

KEYLIGHT

June 2008

Volume XXIV No.3

LEARN HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH THE “KEEP US CONNECTED” CAMPAIGN AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE!



Forms included in
Keylight

Also in this issue...

- Chair Chat with Hap Haasch
- Spring Conference Highlights



www.csregionacm.org

CHAIR CHAT

with

Hap Haasch



As much as I enjoyed fascinating discussions about the future of community media when we gathered in Cincinnati OH for the Spring '08 Regional Conference, I returned home to learn that one of our colleagues had passed away. Karen Schmidt, Manager of the City of Lansing (MI) government Access Channel for the past twenty years, finally lost her battle with breast cancer at the tender age of 45. This is yet another deeply personal loss for me...she and I grew up in the same small town and I recommended Karen for the government access manager's job when I left for the Community Access Center in Kalamazoo in 1986.

Karen approached her job very simply - she wanted to make good television for the City and provide an important service to the community - no more, no less. She wasn't visibly engaged with the CS-ACM, although I could always count on her help when I needed it. She didn't get distracted by big-city politics, even when they endangered her operation. She just kept doing good work and helping people. We'd joke with each other about how we were able to make a living in media without having to sell our souls to "The Man". I am a very lucky person to have the path of my life intersect with hers for all too brief a period.

This preamble leads me to the main point of this column...those of us working in community-based media are EXTREMELY

fortunate to be doing what we're doing. So fortunate in fact that we owe it to our organizations, our clients/customers, our communities, and yes - even ourselves, to not get caught in the "oh woe is me" trap and simply accept that PEG access and community-based media is in a slow death spiral. I loved what Laurie Cirivelo said in one of our sessions in Cincinnati: "we're not about making television - what we're about is helping organizations and individuals use our resources and tools to advance their issues". Yeah baby, yeah!

Community media organizations face many daunting challenges: at&t's ability to shape public policy to their whim; the transition of video delivery from analog formats to digital; the emergence of the web as a dominant information distribution system; our own narrow vision of what we can be. You might call this moment in our history a reality check, a paradigm shift, or a cosmic realignment of the community media gods. I see this as our opportunity to invent the future of community media...and I'm looking forward to the challenge. I hope you are too!

Hap Haasch
Chair - CS-ACM

National Report

As you know, community media has been under attack. The Alliance for Community Media is spearheading a national effort to proactively seek redress on the federal level. We will kick off our Keep US Connected legislative campaign this July, and strongly encourage every individual and organization to visit their Senate and House Representatives in Washington D.C. this July. For those of you who cannot join us at the 2008 ACM International Conference, we encourage you to meet with your Senate and House Representatives in your home district.

The materials you need—the ACM Keep US Connected Toolkit—are available through your Region Boards, including steps to participate in the campaign, how to schedule a visit, tips for a successful visit, the ACM Public Policy Platform and Congressional Quotes about PEG Access. Talking points will be available by mid-June.

Paul LeValley and Arlington Independent Media (AIM) have graciously volunteered extensive resources to provide you support and advice, coordinate visits between now and the conference, and to work with each of you to debrief and collect the results of the visits. If there are others from your state or District who are visiting, Paul and AIM will help you schedule together—this is great for those of you who would prefer to attend with others, such as first-timers who may want to attend with a person who has experience with this type of meeting.

Please join us in kicking off our national grass roots campaign this July, to Keep US Connected!

Here are the 5 steps if you are coming to Washington in July:

1. Obtain an ACM Keep US Connected Toolkit, which you can use to prepare for and schedule the meeting. They are available via your Region or Chapter. A generic packet is also available from the ACM National Office, however your Region may be adding more local specifics, so

it is better to contact your Region. If you do not know how to contact your Region Chair, go to the ACM website for the information.

2. Contact Arlington Independent Media, which is coordinating and tracking all Hill visits leading up to and during Conference at (703) 524-2388. (AIM hours are listed in your ACM Keep US Connected Toolkit.)

