From the Chair…

>>> by Fred Sperry

As most of you are aware by now, fellow Chapter 24 member Vicki Kipp’s husband Garett passed away on Tuesday February 16th. Garett was taken from us way too early at the age of 36 after a brave fight with stage IV lung cancer. Making this whole event harder to comprehend was the fact that Garett never smoked and was in fact a big health and fitness enthusiast.

Besides Vicki, Garett leaves behind two wonderful young sons, family and many friends. I’d ask that you please continue to keep Vicki and her family in your thoughts and prayers as they go through this difficult period.

In other news, SBE National Executive Director John Poray will be visiting Madison this month to meet with Leonard Charles and representatives of the WBA and SBE to begin planning for the SBE National Meeting we will be hosting in conjunction with the Broadcaster’s Clinic October 26-28, 2010.

Please join us for our March meeting on Tuesday March 16th for what I’m sure will be an interesting program. Wisconsin Public Radio’s Director of Engineering Steve Johnston will give a presentation entitled “How Indoor Noise affects HD-FM.” I understand this is a paper Steve will be giving at NAB, so we are getting a “sneak peak” of sorts on the subject.

Chairman Gives Broadband Spectrum Preview

>>> by Tom Smith

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski gave a preview of the TV spectrum proposal in a speech (http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-296490A1.pdf) before the New America Foundation on February 24th. The New America Foundation was one of the leading proponents of the use of TV spectrum for unlicensed broadband use.

In his speech, the Chairman praised all of the possibilities of mobile broadband including how it could affect education, healthcare, energy, public safety and government. He said that mobile broadband was about job creation and economic growth. He then gave a number of projections

>>> continued on page 5

Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 16

THE INDOOR NOISE PROBLEM

& Chapter Nominations

Steve Johnston, Director of Engineering and Operations for Wisconsin Public Radio will give us a sneak preview of a paper he will be presenting next month at the NAB. His thesis is that indoor reception problems are not due to a lack of broadcast power levels but due to increasing indoor noise pollution. His paper is oriented toward FM radio but has implications to DTV broadcasters as well. Enter via the stairs or ramp near the corner of University and Park Street. Take the elevator to the 7th Floor.

Parking is available under Grainger Hall; parking entrance is off Brooks Street. Alternately, you can use the Lake Street parking ramp.

(See map on page 6)

Dutch Treat Dinner at 5:30pm
Nitty Gritty Restaurant and Bar
223 N. Francis Street
Madison, WI

Meeting and Program at 7:00PM
Wisconsin Public Radio
UW-Madison, Vilas Hall
821 University Avenue
Madison, WI
Chapter Leadership

Chair
Fred Sperry, ECB-OC
W: 608-264-9806
fred.sperry@ecb.org

Vice Chair
Bill Hamilton, Wisconsin Eye
W: 608-316-6850 Ext. 305
Bill.Hamilton@wiseye.org

Secretary
Mike Norton, WPT
W: 608-264-9807
mnorton@ecb.state.wi.us

Treasurer
Kevin Trueblood
Wisconsin Public Radio
kevin.trueblood@wpr.org

Past Chair
Dennis Baldridge
W: 608-489-3999
baldridge@mwt.net

Committee Appointees

Program Committee
Steve Paugh 277-5139
Steve Zimmerman 225-1293

Membership / Newsletter Editor
Paul Stoffel
paul.stoffel@wpt.org

Sustaining Membership
Fred Sperry 608-264-9806
fred.sperry@ecb.org

Certification & Education
Jim Hermanson
services@jimhermanson.com

Frequency Coordination
Tom Smith
608-263-2174
smithtc@wpt.org

National SBE Chapter Liaison
Leonard Charles
W: 608-271-4321
F: 608-271-1709
lcharles@wisctv.com

Meeting Minutes

On February 18, 2010, Chapter 24 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers held their monthly meeting at the Wisconsin Public Broadcasting Center in Madison, Wisconsin. There were 12 members present, 10 who were certified.

The Chapter provided pizza and soda before the meeting, and those present enjoyed casual conversation with dinner. Chairman Fred Sperry called the meeting to order at 7:03pm, and started things with brief introductions. The meeting minutes as published in the January Newsletter were then approved on a motion by Mike Kulis and a second by Tom Smith.

