any analog TVs to post a notice in the vicinity of such sets to display a consumer alert. That alert would also be required on any Web site or direct mail or catalog of any mail-order distributor.

The alert would have to say the following: This television has only an analog tuner and will require a converter box after February 17, 2009, to receive over-the-air

broadcasts with an antenna because of the nation's transition to digital broadcasting. The TV should continue to work as before with cable and satellite TV services, gaming consoles, VCRs, DVD players and similar products. For more information, call the Federal Communications Commission at 1-888-225-5322 (TTY: 1-888-835-5322) or visit the Commission's digital television Web site at www.dtv.gov.

Between May 1, 2007 and ending on February 17, 2009, multichannel video providers and broadcasters must conduct an outreach program. Multichannel providers such as cable companies must inform consumers of the digital transition and their options after the transition; this notice must be in their monthly bill or other mailings.

continued on page 4

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January 2007 Meeting Minutes

Chapter 24 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2007 was held at the offices of the Education Communications Board in Madison. There were 16 members present of whom 13 were certified. There were also four guests present.

Chair Cliff Groth called the meeting to order shortly after 7 p.m. He introduced Doug Thompson and Terry Cockerill of Harris broadcast who presented the evening's program. Cliff gave an update on the SBE National from Short Circuits. He mentioned the NAB programs, that we had lost the honor of hosting this year's SBE National Meeting in the fall to the Pittsburgh Charter, and that SBE was now doing online membership applications on its Web site. He also gave the times for the national meeting at NAB.

The minutes for the last meeting were accepted on a motion by Steve Paugh and a second by Fred Sperry. Treasurer Leslie Franzen gave the update on the chapter's finances (\$4,685.21). Secretary Tom Smith mentioned that he had sent copies of last year's minutes and attendance to the national office to meet the deadline for those reports so we can receive our rebate.

Sustaining Membership Chair Fred Sperry reported that we had six renewals and one new sustaining member. The renewing members are Norlight Telecommunications, Heartland Video, WISC-TV, WKOW-TV, Clark Wire and Cable and Richardson Electronics. The newest sustaining member is Primaverity, which gives us a total of 23 sustaining members.

Kevin Ruppert reported for Certification Chair Jim Hermanson that the deadline has past for the February Certification exams. The next local exams will be from June 1 to 11 with the application deadline of April 20. The deadline for anyone wishing to take the exam at NAB is March 2.

National Liaison Leonard Charles noted that there was a new 8-VSB certification and that the national membership meeting at the NAB would be at 7 p.m. on Tuesday. As a member of the MSTV Engineering Committee, he also reported that the MSTV was working with the FCC for planning DTV Transition Day with the main focus on stations needing to change channels at the transition and by putting on regional meetings with personnel from stations. He also gave a short round-up of the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith that he had been working with WMSN Channel 47 on coordination of wireless mics. He also mentioned recent activity with the proposed rulemakings allowing unlicensed devices on the TV broadcast bands and recent proposals for the 4 TV channels that will be reassigned for public safety.

Chair Cliff Groth mentioned the recent Amber Alert test that sent a false alert out which was followed by a short discussion.

Program and Nomination Chair Steve Paugh mentioned the upcoming nominations and elections of officers and that the next meeting's program would be on RF Path Predictions.

Cliff thanked Harris for providing pizza for the evening. Doug Thompson and Terry Cockerill of Harris Broadcast presented the evening's program on planning a HD Radio System.

Submitted by Tom Smith, Chapter Secretary

Amateur Radio News

Compiled by Tom Weeden, WJ9H

No more Morse code

The current 5 WPM Morse code requirement will officially disappear from the Amateur Radio Service Part 97 rules on Friday, February 23, in accordance with the FCC's Report and Order (R&O) in the "Morse code proceeding," WT Docket 05-235. Beginning on that date, applicants for a General or Amateur Extra class Amateur Radio license no longer will have to demonstrate proficiency in Morse code. They'll just have to pass the applicable written examination. Publication of the new rules in the January 24 Federal Register started a 30-day countdown for the new rules to become effective. Deletion of the Morse requirement – still a matter of controversy within the amateur community – is a landmark in Amateur Radio history.