3. Schedule the meeting before or during the 2008 ACM Conference with others from your area or by yourself (AIM is coordinating groups).

4. Contact AIM after scheduling the meeting and provide the date, time and Representative/Senator's name.

5. Check in with the Hill Visits table near Registration after attending the meeting for debriefing and coordinating information.

You can also participate from your home District! Those who may be scheduling visits in home Districts should also contact the Region Chair for an ACM Keep US Connected Toolkit, and follow the step by step instructions for coordinating your visit with the Keep US Connected Campaign (debriefing and tracking info needed for the campaign will be handled via the National Office Post-Conference.)

Don't forget to register for the National Conference!! And if you haven't done so already, join your colleagues in helping to fund the Keep Us Connected campaign with your donation.

Thank you for all you do for community media, and for your participation in this campaign. I look forward to seeing you on the Hill this July!

- Matt Schuster

Treasurer's Report

by Norm Compton

Carol Channing once visited the college I attended for a ground breaking. She said, "Money is like manure, it does the most good when you spread it around!" Well hello Dolly the Central States is trying to follow that practice with our membership services.

First you have to make the money.

Central States fund raising has taken two major form so far this year. The Spring Conference hosted by our friends at Media Bridges did a wonderful job! A special thanks goes out to the major sponsors of the conference. At this date not all of the expenses are in, but I am confident that it was successful in raising a net income of the budgeted \$3,000.00.

The second revenue stream has been the interest earned on the Central States savings. In May we had a CD mature, the interest paid this year was over \$600.00. The savings has been re-invested in a new CD that matures next January. As the year progresses we will get revenue from the Philo Competition in the 3rd quarter and the Fall conference in the 4th quarter.

Now how is Central States spreading this money around for members?

We have put money to fight for our futures in the public policy

realm. The Central States board voted to send \$1,000.00 to Meridian Township in Michigan who went to court to stop Comcast from moving access channels to the digital 900 stratosphere. This was money well spent as Comcast had to defend their actions and couldn't. It also prompted a Congressional hearing where Access had a voice, and legislators listened to and praised us.

The Executive members of the Central States board voted recently to make a \$2,000 donation to the "Keep Us Connected" campaign for the ACM. We have budgeted \$5,000 toward public policy this year and we plan to pledge another donation of \$2,000 at the National Conference in July.

Other money is spent on scholarships to conferences. At the Spring Regional Conference in May CS gave two scholarships (registration & hotel) and 17 local (no hotel) scholarships. We will be sending 5 people to the National Conference in Washington this July. In addition to paying their registrations we will reimburse up to \$350.00 toward travel or accommodations. We have over \$1,000 budgeted for to spend on scholarships to send people to the Fall Conference this October up in Michigan.

Money is spent on the Central States web site

<http://www.csregionacm.org>. Put this site in your favorites as a great resource of contacts, and information. The site is hosted by our friends at the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids. We are also looking to spend money to re-vamp our web site and we are looking to hire to do that if you want more information about this contact Jennifer Teipel the CS Info/Serv Chair.

Central States helps offset travel expenses for participation on the National Board. The Central States currently has two people representing us on the National Board for the Alliance for Community Media. Matt Schuster was voted onto the national board, and is the current National Chair, and we are supporting him as best we can in as he works very hard balancing that job with home life. Frank Jamison is serving as our representative on the National board as well.

So at this time the financial picture is looking good for Central States.

If you have any questions please call me at 260-421-1246 or email to ncompton@acpl.info

Equal Opportunity Report

The Central States Spring Conference held in Cincinnati this year was well attended by members and newcomers from across the region. Diversity in our membership is a very important goal that our regional board strives to maintain and nurture. To accomplish that our board sets aside funds each year to encourage conference planners to reach out to individuals, and organizations by inviting them to our conferences. These are individuals and groups that are unfamiliar with PEG access, or how this valuable asset can be a benefit to them. This years EO recipients were Marcelina Robledo of Spunky Jump Productions, Victor Valez host of La Hora Latina on WDBZ 1230 the Buzz, and Mari Carmen Barbosa who is a co-host of La Hora Latina on WDBZ 1230 the Buzz.



