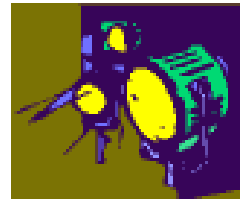


Alliance for
Community Media



Central States Region

KEYLIGHT

Spring 2005

Volume XXI No. 2 www.csregionacm.org

A look at the Central States fall conference



Melissa Mills and Paul Melin talk about
"Ministering through Media"



Conference goers are greeted by
Johanna Perrino



The Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award was
presented by ACM National Chair Tom Bishop
to Robert Harris, a long-time producer
for CitiCable of Cincinnati, Ohio



John Koeze, Tony Riddle and Tim Goodwin are
happy to be here

For a full
conference report
see page 6

CHAIR CHAT

with

Hap Haasch

At the recently completed Central States ACM Regional Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, the Friday luncheon featured the presentation of the Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award to Mr. Robert Harris of Cincinnati, Ohio – a wonderfully deserving winner to say the least. We also honored the memory of our colleague and friend, Dirk Koning of the Grand Rapids (MI) Community Media Center.

This luncheon seemed to have perfect symmetry – Roxie the brutally honest conscience of the organization, and Dirk, the eloquent visionary who inspired people all over the world to get on-board the community media train, somehow together again in our midst. My spine tingled (and eyes watered), and I wouldn't be surprised if others experienced the same sensation.

Almost two months have passed since we lost Dirk. I can't count the number of times I've thought of him and asked quietly "what are we going to do without you?" Usually, in my mind's eye, I see him chuckling at me and saying "Little bro', you're going to carry on and do the best you can!" At the conference luncheon, Tony Riddle (newly hired Executive Director of the Alliance for Community Media) made this observation:

"Dirk knew who he was and what he had to do. He just went out and did it to the best of his ability. Now its up to us to do the same – figure out who we are and what we want to do in this life, then just get after it."

Thanks to Tim Goodwin, John Koeze, Ginger Koning, and several other kind folks at the GRCMC, we were able to show a video clip of Dirk from his ACM George Stoney Humanistic Communication Award



Hap welcomes conference attendees at luncheon

acceptance speech. What a wonderful choice! Dirk called this his "What If" speech, and it paints a picture of what the world might be like if community-based media were pervasive in our political, economic, and social arenas. It was classic Dirk, and I'm glad we have this image preserved for others to appreciate.

Dirk left a legacy as a champion for all those who were unable to speak for themselves. Sometimes his methods were unorthodox, and he took risks that some of us wouldn't dream of taking. However, the impact of his presence in our movement and our lives is undeniable. With luck, and lots of hard work by all of us, we'll look back years from now and see a proliferation of community media centers carrying out a mission similar to that of the GRCMC – "building community through media."

That would make "The Big Guy" smile.

Hap Haasch
Chair, Central States Alliance
for Community Media

A tribute to The Big Guy, Dirk Koning

by Tim Goodwin

“He stood six feet eight inches tall and he was dressed in a T-shirt with a slogan on it and his name was Dirk and he loomed over me to ask if I had a few minutes to talk about public access TV. Sure. Hell, yes. As soon as my pulse rate returned to normal. As soon as I could stop wondering whether I’d get to keep my credit cards. Actually, once I realized he did not intend to carve a zodiacal sign on my abdomen with the rusted edge of an Indiana license plate, I sort of welcomed his company.”

So went the opening lines from Pulitzer Prize-winning media critic Ron Powers in his July 1986 column in GQ magazine after the annual meeting of the National Cable Television Association.

Dirk Koning was a big guy! Five-foot-twenty he often would tell people who asked. It was his most obvious feature, and it served him and our mission well. Invariably, it found its way into scores of articles, even this one, and in many of the eulogies that followed his death February 10, 2005 from a routine heart procedure gone fatally wrong. Big he was, but he was absolutely huge in our movement. He was, I would tell him, the best thing I ever did for community media, an honor I had as founding chair of the Grand Rapids Community Media Center when we hired him as executive director in 1981. But it was also one of the best things I ever did for myself. We became best of friends, soul mates, and fellow travelers in this cause of democratic communications. Dirk came to define the very meaning of community media. The medium was never the message. It was never just television. Never just radio. Never just the internet. They were just tools to Dirk. He was, he said, a “community organizer, around the use of media to share information.”

