



May 2008

Society of
Broadcast Engineers
Newsletter
Chapter 24
Madison, Wisconsin



In this Issue

Election Results.....	3
FCC Takes Action	3
OTA DTV Experience	4
From the Chair	5



Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 14
Harris NET Vx

Tom Sibenaller of Roscor has arranged to have a representative of Harris Corporation get us a presentation on their NET Vx product. NET Vx is the replacement for the current Flexicoder product line which is used to create the SMPTE 310 data stream used in Digital TV broadcasting. The NET Vx product has applications in many other areas including IP, centralcasting interconnects and cable broadcasting. The evening presentation will give us an overview of this new product and it's varied applications.

Dutch Treat Dinner, 5:30 p.m.
Qdoba Mexican Grill
5401 Caddis Bend, Fitchburg
At the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road & Caddis Bend
(no reservation; just gather together)

Meeting & Program, 7 p.m.
Clear Channel Radio Facility
2651 S. Fish Hatchery Rd., Fitchburg



Coming Up

- Wednesday, June 11:** SBE Summer Picnic
- Tuesday, July 15:** Loudspeakers, Part 2
- Wednesday, Aug. 13:** Wisconsin Public Radio Tour

Meeting the Public

>>>By Paul Stoffel

about DTV

The Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) booth at the 2008 Garden Expo, held February 8-10, included a digital television display showing WPT's daytime's 4-channel DTV multicast. Each of the four 19" LCD TVs, tuned to over-the-air WPT, were connected to vintage Radio Shack double-bow-tie UHF antennas. People were curious about the antennas, some asking where they could purchase one. For future DTV demonstrations, it may be better to use a variety of current-day antennas, including "smart" antennas. But for the public, seeing is believing... The antennas did prove to the viewers that they were indeed seeing pictures from over-the-air DTV broadcasting inside a metal building. People also got a chance to tune to the commercial stations in Madison. One woman insisted that the four WPT programs she was seeing were actually "from cable TV." It was nice to be able demonstrate loss-of-signal by physically rotating the antenna in the opposite direction.

An equal number of men and women wanted to know "Will a set-top antenna work?" Depends. "Do I need an attic or rooftop antenna?" Perhaps. "Do I need a UHF/VHF amplifier?" Possibly. The answers are as unique as the person's home and where they live. A woman from Manitowoc said their city requires residents to apply for a permit before they can mount an antenna on their roof. Another woman said she was quoted a \$1200 fee for having a TV antenna mounted on the roof. Quite a few people were happy to hear they could continue to use the same antenna for DTV that they are now using for analog TV reception. Some people had a satellite service, but wanted to know about the future of their analog TV living in a back bedroom or garage.

A lot of people are not aware of the distinction between DTV, SDTV and HDTV. The four LCD TVs did a good job of demonstrating DTV's standard definition television format. Most understood that HDTV (high definition) meant better picture and sound and all associated

DTV & public >>> continued on page 5

Congratulations to our re-elected officers!


Chapter Contacts
Chapter Leadership*Chair*

Dennis Baldrige
W: 489-3999
baldrige@mwt.net

Vice Chair

Clifford Groth (Clear Channel Radio)
W: 274-5450
cliffordgroth@clearchannel.com

Secretary

Tom Smith (WHA-TV)
W: 263-2174
smithtc@wpt.org

Treasurer

Leslie Franzen (WMTV-TV)
W: 274-1515
lfranzen@nbc15.com

Past Chair

Jim Magee
jim@tvmagic.tv

Committee Appointees*Program Committee*

Steve Paugh 277-5139
Fred Sperry 264-9806
Steve Zimmerman 225-1293

Membership

Paul Stoffel
paul.stoffel@wpt.org

Sustaining Membership

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

Certification & Education

Jim Hermanson
271-4321
jhermanson@wisctv.com

Frequency Coordination

Tom Smith
263-2174
smithtc@wpt.org

National SBE Chapter Liasion

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

**Meeting Minutes**

April 2008

On April 24, 2008, Chapter 24 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers met at the studios of WISC-TV. There were 14 members present, of whom 11 were certified. There were no guests present at this meeting. Vice chair Clif Groth presided at this meeting in the absence of Chair Dennis Baldrige.

The minutes for the March meeting were approved as published in the Chapter newsletter on a motion by Leonard Charles; Kevin Ruppert seconded the motion.

