



Gray Shows Off New Digs As Host Of CTAM Winter 2010 Meeting

Last summer Gray Public Access said farewell to the historic building that had served as its home and moved into a new building just down the road. Their new office/control room is right behind the Town Council chamber and sports Sony robotic cameras and other upgrades. As usual Brian and Brad laid out a lavish spread for the pre-meeting meal and those attending were truly satisfied as we got down to business.



Reverend Rick Kimball then spoke to the group about the difficulty he has in getting local sponsors for his gospel music program. He wants statewide distribution but cannot always comply with requirements for local sponsorship. The local sponsorship issue is a firm requirement at many stations which helps ensure that they have as much locally supported programming as possible. Other stations do not air programs of a religious nature. Reverend Kimball says that some potential local sponsors fear being held liable if there is any legal action concerning his programs that they would sponsor. At the end of the discussion there was no real consensus from the group on the issue, other than Reverend Kimball should try to deal with each station individually to find a solution that works for everyone



The night's activities began with a presentation from Eric Spenlinhour of "Town Hall Streams." This new venture builds on technology that Eric and his partner initially developed to provide live monitoring of children at day care centers. Over the past 2 ½ years they have expanded and improved their service to include church services and other events.

Throughout the evening there were several discussions about membership outreach and serving our members better. What can CTAM offer member stations in return for their annual dues? What do stations expect or want from the organization?

Their city council product does not require any upfront capital equipment purchase. They supply the encoder and other equipment – along with upgrades as they come along, and repair. The fee for their service is \$250/month and includes unlimited streaming and an archive of the programs for one year. For more information contact Eric at 207-752-3402 or check out their website: townhallstreams.com.

Some in the audience felt that we should be offering more services to help stations justify the annual dues that their towns pay to CTAM. Others felt that the purpose of being a CTAM member is not to "get" anything in return but to lend your station's voice and support to the Access community in Maine – that by joining together we are stronger and better informed than if we all existed as separate entities. The Model Franchise Agreement was pointed to as one example of the strength of CTAM as an organization.

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Community Television Association of Maine



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Some suggestions of member benefits that came from audience:

- A “Maine Only” version of PEGMEDIA open only to CTAM members or a flat fee for CTAM members
- A more active lobbying effort in Augusta with the legislature and the Maine Municipal Association to help prevent legislation that would be harmful to Access stations.
- Access to legal advice for specific franchise related questions that could benefit the entire membership.
- Increased efforts to put local media voices together through CTAM. Joint activity with other local media – newspapers, radio, web-based services.
- Should CTAM revisit the issue of changing the name to the Community MEDIA Association of Maine?

WHAT DO YOU THINK? LET US KNOW SO WE CAN SERVE YOU BETTER!

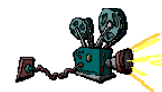
IS PUBLIC ACCESS TV RELEVANT?

Next up was a discussion about training. How formal is your training? Is it done by station staff or volunteers. What equipment do you provide training for – camera, editing, audio, field and/or studio production? Are your classes large or one-on-one?

The key element in this thread was: “Is video training still relevant?” HD flip phones bring capturing high quality images within the reach of nearly everyone. Even the most basic computers provide some level of video editing programming and the internet makes “broadcasting” your video as easy as transferring a file. The larger question

was: Is Public Access television still relevant? Do we as a group and an industry need to redefine our reasons for being and our role in the community? What do *you* think?

Tony Vigue commented on the ongoing reports of cable customers dropping their TV subscriptions in favor of their internet connection as their primary means of watching programming. Tony suggested that internet viewing sites such as Hulu would start to charge for programming, or increase their rates, when their payments to program producers goes up as viewership increases. The audience was also reminded that as cable TV subscriptions drop so do franchise fees on which we call depend for at least some portion of our funding.



Upcoming Meetings

CTAM is *your* organization. One way to show your support is to attend the meetings. They’re a great way to keep in touch with fellow members and to check out the latest in technology, trends or policies that will help you run your station better.

What would *you* like to see at a CTAM meeting?

- A “How To” guide on dealing with the challenges of dealing with multiple

formats from contributed or downloaded programs?

- A session on training classes: What to teach? How to teach it? What works best?
- A discussion about the role of Public Access in today’s society? Perhaps invite local politicians to participate in the discussion?
- Local producer success stories.

Advice and guidance from producers who started small and grew their audience?

