

Summer
2009

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.CTAMAINE.ORG



GCTV2 HOSTS CTAM



.Mike St. Clair mans the grill at the CTAM meeting

Gray Public Access hosted the June meeting of CTAM members at their facility in Stillson Hall.

Although the weather was a bit soggy that didn't deter the team from firing up the barbecue grill and treating their guests to chicken, hot dogs, hamburgers and all the fixins' – including a truly enormous Whoopie Pie Cake.

Once the dinner was out of the way the attendees heard a detailed presentation by Tightrope – who generously supplied the food – on their bulletin board and cablecast systems. Their new product, Carousel, incorporates both the bulletin board

and the scheduler, while their Cablecast system runs both the server and the switching functions. All of their products incorporate the "Write Once, Publish Everywhere" approach to information. Tightrope has an extensive product line which can be seen in detail on their website: www.trms.com

Next up was an update on video server issues. This



included an ongoing dialogue between PegMedia and the Princeton Server Group to iron out some standards concerns and efforts to have the ACM server standards released so they can be implemented by more content producers and stations.

Patrick Bonsant of Saco River TV discussed the importance of cooperation if you operate a regional access center. Patrick noted that it is important to establish good relationships with all the towns you serve and to try and get town leaders, including government officials, on your Board of Directors so they will become involved with the stations projects.

The CTAM website is undergoing some improvements and upgrades. New functionalities are on the way to improve navigation and the presentation of information. A small sub-committee has been formed to look into access to Access Center information on the site.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED TO CHECK YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND MAKE ANY CORRECTIONS NEEDED SO THAT IT WILL REMAIN CURRENT. YOU CAN MAKE THE CHANGES YOURSELF AT WWW.CTAMAINE.ORG

The Treasurer reported that CTAM is in good financial shape and he will present a formal report at the end of the year.

The next meeting for CTAM will be October 27 in Farmington/Mt. Blue.

(Meetings are open to the public)

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CTAM RE-ELECTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the June meeting the CTAM membership unanimously re-elected the Board of Directors for another one-year term.

Congratulations to the returning Board!

Chair

Sally Ann Hebert

Secretary-Treasurer

JP Fortier

Membership & Outreach

Diane Mende

Legislative Review

Tony Vigue

Meetings & Conferences/Special Projects Coordinator

Dave Chipman

Webmaster

Bill Severance



RAY LUND

CABLE AWARD WINNER

Ray Lund had already been teaching traditional arts classes for a dozen years when he started a course called "videography" in 1987. The original television production curriculum has expanded with the times to include new media of all types at Thornton Academy. On June 10 Ray Lund was honored for his work by receiving a *Cable Leader in Learning Award* at a ceremony in Washington, DC. As one of only 10 winners nationwide Ray was recognized in the category of Cable Partnerships for Learning for his creation of TATV, Thornton Academy's TV operation on which he, and his students, produce long running shows seen on Saco River TV Channel.

Frank Gallagher, director of education and media literacy at Cable in the Classroom noted that "For 20 years, Cable in the Classroom has encouraged educators to use technology as a tool for learning, allowing students to grow and develop as responsible and productive citizens." Ray said that he was proud to be acknowledged by the cable industry and that "as educators, we hope what we do impacts the many facets of growth within our students." Melinda Poore, VP of government and public affairs for Time Warner Cable, added "Lund is a leader in effectively preparing our students with the 21st Century skills they need to thrive and flourish in the classroom and the world.

12TH ANNUAL NE REGIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 11, HARTFORD CT.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES:

SEPTEMBER 4, 2009

Information: <http://ne.alliance.org>



Ray Lund with Ceremony MC, Food Network Star Alton Brown



Ray Lund works with a Thornton Academy student

CTAM salutes Ray Lund as an example of the many opportunities that access television can provide for both the audience and for those behind the cameras.

"as educators, we hope what we do impacts the many facets of growth within our students."