Fred Sperry relayed information that was sent by Treasurer Kevin Trueblood which showed the Chapter balance in the black. Newsletter Editor Paul Stoffel had no updates regarding the Newsletter, but thanked those who submitted articles. Paul indicated there were no updates regarding the Chapter membership. The deadline to submit items for the next Newsletter is March 1st.

For Sustaining Membership, Fred announced recent renewals from Heartland Video, Maney Logic, Ross Video and Wisconsin Public Television.

As Program Committee Chair, Steve Paugh reviewed the upcoming planned programs. For next months March program, Steve Johnston, Director of Engineering for Wisconsin Public Radio will preview a presentation he will give at the NAB convention titled How Indoor Noise Affects HD-FM. The April meeting, currently planned to be held at Full Compass, will focus on low cost RF analyzers.

As Certification and Education Chair, Jim Hermanson mentioned that one application for recertification has been processed. He reminded everyone that the next certification exam session was April 13th at NAB and the deadline for applications was March 26th. The next local exam sessions are schedule for June 4 – 14th, with that application deadline on April 16th.

Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith had received no new local requests. National Liaison Leonard Charles reported that SBE Executive Director John Poray will be in Madison, working on National meeting planning for the Broadcast Clinic.

There was no old business to discuss. For new business Fred Sperry mentioned that the SBE is starting to offer more training webinars. Two upcoming topics will cover Leadership Development and Event RF Management. If there is interest from members, Chapter 24 can organize a venue to participate and view these.

In other new business, Nominations Chair Steve Paugh announced that the four current officers are all eligible to run again. If you would like to run for office or are interested in participating on one of the Chapter committees, let Steve know.

In professional announcements, Fred Sperry noted that Treasurer Kevin Trueblood had accepted a position at Wisconsin Public Radio. Also, Steve Paugh has had requests for his January presentation on DTV audio and dialnorm; he plans to have notes and slides available on the SBE24.org web site soon.

There were no Tech Tips or other announcements, and the meeting adjourned at 7:20pm. Tom Smith from WHA-TV Engineering presented a talk on current wireless microphone issues. A discussion about spectrum use followed.

Submitted by Mike Norton, Secretary
New Closed Captioning Rules

On Friday, Feb. 19, 2010, two important new closed captioning rules were published in the Federal Register and went into effect. The new rules require immediate attention by video programming distributors -- including broadcast television stations -- to ensure that they respond promptly to viewer complaints regarding closed captioning issues, and to ensure that they timely file contact information with the FCC by March 22, 2010.

First, the Commission’s earlier Order revised the complaint process for complaints involving closed captioning rules, and with the Feb. 19 publication in the Federal Register, the new complaint procedures are effective immediately. The revised complaint procedures are as follows:

- Viewers who believe that a video programming distributor has failed to meet its captioning obligations may now file a complaint directly with either the FCC or with the program distributor, e.g., cable operator, television broadcaster or DBS provider. (Previously, viewers were required to first file complaints with distributors.)
- If a complaint is filed with a program distributor, then the distributor must respond to the viewer complaint in writing within 30 days of receipt. If a video programming distributor fails to respond to the complainant within 30 days, or if the complainant is unsatisfied with the response, the viewer may then file a complaint with the FCC within 30 days.

Captioning >>>continued on page 6

Recent Renewals

maney-logic
Wisconsin Public Television

Thanks to all our Sustaining Members

Alpha Video
Belden, Inc.
Broadcast Richardson
Clark Wire and Cable
Full Compass Systems
GEPCO International, Inc.
Heartland Video Systems
JVC Professional Products Company
Midwest Media Group
Resonant Results, Ltd.
Roscor Wisconsin
Ross Video
Sarch Electronics
Sound Devices, LLC
Token Creek Productions
WISC-TV 3
WMTV-TV 15
WKOW-TV 27
WMSN-TV 47

Thanks to Leonard Charles for maintaining the Chapter 24 web site and to Steve Paugh for mailing the meeting reminder postcards.
Chilean Earthquake Communications