Dirk understood early where it was heading. “It seemed to me such a natural evolution — convergence of all information into digital transmission,” he said, “Voice, video and data would not necessarily be independent worlds any longer, either in the media or the methods.” And then he set out to make it so at the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, which exemplified the community media center model with



its public access television, FM radio station, nonprofit internet service provider, and media literacy institute.

But as big a man as Dirk was in this physical world and the community media movement, he was larger than life in the hearts and minds of those who knew him, and his death has left a bigger void in our souls than his physical presence ever did in our lives. To know Dirk was to be his friend, as I, and many of you in this movement, had the great joy to know. It was no surprise that people came to his memorial services from three continents and from across the United States on Valentine’s Day 2005. You didn’t expect death from Dirk. He lived such a serendipitous life.

Dirk was a citizen of the world with a keen sense of justice. He carried this seed of liberty we call community media to far corners of the planet, from South Korea to South Africa to South America, Europe and hundred stops in between, maybe one of them in your own backyard. To Dirk, these were seeds of peace. To understand each other was the first step to respecting each other, a prelude to peace. He used the tools at his command and his own very unique presence.

We mourn our loss. As City of Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell said in his eulogy to Dirk, “Dirk, we are you, inheritors of what we mourn. You have, indeed, given us a rich inheritance. May God make us worthy to walk in your way, strong to stand against resistance, and unflinching in our commitment to justice.”— from an upcoming article in Community Media Review, the journal of the Alliance for Community Media.

Tim Goodwin is managing editor of CMR and founding chair of the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Greetings from Grassroots



Grassroots scholarship recipients: Amy Fay Kaplan, Jeni Gipson and Lorry Jayne Hess at the Indianapolis conference

Got Grassroots?

Yes, it's that time of the year again ... the snow has melted, and, before you know it, it will be summertime. Sure, you're probably looking forward to gardening, swimming, dining outdoors or whatever else you enjoy doing during the warm months – but don't forget about the National ACM conference coming up July 6-9 in Monterey, California. Sounds like something you'd be interested in adding to your roster of summertime activities? Worried about cash flow issues that may prevent you from attending?

Fear not, the Grassroots Scholarship is here for you! Application information is posted on the CS Region website and in this issue! In the mean time, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at fejamieson@hartlandaccess.org.

See pages 10-11
for scholarship forms
for the
Alliance for Community Media
national conference
in Monterey, California!

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Rod Swartz, Education Committee Chair
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National Board Update:

by Matt Schuster

The National Board met in Washington, D.C. in early March for three days. The majority of the board's time was spent working on the ends policies (or goal statements) for the Alliance for Community Media. After thoughtful discussion and work, the National Board of Directors adopted the following statements:

1. In order for democracy to flourish, people must be active participants in their government, educated to think critically and free to express themselves. The Alliance for Community Media exists to advance democratic ideals by ensuring that people have access to electronic media and by promoting effective communication through community use of media.
 - 1.1 All people have the opportunity to use electronic media for free expression, civic discourse and information sharing.
 - 1.2 Public Policy supportive of community media exists in law and administrative policy.
 - 1.3 Sufficient capacity and resources are available for community media.
 - 1.4 The value of community media is highly recognized.
 - 1.5 Media literacy, media education and media research are recognized as fundamental components of a participatory democracy.

At this meeting, the National Board also welcomed the ACM's new Executive Director Tony Riddle who is off to a fast start in the National Office. Tony is interested in hearing from anyone who is interested in volunteering to work on projects. If you are interested in volunteering some time, contact Tony to let

him know your areas of interest. Tony's email address is ariddle@alliancecm.org.

The National Conference is fast approaching! Make sure you are planning to attend the 2005 ACM National Conference and Trade Show in Monterey, CA. Conference and registration information is available on-line at www.alliancecm.org.