- Ray Lund

JOIN CTAM TODAY

The Community Television Association of Maine is committed to furthering the following Core Values as set forth by the Alliance for Community Media. They were created by Sue Buske for the ACM West Conference:

Localism: Supports local viewpoints, local perspectives, and the interests of local communities. Most mainstream media programming is intended for national audiences and does not reflect the rich diversity of American community life.

Diversity of Viewpoints-Participatory: Local communities must be able to make and air media that reflects local experiences. Our society is founded on a belief in freedom of expression and free speech.

Promote Dialogue and Discussion: Democracy works best when a wide array of voices and opinions can be seen and heard. The airing of opinions creates an opportunity for dialogue around issues and concerns that people and the community must address.

Media Literacy: A basic tenant of civil society is that the lives of all members of the community are important, and all members of society should be able to represent themselves in the media. In order to represent themselves they need access to the electronic media tools to create content, the training to use the tools, and the mechanism(s) to distribute community content.

Non-commercial: PEG access is an essential component in our public media 'greenspace' where, like a public park, we can reflect on who we are without the interference of commercial values.

Civic Engagement: Many of the decisions that most affect our lives are made at the local level by city councils, school boards, mayors, and so on. PEG access keeps the public informed about local government elections, about health services, about public housing, and about other important local political and economic development activities.

Education: Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access plays an important role in our educational system. It provides a distribution medium for use by schools, libraries and colleges; and it is especially important for education in low income and rural communities.

Public Safety: In many areas PEG access channels provide for emergency information and community alerts.

Electronic Greenspace: All communication service providers using the public right-of-way or public airwaves should provide bandwidth and funding for PEG access.



Membership in CTAM is vital for the continuing work of the association. Here are some of the many web-related benefits membership can offer:

- Website listing of you center & contact information
- Individual web page for each supporting access center, customizable with text, photos and video as well as a link to your primary website
- Private forum for supporting station managers
- Free "Ad" space to hire staff or sell/buy used gear
- Access to Google Analytics data tracking for each page of the new website.

In addition, you have access to a large community of fellow access managers. They can help you with a problem, give you advice with a technical issue or just be there when you need them.

The following access centers have recently joined CTAM for the 2009-2010 year.

Brunswick TV 3, Lakes Region Television-LRTV, Old Orchard Beach, Cape Elizabeth Television, New Gloucester, Washington County TV, WSKI-TV Channel 17

CTAM ESSENGER CONTRIBUTORS & CREDITS

PEG SERVER: Story-Abigail Curtis, *Bangor Daily News*, Photo-Robert Nichols; RAY LUND: Student Photo-Thornton Academy, Award Photo-*Cable in the Classroom*; GOING GREEN: Photos-SRC-TV; CTAM: Grillmaster Photo-Brian Knoblock, Meeting Photo-Laurie Severance; TV3 MOVE: Story-John Goran; CAPITOL VIEW: Tony Vigue, Painting by Charles Codman, Maine State Museum

BECOME A CTAM ESSENGER CONTRIBUTOR

We welcome your story suggestions and ideas

CONTACT US AT: newsletter@ctamaine.org

Editor: Brian Knoblock

Newsletter Design: Jen Scholz



CAPITOL VIEW

Model Cable Franchise Update

For the past year, CTAM representatives have been meeting jointly with the Maine Municipal Association (MMA), Cable and Telco Industry representatives to hammer out a "Model Franchise" agreement that could be used by municipalities as a starting point for their franchise negotiations. This process was authorized and required by LD2133, "An Act To Amend the Cable Television Laws and Establish a Model Cable Franchise Agreement" which was passed by the legislature in July of 2008. Meetings were co-ordinated by the State Office of Information Technology (OIT).

The legislation was initiated by CTAM, working with Attorney Pat Scully and the Maine Municipal association as a way to break the "log jam" of franchises that have expired without being renewed because of negotiation difficulties and the uncertainty brought on by recent FCC rulings that could impact how franchises are written in the future.