During committee reports, Treasurer Leslie Franzen reported on the current chapter bank balance. Kevin Ruppert reported on the upcoming certification reports in the absence of Certification Chair Jim Hermanson. Kevin also reported that Jim was recognized at the SBE National meeting for 15 years of service as a certification chairman. He also reported that Rick Ryan of Chapter 28 in Milwaukee was honored for 20 years of service. Program Chair Steve Paugh reported that the June picnic was moved to June 11th, that at the May meeting, Harris would give program on their Net VX system and that the July meeting would be part two on loudspeaker design. He also reported that the November meeting had a program opening yet. Sustaining membership Chair Fred Sperry reported that Alpha Video had renewed its membership, giving us 22 sustaining members.

Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith reported that WMTV had asked for information on a RPU frequency. In other frequency coordination business, the status of the Madison 2GHz conversion was discussed; Leonard Charles reported that WISC had received a 7 GHz license and asked about coordination. Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith said that it would be a good time to look at coordination of all the TV remote pickup plans when the 2 GHz transition occurs. Chif Groth reported that Clear Channel was using more 450 MHz RPU frequencies as of late.

Leonard Charles reported on national SBE news, noting that SBE gained 30 new members at the NAB convention and, that besides that trip to the National SBE meeting in Madison at Broadcasters Clinic, the grand prize winner of the membership contest will win a 40-inch Sony TV and that each person that enlisted a new member would receive one chance in the drawing to win for every member they get to join. It was also reported that there were two RF Safety webinars coming up.

In other news, there was a discussion that Wisconsin Eye was no longer available to receivers that could pickup unscrambled digital cable signals.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Tom Weeden, and Mike Kulis seconded the motion. Leonard Charles then gave an update on the FCC actions concerning DTV transitions and the status of the Sprint/Nextel 2 GHz broadcast auxiliary transition.

*Respectfully submitted by
Tom Smith, Secretary*

June '08 SBE Chapter 24 newsletter

Copy deadline: Sunday, June 1

Folding party: Wednesday, June 4

E-mail submissions to John Salzwedel at
john@tokencreek.com.



Election results

*Submitted by Steve Paugh,
Elections Chair*

The Chapter 24 election ballots were certified and counted on May 29, 2008. There are 57 voting members in Chapter 24. Fourteen ballots were collected at the April 24th chapter meeting, all were certified as valid. We thank everyone who took part in the election process.

Congratulations to all of our re-elected officers!

Chairperson: Dennis Baldrige
Vice Chair: Clifford Groth
Secretary: Tom Smith
Treasurer: Leslie Franzen

The nomination committee members were Steve Paugh, Mike Kulis and Leonard Charles.



David Geon
Sales Representative

Direct: 414.453.7409
david.geon@belden.com



2616 N. 85th Street
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Fax: 414.433.1850
Cell: 414.517.9242

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AUDIO VIDEO A/V LIGHTING

FCC takes action on localism issues

By Tom Smith

As the FCC has collected comments on localism in broadcasting, the Media Bureau took the two actions they were directed to take in the Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. On April 24, the Media Bureau released on the FCC Web site an updated version of "The Public and Broadcasting." This is an important action that affects all broadcast stations, as they are to have the latest version of this document in their public file. Broadcasters are also required to provide any member of the public with a copy if they ask for it. "The Public and Broadcasting" outlines FCC regulation of broadcasters, what stations must do to comply with FCC policies and regulations and how the public can assess how well stations are complying.

The second action that the Media Bureau took on April 24 was placing a FM frequency finder in their part of the FCC's Web site. The FM frequency finder allows a person to search for a Class A FM frequency at any location in the U.S. To use the site, all one needs to do is place the coordinates of the community you wish to serve or the proposed transmitter site, and the FM frequency finder will either give you a possible frequency or a list of stations that it searched against and the distance and direction for you coordinates. If it finds no usable frequency, it notes that there is no interference-free frequency and will still give you the list. The site gives a disclaimer that the results are not accurate enough to use to file an application with and that one still needs to consult a broadcast engineering consultant.