Seated at this years Spring Conference luncheon are (left) EO recipient Marcelina Robledo, (center) EO Chair, Frank Clark, and (right) EO recipient Victor Valez.

Greetings from Grassroots

by Sara Mahle

The 2008 Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award

Roxie would have loved to be there.

On May 2nd, at the Phoenix Ballroom in Cincinnati, OH, the 2008 Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award was presented to a most worthy of recipients, Frank R. Jamison. Nominated by Hap Haasch, Frank has served his community in more ways than anyone can count. Not only was Mr. Jamison heavily involved in the creation of the Community Access Center in Kalamazoo, MI, his continued guidance and involvement has helped it grow into five channels and a 100 watt FM station that functions as an integral part of the local community. A trustee of the Community Access Center, member of the ACM Michigan Chapter board, appointee to the ACM national board from the Central States region, avid documentary producer, and life-long advocate for free speech, Frank R. Jamison is more than deserving of the award, and we know he has made Roxie proud. Congratulations, Frank!



Grassroots Continued

Scholarship Funds Allow MANY to attend Spring Conference

Ever wonder where those dollars you toss into the “Grassroots Jug” go? Just ask any of our 19 regional scholarship recipients! That’s right, your money really DOES help. Just listen to what some of them had to say:

“It was inspiring not only because of the content but also due to the participants themselves. I would recommend that anyone who has the opportunity to attend and participate in future conferences should do so.”

-Judy Vaught, Access Fort Wayne

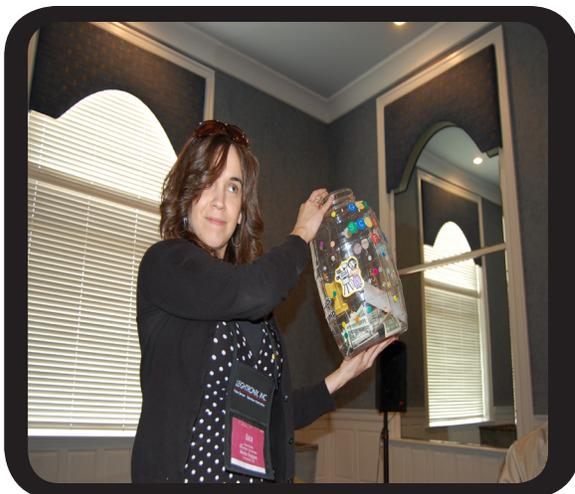
“It was WONDERFUL. Thank you Thank you THANK YOU! An amazing opportunity, I learned so much.”

-Cerasela Ganicenco

“I wanted to thank you on behalf of myself and the students for allowing us to be a part of your conference today. The students enjoyed hearing and interacting with the many guests you had from here and other cities abroad.”

- Zak Nordyke, Harmony Community School Teacher

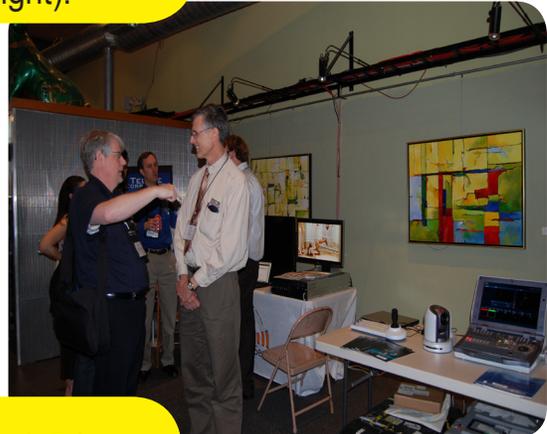
Full scholarships including accommodations in Cincinnati were awarded to Judy Vaught and Otto Boschet, full scholarships were locally awarded to three Media Bridges producers and four local high school students from Clark Montessori, and Friday only scholarships were given to ten students from Harmony High School. HUGE thank yous to all who participate in the Grassroots fund drive. Thanks to you, our family is growing!