Emergency amateur radio communications have begun following a massive 8.8 magnitude earthquake which hit Chile early on February 27th. International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 2 and the Red Chilena Nor Austral de Servicio (RECNA) have suggested Amateur Radio operators monitor the following emergency communications frequencies for traffic pertaining to the earthquake: 3.738, 3.750, 7.050, 7.100, 14.200, 14.350, 21.200, 21.350, 28.300 and 28.500 MHz. IARU Region 2 Area Emergency Coordinator Jorge Sierra, LU1AS, reports that there is now traffic at frequencies of 40 meters from people seeking information from people in Chile: “We would appreciate if amateurs would leave free the frequencies used by RECNA, as well as the usual IARU Region 2 frequencies on in 20, 40, and 80 meters.” In addition to the above frequencies, you may also want to listen to the worldwide emergency communication Center of Activity frequencies: 14.300, 18.160 and 21.360 MHz. Other suggested monitoring frequencies are 3.720, 7.045 and 7.060 MHz.

FCC Allows Robotic Device in Amateur Band

In January 2008, a company called ReconRobotics filed a request with the FCC for a waiver of Part 90 of the Commission’s Rules with respect to the Recon Scout -- a remote-controlled, maneuverable surveillance robot designed for use in areas that may be too hazardous for human entry. A waiver is required to permit licensing of the Recon Scout because the device operates in the 430-448 MHz band, which is allocated to the Federal Government Radiolocation service on a primary basis, as well as the Amateur Radio Service and certain non-federal radiolocation systems on a secondary basis. More than two years later, the FCC granted the waiver request in the form of an Order (WP Docket No 08-63), subject to certain conditions.

According to ReconRobotics, the Recon Scout device can be thrown, dropped or launched into hazardous areas and can provide an operator located a safe distance away with video and audio, along with infrared, biological, chemical, heat, radiation or other data. It would be marketed for use by state and local law enforcement and firefighting agencies, as well as by security personnel in critical infrastructure industries.

The FCC noted in the Order that they had received more than 70 comments “generally consist[ing] of public safety and law enforcement entities supporting the waiver request, and amateur radio operators opposing it.” In their initial waiver request, ReconRobotics asserted that even though the device operates in an area allocated to other services, including Amateur Radio, the Recon Scout operates with only 1 W peak power and it is “unlikely to cause interference to these services.”

In its May 2008 comments, the American Radio Relay League called on the FCC to deny ReconRobotics’ waiver request, “either permanently or even temporarily,” calling on the Commission to require ReconRobotics to “initiate a rulemaking proceeding if it feels that the Part 90 or Part 15 rules governing analog devices are not sufficiently accommodating and should be changed, and could be changed consistent with interference avoidance. Repeatedly granting waivers for analog devices which do not meet the fundamental interference avoidance requirements of the existing rules is bad spectrum management and ill-serves the Amateur Service.”

(Excerpts from the American Radio Relay League’s <arrl.org> web site)
Broadband Spectrum

on the increase of mobile broadband. After his projections, he gave a preview of the spectrum proposals in the Broadband Plan. It centered on a proposal called the Mobile Future Auction. The Auction would permit existing spectrum licenses such as television broadcasters to voluntarily relinquish their licenses in exchange for a share of the proceeds and allow for spectrum sharing and other spectrum efficiency measures.

He said that the remaining TV broadcasters would still be able to continue to serve their communities with free over-the-air local news, information and entertainment and experiment with mobile TV. He said it was a win-win for the broadcasters. He claimed that the TV spectrum was worth as much as $50 billion and that the TV spectrum was not being used efficiently. Of the about 300 MHz of spectrum set aside for TV, in markets under one million only 36 MHz (6 channels) is used, in markets over a million, 100 MHz (16 or 17 channels) is used and in the largest markets only about 150 MHz (26 channels) is used. He also took aim at spectrum allotted to the Mobile Satellite Service (MSS) and the Wireless Communications Service (WCS), which are lightly used. In his final comment of new spectrum he gives praise to the use of unlicensed spectrum as a “proven test bed of emerging competition.” He then mentioned the new services in the unlicensed bands and that the market for Wi-Fi equipment for these bands was 5 billion dollars.

The NAB issued an immediate response stating that “As a one-to-many transmission medium, broadcasters are ready to make the case that we are an efficient user of spectrum in today’s spectrum marketplace”. They then went on to say how they would work with policymakers on broadband without threatening free TV. They noted that broadcasters gave up 25% of their spectrum with the DTV transition.