And in one final action concerning broadcast localism, the comment period on the notice of proposed rulemaking closed on Monday, April 28. The FCC had received and posted 114,412 comments as of the afternoon of Thursday, May 1. Most comments were one-page in length and one paragraph long. From a sampling of the comments, it seems that there was a letter-writing drive by religious broadcasters in opposition to the proposed regulation and particularly to the Commission's proposal that stations do ascertainment surveys and have community advisory boards. There were also many comments by religious broadcasters themselves. As it is difficult to sort out comments in such a large posting, it is difficult to determine how many broadcasters have filed comments and what they said, other than the fact that most were in opposition to the FCC proposals. To read comments on the localism rulemaking, go to the e-filing page and click on the comments link. Follow the instructions from there. The docket number is 04-233.

From FCC Web site (www.fcc.gov)

Note: Author did file comments in the rulemaking.



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An experience with over-the-air DTV

By Fred Sperry

I received an e-mail from my sister just before I headed down South to visit her and her family for the holidays. She wrote to tell me that they had just bought an LCD HDTV set during one of those door-buster sales on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Unlike me, my brother-in-law

is willing to stand outside a Circuit City all night in order to get a deal on an off-brand HDTV they had advertised.

The reason for this purchase was basically to have a larger screen to watch TV and DVDs and for playing video games.

Since they only have analog cable, I excitedly told my sister I could bring down an antenna and an A/B switch and would be able to set them up to be able to watch actual high definition content off-air.

So I packed up my trusty Silver Sensor antenna for the trip down to Alabama. I didn't expect to have much problem receiving the local DTV stations since my sister lives in a suburb adjacent to the city of Huntsville. I also assumed this new HDTV had the fifth generation tuner chip (maybe an incorrect assumption in hindsight), and I had not had problems receiving digital off-air at home with the Silver Sensor antenna and an older set-top box I knew didn't have the latest tuner chipset. I was probably

being a bit overly optimistic.

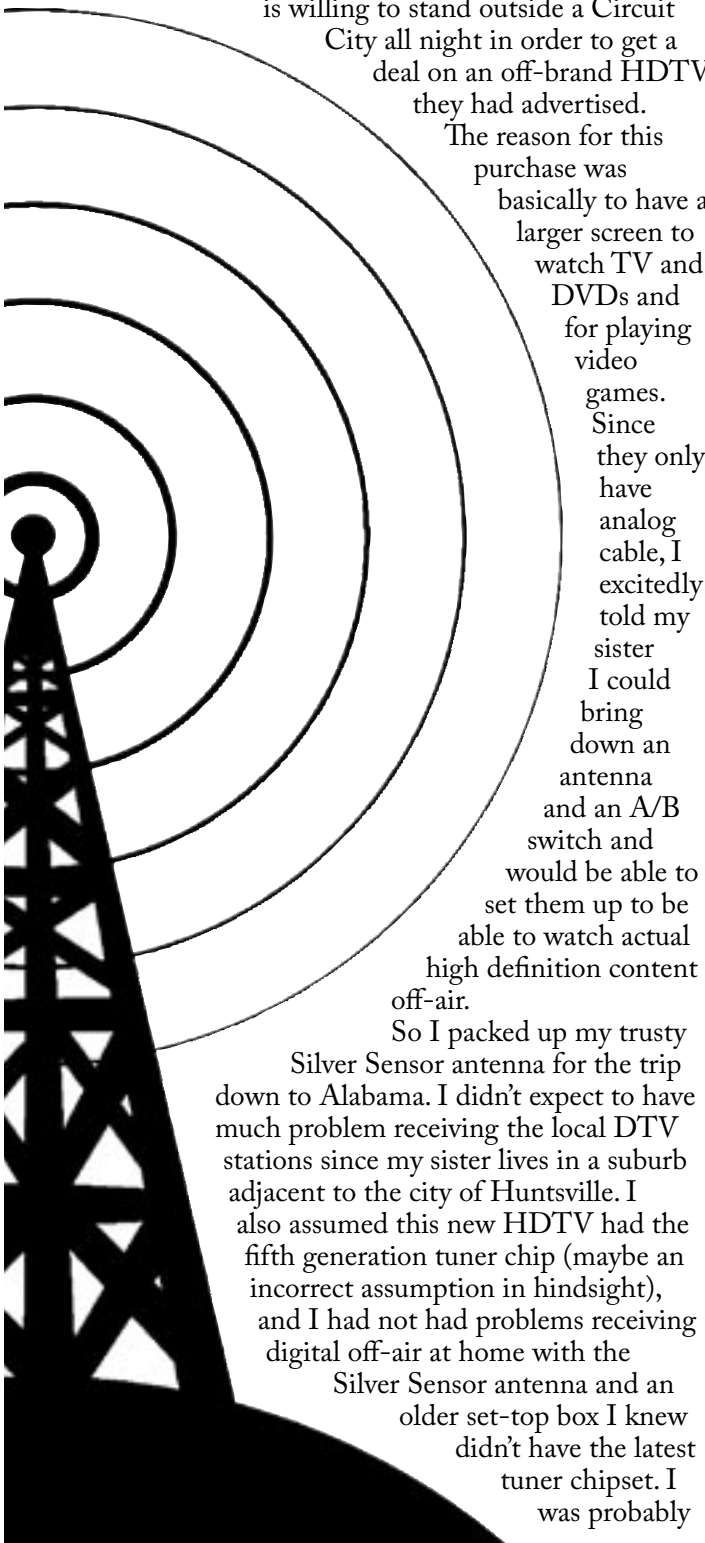
As is the case in Madison, all TV towers for the Huntsville licensed stations are in the same general direction. In this case, the towers are on Monte Sano Mountain just east of the city. As an added bonus, all the stations (analog and digital) are UHF. This certainly made things easier.