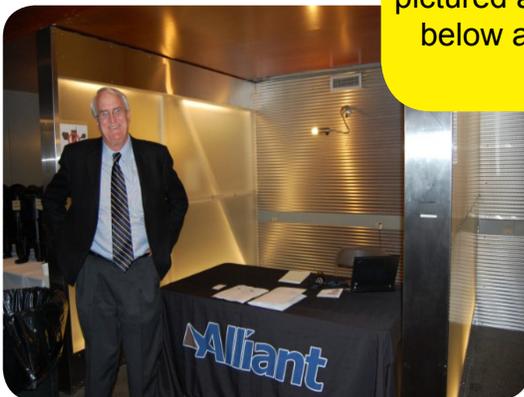
Highlights from Spring Conference with many THANKS to Media Bridges



Pictured above, Keynote Speaker H, Michael Sanders (left), Tom Bishop and Cincinnati Councilmember Roxanne Qualls with proclamation (right).



Pictured above on the left is a session during the conference and pictured above and on the right and below are photos from the trade show.



Central States Region Board members

Hap Haasch, Chair

Community Access Center
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
269-343-2211 Executive@cactv.org

Chip Bergquist

Waycross Community Media
Forest Park, Ohio
513-825-2429x11 chip@waycross.org

Frank Clark, Equal Opportunity Chair

Office of Cable Communications
Cincinnati, Ohio
513-352-5307 frank.clark@cincinnati-oh.gov

Norm Compton, Treasurer, Finance Chair

Access Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne, IN
260-421-1246 ncompton@acpl.lib.in.us

Sara Mahle, Grassroots Chair

Media Bridges
Cincinnati, OH
513-651-4171 sara@mediabridges.org

Erik Mollberg, Indiana Chapter Chair

Access Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne, IN
260-421-1248 emollberg@acpl.lib.in.us

Mark F. Monk, Michigan Chapter Chair

Community Access Center
Kalamazoo, MI
(269) 343-2211 Operations@cactv.org

Matt Schuster, Vice Chair, Public Policy Chair

Louisville MetroTV Channel Manager
Louisville, KY
502-574-1904 matt.schuster@louisvilleky.gov

Tom Shubert, Organizational Development Chair

115 Wilbur Drive, Munroe Falls, OH
330-686-4933 tomshubert@sbcglobal.net

Steve Sobel, OK Chapter Chair

Office of Cable Communications
Cincinnati, Ohio
513-352-5308 steve.sobel@cincinnati-oh.gov

Jennifer Teipel

Campbell County Community Media
Highland Heights, Kentucky
859-781-3495 ext. 12 Jennifer@campbellmedia.org

Check out
the Philo
pictures on
the
website!

The screenshot shows the website for the C/S Region Alliance for Community Media. The page is titled "Philo T. Farnsworth Video Competition" and features a navigation menu on the left with links to various resources. The main content area includes information about the 2007 Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival, a grid of 2007 winners' photos, and a section for the 2007 finalists. A bio for Philo T. Farnsworth is provided at the bottom.

C/S REGION
Alliance for Community Media

- Alliance for Community Media •
- Central States Region •
- Board of Directors •
- Access Center Documents •
- Philo T. Farnsworth Video Competition •
- Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award •
- Newsletter Archive •
- Regional Conferences •
- Chapters •
- Regional Links •

Philo T. Farnsworth Video Competition
Building community through media.

2007 Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival

2007 Winners

www.flickr.com

What is this?