The Membership Meetings at the National Conference are being restructured to make them more beneficial to all of our members. The first meeting will consist of a "State of the Alliance Address." The second meeting will allow for the introduction of any new business, and provide an opportunity for members to address the full Board of Directors. The third meeting will consist of candidate statements, discussion of business, and any voting. So make sure you plan to attend these meetings at the National Conference.



ACM National Executive Director Tony Riddle addresses the crowd at the spring conference



ACCESS SPEEDWAY

Central States Region fuels up on knowledge at “The Access Speedway”

The Radisson City Center in Downtown Indianapolis was the site for the 2005 Spring Central States Regional Conference and Trade Show. Our group was small, but the knowledge of the speakers, networking opportunities and trade show exhibitors were big and better than ever!

We fueled our brains with information about marketing, media literacy, funding development, media salons, playback automation, franchise compensation reviews, public policy issues and more! We were fortunate to have knowledgeable presenters with extensive experience in areas that are important to community media producers, volunteers, access supporters and staff members. We thank them for sharing their valuable information and experiences with us.

The trade show was fantastic! Exhibitors showcasing exciting new products for community media organizations demonstrated their wares, and provided us with lots of information to take back to our centers. We appreciate the continued support of our sponsors and exhibitors including LEIGHTRONIX, RUSHWORKS, DIGITAL ARTS, MAGICBOX, CIMAUDIO/VISUAL,

SYNERGY BROADCAST SYSTEMS AND MAESTROVISION. They play an important role in the success of our conferences, and the success of our organizations. We thank them for keeping us up-to-date with the latest technology and equipment, and services that make our organizations run more efficiently.

The Friday luncheon, sponsored by LEIGHTRONIX, INC., served to recognize two outstanding leaders in the area of community media. The Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award was presented to Robert Harris, a long-time producer for CitiCable of Cincinnati, Ohio. We also honored our friend and colleague, Dirk Koning, who passed away unexpectedly in February.

It was the pleasure of the Central States Board of Directors to host this event, and we look forward to the next regional conference in Louisville, Kentucky on November 3-5.

If you have any suggestions or comments regarding our regional conferences (location, workshops, speakers, social events, etc.), please contact the Central States Regional Conference Chairperson, Johanna Perrino, at 330-336-7919 or jperrino@wadsworth.k12.oh.us.

It's time for Philo Awards again!



Submit your non-commercial program that was cablecast for the first time between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005 from an access center in the ACM/Central States region.

Get your entry form from the website:
<http://www.csregionacm.org>

Early bird entries must be postmarked by:

May 28, 2005

Entries must be postmarked by:

June 27, 2005

Our vendors are always there for *you!*



CIM's Wayne Newbury and Ed Govin
<http://www.cimav.com/>



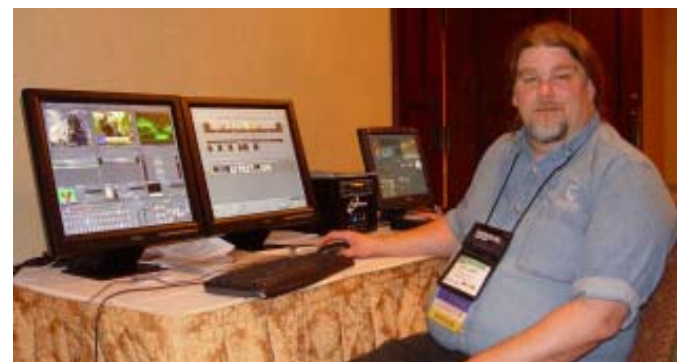
Dave Leighton of Leightronix, Inc.
<http://www.leightronix.com/>



Synergy's Eliot Wesen
<http://www.synergybroadcast.com>



Rush Beesley of Rushworks
<http://www.rushworksmedia.com/>



Jeff Cupp of Digital Arts
<http://www.digarts.com>

Bruce and Scott Morrison
of Heartland Media Group
<http://www.heartlandmedia.com/>

Public Policy Update

by Matt Schuster
Central States Public Policy Chair

Cable victory in Kentucky

Kentucky operators have already scored a victory in their state legislature, who acted on a suggestion from Gov. Ernie Fletcher to revise telecommunications taxes.