"The overall effect of this action is to further the public interest by encouraging individuals who are interested in communications technology or who are able to contribute to the advancement of the radio art, to become Amateur Radio operators; and eliminating a requirement that is now unnecessary and may discourage Amateur Service licensees from advancing their skills in the communications and technical phases of Amateur Radio," the FCC remarked in the "Morse code" R&O that settled the matter, at least from a regulatory standpoint. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) had asked the FCC to retain the 5 WPM for Amateur Extra class applicants, but the Commission held to its decision to eliminate the requirement across the board. The R&O appearing in the Federal Register constitutes the official version of the new rules.

Until 1991, when a Morse code examination was dropped from the requirements to obtain a Technician ticket, all prospective radio amateurs had to pass a Morse code test. With the change, the United States will

join a growing list of countries that have dropped the need to demonstrate some level of Morse code proficiency to earn access to frequencies below 30 MHz.

The new rules also put all Technician licensees on equal footing, whether or not they've passed a Morse code examination. Starting February 23, all Technicians will have CW privileges on 80, 40, 15 meters and CW, RTTY, data and SSB privileges on 10 meters. When the new rules go into effect, Technicians may begin using their new privileges without any further action.

Presidential kudos

President George W. Bush wrote to the ARRL to recognize the just-ended Hello Amateur Radio public relations campaign and to extend "greetings to all those celebrating 100 years of voices over the airwaves."

The president said the centennial of Reginald Fessenden's landmark Christmas Eve 1906 voice broadcast "opened the door for technological advances" that improved the lives of people around the world.

"I appreciate all who work in radio, and I am grateful to the Amateur Radio operators who provide emergency communications that help make our country safer and more secure," President Bush wrote. "Your good work strengthens our society and represents the American spirit."

(Excerpts from the American Radio Relay League's Web site, arrl.org)



WI Broadcaster Emergency Personnel ID Card Program

As of February 1, the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA) began offering a program to all Wisconsin broadcasters to obtain state-issued ID cards for their station transmitter engineers. This grew out of problems experienced by Katrina-affected stations having difficulties in reaching their transmitter sites in the aftermath of the disaster.

The intent of these Wisconsin Broadcaster Emergency Personnel ID Cards is to allow transmitter engineers to pass through police lines for the purpose of maintaining the transmitter to keep it on the air delivering emergency information to the public. The cards can also be used by engineers involved in reaching the local EOC as part of the MSRC program, if such participation is requested by local officials in your area. The cards are specifically not to be used by news-gathering crews.

Your Station Manager recently received information from WBA regarding this program. If you are a transmitter engineer and your station management doesn't approach you on getting this ID, you should approach them. Your Station Manager will need to sign the Request Form for the ID(s). A JPEG photo must also be emailed to WBA for use on the ID Card. All the details of the program are on the WBA Web site, www.wi-broadcasters.org. Click on the "Broadcaster ID Program" logo on the left side of the WBA Homepage. Also at the WBA Homepage, you will see an article on the new WBA president, long-time executive vice president, Michelle Vetterkind. Michelle and I worked together to broker this ID Card agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Justice. We hope all stations will take advantage of it.

Gary Timm, Broadcast Chair
Wisconsin EAS Committee
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Wireless Network Design

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DTV Bill *continued from cover*

Broadcasters directly or through their associations must report to the FCC every 90 days what steps they are taking to notify the public and what they plan in the next 90 days, including the times, frequency and content of any public service announcements relating to the DTV transition. This requirement would begin 45 days after the bill is enacted. There will be penalties for inaction by multichannel providers and broadcasters.

The FCC will be required within 30 days after the enactment of the bill to start operation of a digital television outreach program. They may partner with broadcasters, retailers, manufacturers, cable and satellite providers and consumer groups. They are to educate consumers of the transition, their options, and the DTV converter program. The FCC will be required to maintain a Web site containing this outreach information "as well as links to other Web sites that the FCC determines to be appropriate."

Also within 30 days of the enactment of the bill, the FCC shall establish an advisory committee to be known as the "DTV Working Group" to work with state and local governments, low-income assistance groups, educational institutions, community groups and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to promote consumer outreach and assistance regarding the converter box program and the DTV transition. Members of the group will not be compensated. The group will provide advice to the FCC on creating and implementing outreach programs, advise the FCC on various procedures for doing the outreach, and provide the FCC with prog-



ress reports on ongoing and planned efforts to inform consumers of the transition.