2007 Finalists

The 2008 Competition is Sponsored By:
The Alliance for Community Media's Central States Region

Philo T. Farnsworth

Philo T. Farnsworth, known as the father of modern television, was born August 16, 1906 on a farm near Beaver City, Utah. As a youth in 1922, Philo first revealed his scientific ideas for an all-electric television system. He later established an electronics laboratory in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he succeeded in turning his dreams into reality by inventing the first receiving tube for television transmissions.

http://www.csregionacm.org/video_comp.php



Keep Us Connected

The Alliance for Community Media is launching a national grass roots campaign, beginning this July at the 2008 International Conference, to redress harms to community media on the federal level. Your support and participation at home and in Washington, D.C. is vital as we work together in the new Congress and Administration to achieve strong and vibrant community media. Please help to Keep US Connected!

How YOU can participate to protect community media:

If You Are Attending Conference:

1. Obtain an ACM “Keep Us Connected” toolkit which includes “Meeting Face-to-Face with Your Member of Congress” packet, to use in preparing for and scheduling the meeting. They are available via your Region Chair or Chapter Chair (a generic packet is also available from the ACM National Office, but Regions will likely be adding more local specifics, so it is better to contact your Region). If you do not know how to contact your Region Chair, go to the ACM website for the information.
2. Contact Arlington Independent Media (AIM), which is coordinating and tracking all Hill visits leading up to and during Conference at (703) 524-2388. (AIM hours are listed in your “Meeting” packet.)
3. Schedule the meeting before or during the 2008 ACM Conference with others from your area or by yourself (AIM is coordinating groups).
4. Contact AIM after scheduling the meeting and provide the date, time and Representative/Senator’s name.
5. Check in with the Hill Visits table in the Exhibition Hall after attending the meeting for debriefing and coordinating information. (If you need more info prior to your visit, you may obtain any materials and advice you need before going. The booth will have live assistance Thursday and Friday.

Please remember to contact Paul LeValley, Arlington Independent Media (AIM), at (703) 524-2388 (hours for AIM listed in the packet) BEFORE and AFTER the meeting.

From Your Home District:

If you are scheduling ***before*** the 2008 ACM Conference (July 9 – 12), please follow steps 1 through 4 above, and call Paul to debrief by close of business, Tuesday, July 8. If you need to debrief during the conference, call the hotel and leave a message for ACM registration 202-234-0700.

If you are scheduling ***after*** the 2008 ACM Conference (July 13 — September 30 for the first phase of the campaign):

1. Obtain an ACM “Keep Us Connected” toolkit which includes “Meeting Face-to-Face with Your Member of Congress” packet, to use in preparing for and scheduling the meeting. They are available via your Region Chair or Chapter Chair (a generic packet is also available from the ACM National Office, but Regions will likely be adding more local specifics, so it is better to contact your Region). If you do not know how to contact your Region Chair, go to the ACM website for the information.
2. Contact your member of congress in their local district and schedule a meeting. Information on your local Representatives is available from your Region Chair and from the ACM National Office.

3. Contact Rob McCausland at the National Office to let them know of the date and time of the visit, the representatives with whom you will be visiting, and to determine whether there is any specific information that might be useful during your visit. You may call (202) 393-2650 or email Rob at rmccausland@alliancecm.org.
4. After the visit, please contact the National Office at (202) 393-2650 and let him know about the results of the meeting, including what questions the staff or representative asked, the areas for which they desired more information, and opportunities for follow-up. (The National Office will keep your Region Chair informed.)