I set up the receive antenna and pointed it in the general direction of the towers in the east, which are about 13 air miles from my sister's house (a little more distance than I anticipated). I did a channel scan and was surprised and disappointed to find I could not receive the PBS and NBC affiliate digital channels. I did multiple channel scans with the antenna in different locations. Sometimes I was able to get the PSIP channel information for both stations to be recognized, but I couldn't get any video or audio, no matter what I did. I even moved the antenna outside onto the deck, but the situation didn't improve.

I finally got on the Internet and went to the Web sites for the two stations I was having problems receiving. I wanted to check the actual channel their digital station was broadcasting on to see exactly what I was dealing with. This wasn't as easy as I hoped since I couldn't find this information on either station's Web page, so I had to refer to the NAB Web site to get it. One very helpful thing I did find on the Alabama Public Television Web page was a notice that their DTV transmitter in Huntsville was operating at reduced power on a stand-by antenna. This pretty much explained why I couldn't receive that DTV signal. For the NBC affiliate, it wasn't until I returned home that I looked up their license information on the FCC Web site and discovered they are operating with Special Temporary Authorization (STA) on their digital channel. Their ERP at this point is 2.6 kW, which also explains the problems I was having receiving this station. In fact, I checked www.AntennaWeb.org and they recommend a large outdoor directional antenna with pre-amp to receive this station from my sister's location!

The story doesn't end here though. Once I realized I wasn't going to be able to receive all the stations with the antenna and location I was working with, I was content to show off the HD picture on the remaining stations. It wasn't long before we started to experience tiling and signal break-up on the stations we could receive. This was probably more disappointing to me than the stations we couldn't receive. At this point I switched them back to cable and told them I would be going to try a different antenna next time I visit (possibly the DB-2 from AntennasDirect). An outdoor antenna is not an option in this case, and I won't be allowed to drill any holes so the options are somewhat limited.

Experience >>> continued on page 6



Thanks

It's their only pay

From the Chair

Dennis Baldrige



The past few months' articles have reflected on the SBE's Canon of Ethics. It is important to understand that at the heart of this subject matter is a person's character. One's words, attitudes and actions reflect their heart and thus impact every area of life and work.

Aristotle once said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit." SBE Chapter 24 is fortunate to have men and women who live this standard of excellence by faithfully fulfilling their office. I believe it is important to recognize those who have served our chapter this past year and express our gratitude for all they have done.

Those who deserve our sincere thanks for their dedication to our SBE Chapter include the following:

- Vice Chair Clifford Groth*
- Secretary Tom Smith*
- Treasurer Leslie Franzen*
- Membership Committee Paul Stoffel*
- Sustaining Membership Committee Fred Sperry*
- Newsletter Editor John Salzwedel*
- Program Committee Steve Paugh, Fred Sperry and Steve Zimmerman*
- Certification Education Jim Hermanson*
- Frequency Coordinator Tom Smith*
- SBE National Liaison and Chapter 24 Webmaster Leonard Charles*

I encourage you to take a few minutes at the next meeting to thank our officers and committee members for their faithful service. It's their only pay!

We are what we repeatedly do.

Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.