Broadcasting and Cable reported that David Donovan of MSTV said that they would examine the broadband plan, but that consumers should not have their access to free over-the-air TV be diverted to pay services from the wireless phone companies.

It should be noted that this is only a proposal from the Commission and will need the approval of Congress. And Congress likes the access to local broadcasters particularly around election time.
Captioning

• If a complaint is filed directly with the FCC, the FCC will forward the complaint to the program distributor, which will be required to respond to the FCC in writing within 30 days of receipt. (Previously, distributors were required to respond to FCC complaints within 15 days.) In responding to a complaint, the video programming distributor must provide the Commission with sufficient records and documentation to demonstrate that it has complied with the Commission’s rules.

• Viewer complaints must be in writing and must be filed within 60 days of the alleged violation (whereas previously complaints could be filed within the calendar quarter in which the alleged violation occurred). The complaint also must state with specificity the alleged Commission rule violated and include some evidence of the alleged rule violation.

Second, in order to facilitate the ability for viewers to (1) raise immediate captioning concerns (such as garbled or missing captions), and (2) file captioning complaints, television broadcasters must publicize appropriate contact information and also provide contact information to the Commission.

To assist viewers with immediate captioning concerns while they are watching a program, television broadcasters must publish a telephone number, fax number and e-mail address for purposes of receiving and responding immediately to any closed captioning concerns. The revised rules require that “customers using this dedicated contact information must be able to reach someone, either directly or indirectly, who can address the consumer’s captioning concerns.”

In addition, television broadcasters also must separately designate a contact person for the receipt of written (non-immediate) captioning complaints. This contact person must have primary responsibility for captioning issues and compliance with the FCC rules. The contact information must include the contact person’s name, title/office, telephone number, fax number, postal mailing address and e-mail address. A distributor’s contact information must be included on the distributor’s web site (if it has a web site), in billing invoices (if any) and in telephone directories (if the distributor already directly advertises or has a paid expanded listing, i.e., more than merely name, number and location in standard font, in a telephone directory). Broadcast television stations must file their contact information with the FCC by March 22, 2010. Go to https://esupport.fcc.gov/vpd-data/login!input.action.

Alternatively, the contact information can be e-mailed directly to the FCC’s Disability Rights Office at: CLOSEDCAPTIONING_POC@fcc.gov

(excerpts from www.broadcastlawblog.com)
Notice of Elections

By Steve Paugh, Nominations Chair

In April we will hold elections for Chapter 24 offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer for the 2010-2011 term. All interested members of Chapter 24 who are current in their dues are eligible to run for elected office. The nominations committee is now accepting nominations for all four offices. As of this date, the following members have been nominated for the following offices.

- Chair: Fred Sperry
- Vice Chair: Bill Hamilton
- Treasurer: Mike Norton
- Secretary: Kevin Trueblood

Call For Nominations

During the March 16th meeting, the nominations committee will solicit the members present for additional nominations. If you would like to run for an office, or know someone who wishes to run, please bring it to the attention of the nominations committee. All nominees are requested to submit a short biography for publishing with the ballot. The nominations committee consists of Steve Paugh (Chair), Mike Kulis and Leonard Charles.

Appointed Officers

The appointed offices do not fall under the jurisdiction of the nominations committee and are appointed by the Chair of Chapter 24. Traditionally, the existing appointed officers continue for another term automatically. If you are a current appointed officer and would like to step down, please contact the current Chair Fred Sperry. If you would like to serve as an appointed officer please make your desire known to the Chair.

The current appointed offices are Program Committee Chair- Steve Paugh, Program Committee Members- Steve Zimmerman & one vacancy, Newsletter Editor- Paul Stoffel, Membership- Paul Stoffel, Sustaining Membership- Fred Sperry, Special Events- VACANT, Certification and Education- Jim Hermanson, Frequency Coordination- Tom Smith and National Liaison- Leonard Charles.

Ballots

The election ballot will be mailed in early April and will be published in the April on-line newsletter. You can either use the mailed ballot or print the on-line ballot and mail it in to the Nominations Chair. The deadline for nominations and the submission of biographies will be March 28th, 2009. At this time we have no procedure for on-line voting.