***Please remember to contact the ACM National Office at (202) 393-2650
BEFORE and AFTER the meeting.***

“Keep Us Connected” Toolkit

The toolkit is available from your Region Chair to support your visits, and includes:

- **Step-by-Step Instructions to Participate in Keep US Connected**
- **“Meeting Face-to-Face with Your Member of Congress” packet;**
- **Script for phone call to schedule a House/Senate visit;**
- **ACM Public Policy platform;**
- **Congressional Quotes about PEG Access;**
- **IRS nonprofit advocacy information;**
- **National talking points based on PEG Harms Survey, with local information integrated (beginning June 18) (please talk to your area PEG center and Region Chair for more local-specific talking points)**
- **FAQ about PEG Access (available June 18)**
- **A flyer suggesting Advocates add information about the community media organization(s) represented in the meeting (brochures, handouts, annual reports, DVDs of sample programming), and business cards of meeting participants (available June 18)**

Please Donate whatever you can

You can also participate in the Keep US Connected campaign by donating to ACM – please visit the www.alliancecm.org to learn how to contribute to help ACM:

- Support legal action against the FCC’s damaging regulations;
- Provide resources needed to train members how to better educate elected officials, community leaders, and other citizens about the important of access media;
- Enable the national office to provide more resources that help start or continue the growth of community media centers in urban and rural areas.

Thank you for all you do for community media.



Keep Us Connected

Alliance for Community Media International Conference
July 9 through 12, 2008
Washington, DC

Plan for Organization and Implementation

*“Community media is under assault by state franchise laws, FCC rulings, and industry actions. Funding has been DIS-connected...Channels - DIS-connected...Local control – DIS-connected. **Time for US to RE-connect with Congress.***

The Board of Directors and I urge you to come to the national conference and talk to your elected officials in Congress.

Why?

TO:

- 1) Present the Alliance’s public policy platform and ask for legislative cures within the first 100 days of the next Congress.*
- 2) Raise community media/PEG Access issues;*
- 3) Showcase your community efforts*
- 4) Educate Congresspeople about harms being inflicted upon their constituents;*
- 5) Remind Congresspeople that they themselves can use community media.*

Come join us! Information is available on the Alliance’s web page – www.alliancecm.org

Matt Schuster, on behalf of the Board of Directors, Alliance for Community Media

Keep US Connected

Purpose:

To meet with Congressional House Representatives and Senators, tell the PEG Access story, and educate them about real and pending harms being inflicted upon their constituents by state franchising laws, FCC rulings and industry actions that are directly affecting community media/PEG Access centers.

When:

Launch on April 15, 2008 – Complete Hill Visits on Friday July 11, 2008

Visits for first phase of Campaign may continue in home Districts through Sep. 30, 2008

Campaign will continue towards obtaining federal level redress for harms to PEG

Objectives:

- 1) *Provide Congress with the Alliance's public policy platform and ask for their help with legislative cures during the first 100 days of the next Congress;*
- 2) *Raise the profile of community media/PEG Access issues;*
- 3) *Showcase your efforts in your community and the constituents you are serving;*
- 4) *Educate Congress about the actual or pending harms being done to their constituents by state legislation, FCC rulings and industry actions;*
- 5) *Remind Congress that they can use community media if they are not using it already.*

The Rules:

Advocacy, Lobbying and You

The Campaign shall be animated by the original purpose and importance of having an informed representative democracy, and strictly follow the modern rules of grassroots advocacy and lobbying. Information about advocacy and lobbying by individuals and nonprofits can be found on the web site of the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest – www.clpi.org

Campaign Tasks and Activities

1) Establish a *Keep US Connected* Coordinating Committee

This group shall coordinate all aspects of Hill visits over the 3 months leading up to the conference. The Committee shall be composed of representatives from the national board, regional chairs, chapters, National Conference Committee, Local Planning Committee, (LPC) Public Policy Working Group and staff. The Committee shall elect an Event Coordinator who will be the chief point of contact for the following Tasks and Activities:

2) Recruit, Educate and Train *Keep US Connected* Advocates

With guidance and support from the Coordinating Committee, members of the LPC Strategic Outreach Committee, (SOC), national, regional and chapter boards will commit to undertake specific activities that will recruit Alliance Advocates and provide them with the resources necessary to be effective in their Hill visits. Members of the national board will determine specific commitments as required and as requested by the SOC, regions and chapters.