The bill also sets converter box energy standards for the boxes to qualify for purchase under the coupon purchase assistance program.

Finally, the FCC will be required to submit a report every 180 days to the House and Senate Committees responsible for telecommunication and FCC oversight. The period shall begin

on June 1, 2007 and end December 1, 2008, which means that the FCC will have to give a least three reports to Congress. The reports will have to give updates on border coordination efforts with Canada and Mexico, the FCC's and other groups such as broadcasters, electronic manufacturers and consumer group's education efforts. The NTIA will have to give a report to Congress every 90 days between April 1, 2008 and October 1, 2009 on the progress of the converter box coupon purchase program.

—From Congressional Web site (Thomas.loc)

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.

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SBE Notes

Editor change

After many years of creating the monthly SBE Chapter 24 newsletter, Mike Norton has turned the responsibility over to John Salzwedel.

Submissions of interest to the broadcast technical community are welcome. Please e-mail submissions (either attached as a Word or text document or pasted into the body of the e-mail) to John Salzwedel at tcp@tokencreek.com. Submissions may be edited for space, content or clarity.

Using the SBE logo

SBE chapters and members may use the SBE logo on business cards, letterhead and chapter newsletters. When referring to a chapter, it must be used with that chapter's name or number adjacent to the logo. Members must put "Member of" or "Certified by" adjacent to the logo.

The proper logo must be used in any case. The correct logo can be obtained only through the SBE National Office. Send an e-mail with your request to Angel Bates at abates@sbe.org.

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WISC-TV
 MADISON 5

Unlicensed Devices Move Forward

By Tom Smith

The FCC continued its move to allow unlicensed devices on the TV broadcast band. On December 21, 2006, FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology announced that it would accept prototype TV band devices for testing. Those parties wishing to have the FCC test their devices were to start notifying the Commission's laboratory by January 19, 2009 to make arrangements.

In further Congressional action, Senators John Kerry (D-Mass.) and John Sununu (R-NH) introduced bills to speed up the process, even after the FCC had set a timetable on September 11, 2006 for the implantation of unlicensed devices in the TV band. Kerry announced his proposed bill on January 10, 2007, and Sununu announced his bill on January 18, 2007. Both had signed onto similar bills in 2006. Kerry's bill would require the FCC to allow unlicensed devices within 180 days of enactment and Sununu's bill would require the FCC to allow the use of unlicensed devices 90 days after enactment or October, 2007, whichever is earlier. The question is why the bills were introduced after the FCC had set a deadline to allow unlicensed use the day after the DTV transition deadline of February 17, 2009. A check of both senators' campaign finances on opensecrets.org did not show any contributions from members of the computer industry and minor contributions from members of the telecommunication industry in relation to the overall funds contributed. This would not indicate

undo pressure from contributors.

On January 31, the comment period ended for the current FCC rulemaking on unlicensed devices in the TV band. With comments from the earlier inquiry, the FCC has collected 730 filings. Not all of these filings are comments; some are notices that people had met with officials of the FCC in ex parte meetings. Since the FCC released its timetable for the implementation of unlicensed devices in the TV band on September 11, 2007, 320 filings have been made. The numbers are small compared to the filings concerning the ownership rules

...it appears that everyone felt there would be some sharing of the TV band with other users.

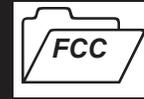
and they could even be considered even smaller than the number given. There were 195 e-mail filings that had the same comments which

indicate an organized effort. There were a handful of filings that were slightly different, however, all but a few shared one common feature: They had North Carolina addresses.

Of the 135 other filings, some were ex parte meeting notices with the rest being comments. The Association of Maximum Service Telecasters (MSTV) and the National Association of Broadcasters made five joint filings totaling 515 pages, the New America Foundation and the New Media Project, along with other interest groups such as the Consumer Federation of America, Common Cause, United Church of Christ, Prometheus Radio Project and others made three filings totaling 298 pages. They were joined by at least five wireless Internet providers.