It was our belief that certain provisions such as bonding and insurance, consumer protections and penalties for non-compliance should be included in all franchises, with the opportunity to amend them to meet local requirements. The benefit of using a Model is the fact that 90 percent of the language will already be approved by representatives of the industry and the municipalities.

The last of approximately 25 meetings was held on July 13, and the majority of the Model Franchise was accepted by both sides with only the PEG and I-Net appendices left to be agreed upon. Pending any last minute objections by the cable industry, those sections should be approved soon. Copies of the Model Franchise will be posted on the OIT, MMA and CTAM web pages. It is anticipated that our web page will have additional information regarding PEG which will be helpful to the towns. Notice of the approved Model will be sent out to our Access Center e-mail List as soon as it happens.

PEGMEDIA CHANGES PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION



Robert Nichols

America needs more locally produced television and less "Law & Order," according to Rockport entrepreneur Robert Nichols. While cable stations proliferate, relevant and interesting programming can be hard to find, Nichols said in an interview with the Bangor Daily News.

That's why his latest idea, Peg Media, uses innovative technology to help distribute and promote community television shows around the state, the

country, and even the world.

PegMedia is a Web site – www.pegmedia.org - and electronic distribution hub for locally produced television programs. The site has revolutionized how local programs find homes - taking programming from the inefficient "bicycle age" of distribution, where DVDs were distributed through the mail, into the digital era.

Nichols, 62, knew of that inefficiency firsthand because after getting involved with Knox County's Channel 7, he volunteered to distribute DVDs of a Maine-produced program called "The Second Act."

Nichols, who describes himself as a "serial entrepreneur" with a strong computer background, decided to look into other options. He found that cable-Internet speeds now are sufficient to do electronic distribution of shows, and so about one year ago he set up an electronic server through which the programs can be downloaded over the Internet.

"I ended up with more people who wanted more shows distributed," Nichols said. "I ended up spending more and more of my time creating DVDs."

"What we've done is energize the stations, because they have more content, and energize the producers, because they have a much wider audience," Nichols said. Hundreds of community access television stations around the country and even some in Europe are using the service.

One of those stations is run by Tony Vigue, who said the programming made electronically available through PegMedia is a great addition to the world of community access television.

"This is a great way to do it," the South Portland Community Television manager said. "We see a lot of programming from different parts of the state or New England on PegMedia. And when a station produces something locally, the first thing we want to do is share it with others."

Robert Skogland, also known as "the humble Farmer," said PegMedia has helped him get his home-produced television hour on the air in places as far away as Oklahoma and Wisconsin. Every week, Skogland said, he would mail DVDs of his show to 30 stations in Maine, but no more. "He's really provided a great service," Skogland said.

This kind of success isn't new to Nichols, who in 1996 sold his Maryland software company to Symantec, which makes the Norton Anti-Virus program. After the sale, he probably could have retired and relaxed on Florida beaches. In fact, he and his wife did retire to Florida but moved to Maine a few years ago and Nichols dived into local politics, getting on the planning board and then the Select Board in Rockport. At the meetings, he noticed something that surprised him. *(continued on next page)*

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“I found that people watched our meetings [on TV]. Not very exciting, but they would watch them,” he said. “The power of local television is a way of getting to people. We’re losing a lot of personal interaction. People don’t come to town meeting anymore. They’re in their cars instead of walking, [or] in their houses, watching TV.”

The PEG stations’ programming had a lot more to do with communities than corporations, Nichols decided, and has been glad to use his skills to help in the nonprofit endeavor.

“This is one of the last bastions of local programming and local people getting involved. We’re trying to preserve that. It’s coming at a time when people are concerned about losing communities. To me, it’s another sort of perfect storm. The time is here and the need is here,” Nichols said.”

STATION NOTES

GIVE ME 5!

Due to a Time Warner Cable channel realignment CTN in Portland has moved from Channel 4 to Channel 5. The station kicked off the change with a “Give Me 5” publicity campaign. The Access Channel can still be seen on Channel 2

SRC-TV IS GOING GREEN

Saco River Community TV is going green – at least on the air. Sisters Dianne Senechal and Donna Sawyer have joined forces to create Garden Thyme, an entertaining half hour gardening show taped in their own backyards and other locations in the area. The show combines yankee wit and downhome gardening information and will continue on a weekly basis throughout the summer.