- A look at the Maine-only alternatives to PEGMEDIA?

APRIL 26 – Norway/Paris
JUNE 28 – Newcastle

Please let us know which of these topics, or others of your own, would interest you as the

main attraction for upcoming CTAM meetings.

CTAM Board Vacancy

Diane Mendes is leaving the CTAM Board and we are looking for a new member to oversee membership and outreach activities. These two areas are critical to the continued success of CTAM and we hope that one of our members will raise their hand and fill this critical position. CTAM’s mission depends on work of volunteers on the Board and your participation is vital.



CTAMESSENGER CONTRIBUTORS & CREDITS

CAPITOL VIEW: Painting by Charles Codman, Maine State Museum; CTAM MEETING: Photos: Brian Knoblock

BECOME A CTAMESSENGER CONTRIBUTOR

We welcome your story suggestions and ideas

CONTACT US AT: newsletter@ctamaine.org

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Capitol View

It is expected that the “Community Access Preservation Act (CAP Act) will be reintroduced in Congress within the next few weeks. Supporters note that this time there is a Republican Co-Author, Representative Steve Latourette (R-OH).



It may attract more sponsors than the previous version, HR 3745 which had only Democratic sponsorship. When it is reintroduced it will carry a different number. Be sure to keep up to date with the new legislation when it surfaces by visiting the Alliance for Community Media web site at www.alliancecmm.org. CTAM is working to get Senator Snowe’s Washington DC staff to encourage them to introduce a companion bill in the Senate.

The CAP Act responds to four threats to PEG stations: It allows franchise fees to be used for operational costs, including salaries, instead of being used only for equipment. It reaffirms the principles of the Communications Act that cable operators should not discriminate against PEG stations and should treat us the same as other local broadcast channels. It promotes the preservation of PEG channels and ongoing funding from cable providers for local programming. It amends the Communications Act to treat wireless

providers the same as cable providers when it comes to support and carriage of PEG stations.

CTAM will need the support of all its members to educate and inform Senator Snowe about the merits of the bill and encourage her to introduce a Senate version. We’ll also need to contact our House members and ensure that they support the bill as well. Representative Pingree was a sponsor for HR3745 and it is hoped that she will co-sponsor this new version as well. Representative Michaud has not expressed an opinion as yet.

CTAM members are reminded that they should take advantage of the Model Franchise Agreement when their franchise comes up for renewal. The agreement, which is the result of two years of negotiations between CTAM, the PUC and the Cable Companies, provides an already agreed to framework for your discussions. By using it you can avoid spending time

negotiating points that have already been agreed to and focus your energy on issues that are unique to your town. The agreement is available online at: <http://www.maine.gov/connectme/modelcablefranchise/MaineModelCableFranchise.htm>.

Tony Vigue has some additional information available for stations that are facing franchise renewal including how to prepare for your renewal and what has changed since your last negotiation. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of these documents send an e-mail to: info@ctamaine.org.

Also, if you have not registered on the CTAM web page, please do so. If you are a Station Manager, you will then be able to update your station info on the “Centers” Tab at www.ctamaine.org. If you are an individual or non-profit organization, you will be able to access the Centers Tab for contact info about the other stations.

Don’t forget to include a CTAM membership for next year as you plan your budget, if you haven’t yet sent in your membership application, one is attached for your convenience.

Join ACM Northeast/Mid-Atlantic/JAG Conference May 5 - 6

Sally Ann Hebert reported that the next joint conference will be in New Haven, May 5-6. There will be many workshops and great speakers along with door prizes and raffles. Each state in the region is providing a basket of items from that state that will be raffled off and we are looking for suggestions and donations from our members in Maine for our contribution. Please contact Sally Ann with your ideas and, especially, your contributions.

There is a reduction in the fee for early registration and a special deal has been made with a hotel for the rooms. For more information check out the website at: acm-ne.org.

2010-2011 CTAM Membership Invoice
(Expires June 30, 2011)

Today's Date: _____

Name of Member:

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

Address: _____

City: _____ 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

_____ Non-Voting Membership (Vendor) \$50.00

_____ Non-Voting Membership (Non-Profit Organization) \$50.00

How did you learn about CTAM? _____

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

Print out this form , fill it out and mail to:

The Community Television Association of Maine

P.O. Box 2124

South Portland, Maine 04116

Thank you for your support !