Another large filing came from the

continued on page 6



FCC

Rulemakings

Compiled by Tom Smith

PROPOSED RULEMAKINGS

*WT Docket No. 03-187
Effects of Communications
Towers on Migratory Birds*

The FCC has extended the deadline for comments and replies on the inquiry into the effects of communication towers on migratory birds. The deadline was extended from January 22, 2007 to April 23, 2007 and the reply deadline was moved from February 20, 2007 to May 23, 2007. On January 8, the American Bird Conservancy, CTIA—The Wireless Association, Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Defense Fund, National Association of Broadcasters, National Audubon Society, the National Association of Tower Erectors and the PCIA—The Wireless Infrastructure Association filed a joint petition for an extension of time. The parties asserted that they were in a "dialogue related to avian safety" and that the extension of time would allow the record to more fully reflect the agreements and disagreements between the parties.

Normally, the FCC does not grant such a long extension, but did in this case because the parties represented were the most interested in this inquiry and represented both sides of the issue.

This action was adopted and released on January 12, 2007.

—From FCC release (www.fcc.gov)



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Devices *continued from page 5*

Brattle Group, a research group that consults on energy, Environmental, product liability, finance, commercial litigation, telecommunications and industry. They filed a 101-page report and thanked Qualcomm for its support. Motorola made a 32-page comment, and Dell, Intel, HP, Microsoft and Philips made a 37-page comment. Dell, HP, Intel and Microsoft, along with the New America Foundation, made at least one ex parte meeting with FCC staff. There were also a number of ex parte meetings between FCC staff and the MSTV and the NAB.

Other commentators included Shure, who made a number of small filings, translator owners and associations, musical concert producers and mobile radio groups.

From the first reading of the comments, the NAB, MSTV and wireless mike users objected to the use of unlicensed devices. The New America Foundation and its partners wanted unlicensed use, the faster, the better; and there were some who suggested that licensing was the route to go. From an early read, it appears that everyone felt there would be some sharing of the TV band with other users.

Reply comments are due on March 2 which should add to more dialog to the debate.

—From the FCC Web site
(www.fcc.gov), U.S. Senate Web site
(Thomas.loc)

Disclaimer: Author also filed comments in this proceeding.

 **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**Technology Manager
WisconsinEye**

WisconsinEye seeks highly motivated professional to join core management team at nonprofit multimedia public affairs network launching May 2007. WisconsinEye will present an independent statewide view of community affairs and public policy discussion, beginning with nonpartisan, gavel-to-gavel coverage of state government in Madison. This challenging ground-floor opportunity at our Madison operations center includes both day-to-day operational responsibilities and active participation in developing network goals, policies, and procedures.

Responsibilities: Technological infrastructure, including design, installation and maintenance, both hardware and software, of all broadcast equipment, production systems, data network, new media platform, and IT business systems. Coordinate and maintain equipment as needed to support live and tape-delayed broadcast operations. Establish and maintain technical quality standards.

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Token Creek Mobile Television is seeking a mobile unit engineer. Responsibilities to include overseeing physical and engineering setup of mobile unit, performing required maintenance, and making upgrades as needed. Applicant must be knowledgeable of broadcast systems, IT systems, television production, and posses an ability to read schematics and troubleshoot problems. Nights, weekends, and holiday travel is required. Generous benefits. Token Creek is an equal opportunity employer.

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Certification Exam Session Dates

The SBE National Certification Committee has announced exam session dates. Check the list below for the exam period that is best for you. For more information about SBE Certification, see your Chapter Certification Chair or contact Megan Clappe, Certification Director at the SBE National Office at (317) 846-9000, or mclappe@sbe.org.

Exam Dates	Location Application	Application Deadline
April 17, 2007	NAB, Las Vegas	March 2, 2007
June 1-11, 1007	Local Chapters	April 20, 2007
August 10-20, 2007	Local Chapters	June 8, 2007
November 9-19, 2007	Local Chapters	September 21, 2007

Upcoming Regional SBE Conference

Great Lakes Broadcasting Conference & EXPO

Date: March 13-14, 2007

Location: Lansing, Mich.

Hosted by: The Michigan Association of Broadcasters, in cooperation with SBE Chapter 91 and the Michigan Association of Public Broadcasters

Contact: Call (800) 968-7622, e-mail mab@michmab.com or visit www.michmab.com/conferences/glbc_main.html

Registration: 2007 Rates TBA; admission to exhibits only is FREE

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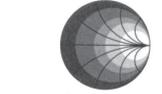
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Contributors this month: Tom Smith and Tom Weeden.
 Thanks to Leonard Charles for his work on the Chapter 24 Web page.
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