In other green news, the new Hollis Community Garden, located right next to SRC-TV is off to a great start. The community project is already a big success and Patrick Bonsant and Matt Fletcher even have their own plot.



Matt Fletcher and Patrick Bonsant in their garden

HARPSWELL RESIDENTS WEIGH IN ON ACCESS

What do people think about PEG Access? It’s often difficult for station managers to know how their community feels about their work. Often the only feedback are complaints when a viewer or community leader sees something they don’t like.

Most stations don’t have the funds or facilities to do a formal survey of their audience but the residents of Harpswell recently received community feedback thanks to COMCAST.

This spring COMCAST hired RKM Research and Communications to conduct a phone survey of 225 randomly selected residents – 5% of the population – of the town of Harpswell, Maine. The results were interesting, to say the least.

96% of those surveyed were aware of Channel 14, the local PEG channel and **78%** of those watched the access channel on a regular or occasional basis.

59% said their satisfaction with cable would *decrease* if Channel 14 were no longer on the air.

39% said their satisfaction would remain the same.

On the other side of the coin, literally, their satisfaction with the station doesn’t necessarily translate to financial support.

70% oppose paying a fee in their monthly bill to support the station and

59% of COMCAST customers said they *oppose* paying an added monthly fee to fund the station. **63%** would not be willing to pay anything to fund the station.

39% oppose the current monthly franchise fee of \$2.65. **59%** believe that all cable companies should help fund cable-related needs and interests in the community.

In terms of using the station’s equipment, only **19%** said they would be likely to use the PEG access facilities while **70%** said they would be unlikely to use them.

70% of the respondents were on cable, **20%** were on satellite and the rest had no TV or received programming off-air. The margin of error is +/- 6.5%.

So, it seems that the residents of Harpswell enjoy having Channel 14 available to them but they are unwilling to pay any higher cable bills to help with funding.

This was one survey in one town but it may indicate that access centers have a long way to go to convince their audience, and taxpayers, a PEG station is something worth supporting.



MOVING AN ACCESS FACILITY

The GOOD news is that you're finally getting that new studio and workspace you've been planning years for. The BAD news is that now you actually have to move!

Brunswick TV3 recently moved its facility to a new location and John Goran tells us what was involved.

For several years, I've known that my facility, Brunswick TV3, would have to move. The building we occupied, the OLD Brunswick High School, was going to be torn down to make way for a new school.

Last year, the Town actually made plans to move forward with the new facility, in the old Times Record building, approximately a mile away.

Last January I started making plans to move the facility; meeting room equipment, automation system, my office and all my storage. With the assistance of the Town's Facilities Manager Craig Worth, Town Maintenance person Buddy Rogers, and our IT person Matt Sullivan, we spent several months reviewing, planning and preparing to move. Among other things we had to line up a moving company, contact our satellite systems contractor and inform the cable operator.

After a few delays, a moving date was finally set: the last 2 weeks in April. In the run up to the move I had packed my office, as well as all the storage items and the program library. We worked closely with Comcast, and had all the necessary infrastructure; fiber optic return feed, cable drops, cable modems, etc., planned and installed several weeks prior to the moving date.

Just to throw what turned out to be the only "wrench" in the works, a few weeks prior to our move date, I injured my second knee, and was hobbling around on a cane. I was going to have the delightful experience of disassembling, packing, moving, unpacking and reassembling my whole facility while being unable to walk or stand up!!!

Our movers were scheduled to arrive on Tuesday morning, April 21st. Our last municipal meeting was scheduled to be cablecast the previous Thursday, April 16th. On Friday, April 17th, after dubbing the week's meetings off to DVD, our maintenance person, Buddy, and I began the process of disassembling and packing all the meeting room equipment; a 3-section Winsted operating console completely loaded with equipment, the meeting room cameras, audio system, etc. We completed that job in about 2-1/2 hrs.

