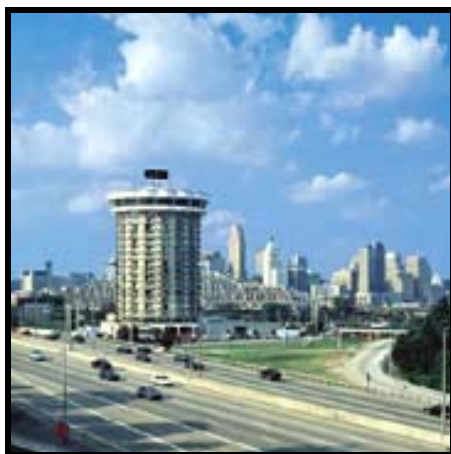




Pictured Above: Dirk Koning, the Fall '02 Regional Conference Keynote Speaker, ponders the "interactive art" event held in the Kalamazoo Community Access Center's Main Studio.

Pictured below: The Radisson Hotel in Covington, KY, site of the Central States Spring '03 Regional Conference. The hotel is right on the Ohio River and near several entertainment districts.



WHAT I HEARD AT THE C/S REGIONAL ACM CONFERENCE

Take a minute or two to let me tell you about one of the important presentations made at the recent ACM Central States Regional meeting held in Kalamazoo, MI. Congressman Fred Upton was listed on the program to appear as the keynote speaker for the Friday luncheon. Last minute change in the lineup . . . guess who steps up to the plate to pinch-hit for the Congressman? . . . Dirk Koning from Grand Rapids! Previous presentations that I have heard by Dirk have been informative and timely. He knows the issues which are of concern to access people, aware of the international, national, and state political climates, and is skilled at communicating and inspiring his audience to take notice and to take action.

A portion of Dirk's message this time was aimed at the recent and current media mergers that are reducing the number of media "biggies" to less than 10 megamedia conglomerates! What that means is corporate media are being vertically and horizontally integrated, owning percentages of other media properties, promoting and selling "brands" across numerous sectors of the media that were not previously linked.

Dirk stressed how these mergers and acquisitions are potentially lethal to PEG access centers

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CHAIR CHAT

Frustration. Frustration, aggravation. Frustration, aggravation, more frustration.

That was how I spent November 14th through the 17th. Those were the dates of the Alliance for Community Media National Board of Directors meeting in Tacoma, Washington, and I was sitting in my living room in Bridgetown, Ohio, knocked flat by a childhood disease. For those of you wondering, everything you've heard about Chicken Pox in adults is true with a vengeance. 'Nuff said!

Back to the frustration. Knowing that the possibility for great change in the ACM was happening on the other side of the continent and that there was nothing I could do to affect it was an experience I don't want to get in touch with again. But in reflecting on this it made me think of what communities with little or know PEG access television go through everyday.

They do not have same power you and I do to create change in their community. They are forced to sit back and let the dominant media frame the debate. They are relegated to a sideline position in the marketplace of ideas.

Now PEG access is no panacea in and of itself, but it is a tool that people can use to gain a foothold in fighting the good fight. Its helps open doors and gives communities a chance to discuss ideas amongst themselves, bypassing the filter of local news and talk radio. It gives people a chance to alleviate... frustration.

In our centers we are privileged to be able to further reduce frustration as we reduce the barriers of access to electronic media through education, training, equipment and bandwidth. What we do is more than a job. Don't ever forget that. What we do is a good thing.

Tom Bishop
Chair, Central States Region—ACM



Pictured Above: C/S Region Chair Tom Bishop (that's Tom on the left) in happier days...backstage at the Fall '02 Regional Conference Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival ceremony with Philo Backstage Hostess Marti Fritz.

Congratulations to ALL Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival Winners and Runners Up! Thanks to ALL for participating in the 2002 Philo's. **Remember, the Central States Region is seeking a 2003 Philo Coordinator. This is a "paid" gig, so contact:**

Rod Swartz, Philo Committee Chair
513-552-8275
Rswartz@phs.princeton.k12.oh.us

Pictured below: Artist Jennifer Oleff (L) and CAC-Kalamazoo Executive Director Linda Phillips admire the final product of the interactive art experience held in the CAC studio during the Fall '02 regional conference.