A recently approved budget bill will replace franchise fees with a 3% excise tax plus a 2.4% gross receipts tax. The new tax will corral revenue from the state's satellite dish users, as well — equalizing the tax burden on video subscribers, in the eyes of cable operators.

Important legislation: The ACM needs you to help advocate for PEG

We need everyone to start working on educating their local, state, and federal elected officials on the importance of community media, the importance for local municipal control, and the importance of strong public interest obligations for communications providers. Industry representatives are lobbying at all levels of government to make sure their voices are heard, and we need to work hard to ensure that our local community's interests are not overlooked in the process. Many of the arguments being used relate to "parity" between different platform providers.

The cable industry argues that it can not compete fairly against satellite because satellite does not have to pay local franchise fees or provide support for PEG access. Phone companies argue that the local franchising process is too cumbersome, so they can not effectively compete against cable companies.

The danger, in having new laws passed based on these arguments, is that the industry is crafting the legislation in their favor. Instead of taking the stronger elements of current regulations and applying those to different platforms, the proposed bills and new laws are taking the less stringent of the obligations and eliminating local funding sources and control.

In Kentucky, the legislature and the Governor recently approved a tax modernization plan, that included a provision affecting local franchise



Matt Schuster, Public Policy Chair

fees and authority. The new tax plan was designed to increase parity between cable providers and satellite providers. The new law eliminates all local franchise fees and the ability of the local government to enforce any franchise provisions related to franchise fees and PEG pass-through fees. These fees were replaced with a state-wide tax on cable and satellite subscriber revenue. The money collected by the state will then be redistributed to local municipalities based upon a complex formula. The text of the bill can be found on-line <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/05rs/HB272/bill.doc>. The language related to cable and satellite begins in Section 88 on page 208.

When hearing these arguments from the industry, we need to remember that cable and satellite are not equal. Cable companies use the public right-of-way for their service. Franchise fees and other public interest obligations are simply forms of rent for the use of this public land. Franchise fees were charged to the cable company and itemized on the bill. Franchise fees were never charged directly to the customer; any revenue collected (including the franchise fee itemization) was included in calculations to determine the cable company's gross revenue.

Satellite companies paid money upfront to purchase space in the electromagnetic spectrum for their service. So if parity is being sought, shouldn't cable companies now have to pay an upfront fee to purchase their space in the

public right-of-way?

There is also a lot of activity occurring in other states. The Baller Herbst Law Group is tracking information on state legislation that threatens local municipal control over cable regulation and proposed barriers to municipal entry into telecommunications and cable services. [http://www.baller.com/pdfs/Baller Proposed State Barriers.pdf](http://www.baller.com/pdfs/Baller_Proposed_State_Barriers.pdf)

There is a new bill introduced in Ohio - HB 188. According to the Baller Herbst Law Group, the bill would essentially prohibit state and local agencies from providing any electronic communications service that at least two private providers are offering. There a number of conditions that would also have to be met, prior to a municipality providing this type of service. In Michigan, Section 3(b) of HB 4600 would prevent a governmental entity from providing a communications service except for the use of the entity itself. The bill defines "communications service" as defined as a telecommunications service in 47 USC 153 and the orders and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

Both of these examples are consistent with legislation being introduced in other states. The phone companies are effectively trying to limit local franchising authority and municipal provision of telecommunications services at the state level.

In other states, we are seeing legislation introduced and passed in some instances that is harmful to PEG access. In Arizona, legislation has been introduced, defeated, and is being reintroduced that would limit the number of PEG channels to 2 in a municipality, and the replacement of local franchise fees with a statewide tax. There is also legislation being considered in Texas which would have a negative impact on PEG services.

The Alliance for Community Media is working to keep track of these bills and assist local members with strategy and lobbying information. In order to be effective, the ACM needs a strong network of local people, especially those living in state capitals, to assist in public policy work. If you are interested in being a part of the state coordinator's network, contact Sean McLaughlin, ACM Public Policy Workgroup Chair, at sean@akaku.org.

Central States Financial Report

The Region has three main fund raising events per year to help support all of our activities. The Spring and Fall Conferences and the Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival, each should bring in thousands of dollars to support membership services. The region spends money on scholarships to regional and national Alliance conferences, maintenance of our website and to help regional representation serve on the national board of the Alliance.