On Monday, April 20th, at 10 AM, I shut down the automation system, took the channel off the air, and began the process of disassembling the 2 Middle Atlantic racks which held the automation system, all its various components, the networking system, UPS, etc. When I shut down the system, one of the engineers at the Comcast headend put a slide up on channel 3 informing the viewers that we were moving. It took three of us approximately 4.5 hours to disassemble and pack all the equipment, sort and pack all the cables and otherwise prepare the remaining equipment for the big move the following morning.



When I arrived at the old location the following morning the moving crew was already hard at it! By 10 AM they had the moving trucks completely loaded and ready to go. Off we went to the new location, about 2 minutes away, where the moving crew went right to it and had the trucks unloaded within a few hours.

When they finished, I had a great view of my facility, in boxes and piled up all over the place! The plan was simple; get something up on the channel, then get the bulletin board operational, complete the automation and networking systems, and then tackle the meeting room.

We dug around and found the Compix character generator computer and its associated components, plugged it in to the laser, turned it on, and built a single slide informing folks that we were moving and would resume programming as soon as possible. This slide was up and on the air by 2 PM the same day! Once that was on the air, we continued on building the racks and finding and installing all the automation system components. By 5 PM the day of the move, we had assembled just over half of the automation system.

Day 2 (Wednesday) of the move started with finding the rest of the automation system components, installing them, and then I began testing the subsystems. By 3 PM on Day 2, I had the bulletin board up and running!!!

Day 3 (Thursday) is more of the same, and we managed to get most of the equipment back into the racks, and get it wired and tested. By this time, most of the networking had been installed and testing began on that subsystem. Our satellite contractor arrived and installed our Dish Network system. At noon, I was able to get the live satellite programming on the air, and by the end of the day, I was able to get the main servers and streaming server on-line.

Day 4 (Friday) we made tremendous progress. Just after lunch I was able to bring programming back online, and by the end of the day, I had approximately 80% of our programming running. Time for a weekend break!!!!

The following Monday (Day 5), we were able to get my office built and set up, and we started the task of installing all the meeting room equipment, which consists of 4 Sony BRC-300 P/T/Z Cameras, a fixed camera, 2 flat panel wall mounted TV's, ceiling speakers, 12 microphones and presentation system. At the same time, we began the process of rebuilding the Winsted console and installing all of the meeting room equipment.

It took the whole week to install all the equipment in the meeting room and complete all the necessary wiring. We knew we had a live Town Council meeting on Monday, April 27th. That Monday was spent installing new microphones, tuning the sound system, programming cameras, and otherwise testing all of the meeting room subsystems. By 4 PM, we had the job done, for the most part. Everything was operational; we just needed a few days to clean up the small things, items that did not affect operations. The live meeting that evening went off without any problems.

It took the next few weeks to iron out the little things, get my office up and running, and put away all the storage items.

Now that we know we can accomplish the task in a reasonable amount of time, the Town may be *moving the facility again, possibly as soon as this fall!!!* By the end of the year, we'll be experts!!!!



Community Television Association
of Maine



2009-2010 CTAM Membership Invoice

(Expires June 30, 2010)

Date Submitted: _____

Name of Member: _____

(Name of Municipality or Access Center IF VOTING MEMBERSHIP or Individual's Name if NON-VOTING)

Address: _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Evening Phone: (optional): _____

E-mail address: _____

Please Check Appropriate Membership Category:

____ Voting Membership (Organization) \$50.00

Person designated to cast vote on behalf of your organization:

____ Their Phone Number: _____

____ Non-Voting Membership (Individual) \$37.50

How did you learn about CTAM? _____

Please Make Check Payable To: The Community Television Association of Maine

Print out this form , complete and mail with the check to:

The Community Television Association of Maine
P.O. Box 2124
South Portland, Maine 04116

Questions? Call (207) 767-7615

Thank you for your support !