Continued from page 1...

as the "giants" set their sights on refining the definition of "cable service" with a lot of recent assistance from the FCC. There will be increasing pressures to reduce the budgets for operational and capital funding at franchise renewal times. Dirk emphasized that the key "added value" that access channels bring to the "table" is local community programming which is unique and vital to the citizens of our areas.

Conglomerates aren't interested in what the League of Women Voters are doing in our communities. Our local "electronic soapboxes" are essential ingredients to the mix on the cable channels. Those city council and county commissioner meetings every month don't receive rave reviews, but they do inform and perhaps inspire the local citizens to participate in the governmental life of their communities!

That word "citizen" was another salient and significant concept Dirk mentioned. "Citizen" is a very prestigious term. A "citizen" is one who is entitled to the rights and privileges of a free person, entitled to the protection of a sovereign state. I think Dirk emphasized the status of "citizen" as being more important and essential than the status of "consumer" which is the focus of a great deal of corporate media today.

I, for one, found Dirk Koning's remarks timely and in some respects terrifying. Timely because we still have an opportunity to get involved and make a difference. Terrifying because I am left with the feeling that if we are not vigilant and involved citizens we will likely become impotent consumers.

Margaret Meade: ***"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."***

Barbara Clarke, Access Volunteer and Cable Commissioner, CTN—Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award

Entries are now being accepted for The Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award.

The award is given to someone who best exemplifies the spirit of access television in their community. This person is a leader who has effectiveness, initiative, drive, energy, skill, authority and vision. A nominee may be a volunteer, producer, Board member, staff member or community activist.

Roxie L. Cole was very dedicated to PEG Access in the Central States Region as well as on the National Level. She started Public Access in Dayton, Ohio in 1978, she was known to many as the mother of Public Access, she was also a vital part of the Alliance for Community Media. Roxie passed away in 1994, leaving us with the drive and vision to keep PEG access thriving in our respective communities.

Please supply the following information concerning the nominee and submit it to Melissa S. Mills, DATV 280 Leo Street, Dayton, Ohio 45404 or email Melissa@datv.org.
Deadline is Monday February 24, 2003.

Please limit applications to no more than two pages.

1. How has this person served the community in relation to Community Media?
2. What leadership role(s) have they taken in their community?
3. How does this person handle challenging issues?
4. What has been this person's best contribution to the Community Media movement?

Access Cafe ☕

How May We Sewe You?

Spring Regional Conference
 April 24 - 26, 2003
 @ the Radisson Hotel
 Covington, KY

Pictured above: Amber Woodruff featured in the Covington, KY regional conference promotional flyer. Be sure to “place an order” with Amber and her pals when you get to this exciting conference!

Central States Spring '03 Regional Conference!

Come to the Southern side of Cincinnati for the Spring ACM Central States Region conference in Covington, Kentucky, April 24th through the 26th. There will be three tracks covering Public, Educational and Government Access with 17 sessions to choose from! Workshops will include topics such as Youth Video Camps, Camera Shoot-out, Regional Tape Archives, Interactive Distance Learning, Retaining Volunteers, and Class Certification Structures.

Several social “networking” events are under consideration, or just take a short walk across the street from the hotel to Covington's Mainstrasse Village, the restored German Village with over 35 shops, restaurants and nightspots. Stay for the weekend and take in a Reds game, the Cincinnati Zoo, or a relaxing Sunday brunch cruise down the Ohio River.

Don't forget to check out the accommodations at the distinctive Radisson Hotel. Make sure you reserve early and ask for a Riverview room. Reserve a dinner at the Riverview revolving restaurant or just enjoy the view with a couple of cocktails. Hope we see you there!

Brought to you by...The Wonderful Covington, KY Conference Planning Team!

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