—Aristotle

Etiquette 2.0: A Guide to Online Manners

New laws about online harassment have put online bullying center stage in the headlines recently. While much of the recent news focuses on adolescents and teenagers being bullied on the Internet, the problem of online bullying transcends age. It can affect anyone participating in blogs, social networks or even those using e-mail.

Fortunately, some of what might be seen as bullying could just be a case of improper etiquette. Following proper online etiquette can help navigate the virtual world with social grace and manners, no matter the level of their online activity.

"When online, we often don't take time to think about the consequences of our comments," says Sheelagh Manheim, PhD, co-author with Jack Jonathan of "Yes, You Can . . . Find More Meaning in Your Life." Jonathan and Manheim offer the following 8 online manners.

1. Use good grammar and punctuation.
2. Use language you would use in person.
3. Follow the golden rule and communicate online as you would want others to communicate with you.
4. Be aware of the recipient's values when you send e-mail jokes, political cartoons or religious stories.
5. Remember, the Web is a public medium. Be careful that what you say is not too private.
6. Don't gossip or spread rumors.
7. Don't harass people with too many e-mails.
8. Avoid sharing intimate feelings.

Courtesy of ARAccontent

SAVE the (changed) DATE

It's official — the SBE Picnic is Wednesday, June 11.



Please update your calendars.

It will be held at the same place as last year, Badger Prairie Park in Verona.

Everyone is welcome — bring a friend and a dish to pass.

Sign-up sheet will be posted after the May meeting.

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Experience >>> from page 4

DTV & public >>> continued from the cover

The average viewer

This experience got me thinking about the average viewer out there. Since I deal with a fair number of the reception complaints that come into Wisconsin Public Television (WPT), I now have a little more sympathy for some of the struggles our viewers call in with. It isn't always that they are using a roof antenna installed 30 years ago with half the elements missing and twin lead feeding a 4-way splitter (although sometimes it is).

With that said, my experience also concerns me for the coming year and beyond as more and more of the general public transition to receiving digital over-the-air signals. The calls to WPT regarding DTV reception are already starting to increase, but for the most part, the viewers calling at least have some basic understanding of DTV and the digital transition. Not that it is keeping me up nights, but I am concerned how reception complaints may really take off when the general public begins to purchase and install digital converter boxes or DTV sets in large numbers. Even if they had received a marginal but viewable analog signal in the past, there will certainly be cases where they won't be able to receive a useable signal from our digital station and they will want to know what we are going to do to rectify the situation. Unless you can give them a specific reason and the problem is on the station's end, it gets much more difficult to explain to them the problem is on their end.

Despite the educational campaign by stations, NAB, WBA and others, we all know there is a segment of the population that is going to be really surprised when they turn their analog TVs on February 17, 2009. Once they start calling is when things will really get interesting. Come to think of it, I'm going right now to submit my vacation request for that Canadian train trip I've always wanted to take. In case you're wondering, my departure date will be February 16, 2009!

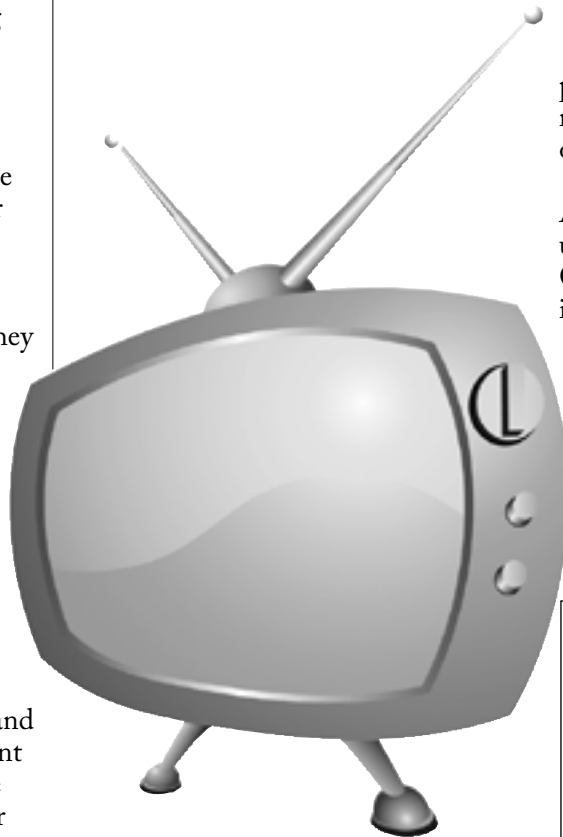
HDTV with the new LCD and Plasma screens.