Currently our finances are in good shape. At the end of March we had \$29,721.94 in our bank accounts and had invested an additional \$16,000 in a CD paying 3% interest.

Special thanks goes out to the many vendors who have supported us at the regional conferences.

Respectfully,
Norm Compton, Treasurer
ncompton@acpl.lib.in.us

State Chapter Report Michigan Chapter

by Mark Monk, Chair

The Michigan Chapter of the ACM would like to thank Colleen McNamara from the Michigan Cable Telecommunication Association as our Keynote presenter during the winter meeting held in Lansing, MI. We would also like to thank the Michigan members for their participation at the state chapter meeting during the spring Central States Conference. Currently the MI-ACM chapter is conducting a county by county search for 'Access Center' organizations that may not know about the Alliance for Community Media.

This summer the MI-ACM chapter will start up a web site. On Friday, September 9th we will have the fall state chapter meeting and MI-ACM officer nominations.



The national conference of the Alliance for Community Media is just around the corner. This year's conference will take place in Monterey, CA from July 7 through July 9, 2005.

The Central States Region will be offering Grassroots Scholarships to individuals in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. The scholarship includes full conference registration, as well as up to \$400 reimbursement for costs associated with attending the conference, such as travel, accommodations, etc)

The ACM Grassroots Scholarship is open to individuals, access centers with small budgets, volunteers, independent producers and interns. Currently, recipients need not be individual members of the alliance.

To apply, fill out the one page application and return to:

Felicia Jamieson
Hartland Community Access TV
3191 Hartland Rd.
Hartland, MI 48353
fejamieson@hartlandaccess.org

Questions? Call Felicia Jamieson – (810) 632-3148 or email
fejamieson@hartlandaccess.org

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS 5:00 PM WEDNESDAY, MAY 6th

2005 Grassroots Scholarship Application
Alliance for Community Media National Conference
July 7-9, 2005
Monterey, California

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Access Facility: _____

Are you a member of the ACM? Yes _____ No _____

Are you a: Volunteer Producer Other (Circle One)

How have you been involved with your access station:

Are you a staff member of an access center? YES NO

Annual Budget _____ Number of FT Staff or Equivalent _____

Why do you want to attend an ACM National Conference and how will you benefit from this:

Have you received an ACM Grassroots scholarship before? Yes _____ No _____

If so when? _____

Complete and return to YOUR ACCESS CENTER

Or

ACM Region Representative
by 5:00 pm Wednesday May 6, 2005

Discover Louisville at the Central States Fall Conference

Make your plans to attend now!

Louisville was the site where Lewis and Clark began their journey together and formed their Corps of Discovery. As the media landscape continues to evolve and change, spend time charting out your course for the future at “On the Threshold of Discovery,” the Central States Region Fall Conference and Trade Show, November 3 - 5, 2005 in Louisville, Kentucky.

The conference will feature a workshop track on “Media Literacy,” including an overview of media literacy and intensive sessions on how to teach media literacy. The conference will also feature a series of workshops on marketing, so you can leave the conference with a developed marketing plan. Plus, there will be workshops on public policy, new uses of digital technology and creating a complete digital infrastructure for your center.

Don't miss the Philo T. Farnsworth Video Awards and the vendor trade show.

Also, Louisville has plenty to offer for you and your family to enjoy. Visit the Louisville Slugger Factory and Museum, the Kentucky Derby Museum, the Louisville Science Center, the Louisville Zoo, the Frazier Historical Arms Museum and more. Visit <http://www.gotolouisville.com> for more information on all there is to do in and around downtown Louisville.

The conference will be held at the newly opened Marriott Downtown Louisville, and the Kentucky International Convention Center right across the street. Make your room reservations by calling 1-800-533-0127 to reserve your room today. Mention you are with the Alliance for Community Media for a special \$95 room rate. Room rates are only guaranteed until October 5, 2005. <http://www.csregionacm.org> for details.



The newly opened
Marriott Downtown Louisville



The Marriott's scenic lobby