One woman was quite relieved to hear she didn't need to buy a new TV. We also had on display Zenith's (LG Electronics) version of a Coupon-Eligible Converter Box (CECB) that converts DTV's digital signals to analog so people can keep their old TV. It was helpful for people to actually see a CECB and to see how it was wired up. People liked the built-in signal strength meter, but they were confused when it came to understanding user-adjustable aspect ratio and wondered "So I tune my analog TV to channel 3 or 4 and then use this new CECB remote control to change the channel? Why can't I just use my TV's remote control?" Besides a growing market for TV antennas, programmable remote controls may become even more popular. DTV handouts were made available to people who wanted information on how to sign up for the converter box coupons. (Since this demo took place, some people in the Madison area have already received their coupons in the mail.)

I got the feeling people have hung on to their old rabbit ears antenna that was used on that bedroom TV and now want to connect it to their new converter box. For those of you who abhor the look of the set-top antenna, Radio Shack sells an indoor antenna called the Picture Frame antenna...the picture frame has rabbit ears extending out of it and the frame itself acts as the UHF loop antenna. And there's even a place for your 4x6 photo of a loved

one. Nice. Some people wished they could try an antenna before buying it. I recommended they keep all the packaging intact, in case they want to return the antenna and get a different one.

GE is selling a Smart Digital Antenna developed exclusively for use with their GE Smart Digital Converter Box, model 22729. Other information about CECBs having an EIA/CEA-909 smart antenna control interface is sketchy. A continuously updated database of CECBs is available at http://octopus.freeyellow.com/CECB_list_wip.xls or check out http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_CECB_units.




Mark Bartolotta
Regional Sales Manager

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SBE Chapter of the Air

HamNet meets the second Sunday of each month at 0000 GMT on 14.205 MHz. Hal Hostetler WA7BGX is the Control Station. Any amateur operator is welcome and encouraged to participate.

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 your request to Angel Bates at abates@sbe.org.

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.

<u>Exam Dates</u>	<u>Location Application</u>	<u>Application Deadline</u>
August 8-18, 2008	Local Chapters	June 6, 2008
November 7-17, 2008	Local Chapters	September 19, 2008


CHAPTER 24 SUSTAINING MEMBERS

RECENT RENEWALS

Roscor Wisconsin
WMTV-TV 15

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- Belden-Networking Division
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- Heartland Video Systems
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- Midwest Media Group
- Resonant Results Ltd.
- Ross Video
- Scharch Electronics
- Sound Devices, LLC
- Token Creek Mobile TV
- WISC-TV 3
- Wisconsin Public Television
- WKOW-TV 27
- WMSN-TV 47



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Madison, Wisconsin 53719

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RON LEWANDOWSKI
Senior Broadcast Technician

(608) 274-3464 (800) 810-5865
Fax (608) 274-3176
www.madisonvideorepair.com
rlwandowski@madisonvideorepair.com

1409 GREENWAY CROSS MADISON, WI 53713

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.



National Contacts

Society of Broadcast Engineers, Inc.
9102 N. Meridian St.
Suite 150
Indianapolis, IN 46260

Office: 317-846-9000
Fax: 317-846-9120

Web: www.sbe.org



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www.tokencreek.com
john@tokencreek.com


WISCONSIN PUBLIC TELEVISION

821 University Ave.
Madison WI 53706
www.wpt.org

Phone 608.263.2121
Fax 608.263.9763


Don Heinzen
Datacom Manager

Direct: 608.848.2001
don.heinzen@belden.com


Belden

9001 Hawks Reserve Lane,
Unit 103
Verona, WI 53593

Office: 608.848.2001
Fax: 608.848.2001
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Media & Information Technologies

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

 **WMTV**
MADISON


615 Forward Drive
Madison, WI 53711
608-274-1515
www.nbc15.com

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Contributors this month: Tom Smith, Paul Stoffel, Fred Sperry, Steve Paugh and Dennis Baldrige. Thanks to Leonard Charles for his work on the Chapter 24 Web page.

FIRST CLASS MAIL





SBE Chapter 24 Newsletter
P.O. Box 46291
Madison, WI 53744-6291