Those tasks include but are not limited to:

- email blasts,
- podcasts,
- training videos on web sites,
- phone calls to members,

- face to face personal appeals,
- distribution of materials and documents,
- hosting educational sessions at PEG Access centers,
- regional conferences,
- webinars,
- special conference calls,
- local educational sessions,

or anything else the local Advocates believe will be effective in contacting, educating, motivating and training individuals and organizations to come to DC in July to meet with their elected officials.

Task 1:

Recruitment

The Campaign's Event Coordinator shall work with members of regional boards and chapters, members of the PPWG and the Chair of Chairs to secure commitments from specific individuals to visit with their congressional representatives. The Chair of Chairs will coordinate the work of the regional chairs who may, in turn, coordinate the members of the regional board, or in the alternative, select someone in the region to coordinate the educational session, materials distribution, and motivational activities. This will require personal contact on an ongoing basis by national, regional chapter board members, each one committing to contact between 3 and 10 organizational members in their state or region to support, motivate, inspire, persuade the members to get involved. Contact schedules need to be established in each state or region as appropriate. Follow up, follow up, follow up!!! Every Alliance member, individual and organization, should receive at least 3 personal contacts between April 15 and June 15 to motivate them to participate in the conference and in the hill visits.

As appropriate to the strategy in each region, staff of PEG Access organizations will coordinate the informational and educational works to their stakeholders within their communities.

Task Coordinator: Chair of Chairs

Task Timeline: The Launch Date, April 15, will begin with an appeal from the Chair of the Board on behalf of the national board explaining the importance of participating in the event. There will be a simultaneous email blast from the national office, regional and chapter representative. Each message should contain basic information and a rudimentary timeline of events at the national, regional and chapter levels, i.e., training sessions at regional conferences, special chapter meetings, dates for conference calls for interested members, etc. Pre-arranged responses to the various emails will follow shortly, to immediately impress the broad nature and support of the initiative.

Task 2

Develop, draft or locate documents and materials to educate members about the issues and to be used as part of the informational packet left with the elected official

The list below specifies the documents which have been created or obtained for the event. The documents were prepared to meet the needs of the Alliance stakeholders who have never done this kind of thing before. Also our members will need documents for their own security and information. The documents are simple yet informative and comprehensive, carrying the theme of the campaign. The packet to be left with the elected official, the “Leave Behind,” should contain in a labeled, pocketed folder, the following:

- Alliance Public Policy Platform (one sheet)
- List of harms done to PEG (one sheet)
- Description of the Alliance for Community Media (one sheet)
- Information from the local PEG organization(s) including DVDs

Task Coordinator: PPWG volunteers drafted or obtained the documents. Paul LeValley’s group is available to “de-wonkify” materials as needed. All event documents will be available electronically on a site to be chosen by the staff.

Timeline: All materials that are to be used and/or distributed need to be completed by April 15 in time for the Launch Date and initial training sessions.

Task 3:

Scheduling Visits to Congress

Task Coordinator: Paul LeValley and his organization, Arlington Independent Media, has volunteered to be the primary coordinator of all visits to House and Senate offices so as to avoid multiple and/or conflicting visit schedules. Paul is available to travel reasonable distances to assist in the educational and training activities such as regional conferences. Members will coordinate their meeting schedule through Paul’s group, then call to make the appointment(s) with the House Representative and Senator, and report the scheduled meeting time(s) back to Paul’s group. An alternative strategy will be for regions to arrange groups for meetings and contact Paul’s group for coordination. The contact information for Paul’s group to coordinate *Keep US Connected* visits is **703-524-2388** or email – paul@arlingtonmedia.org

Task Timeline: Beginning At Launch Date April 15 through Conference
Home District visits after Conference will be tracked via National Office

Task 4:

PreConference Workshops on Wednesday July 9: Keep US Connected: Learn How to Make the Most of Your Visit with Your Congressperson

A 3-hour session will be offered twice on Wednesday, July 9 to help prepare attendees to have the most effective meeting with your Congressperson.

Task Coordinator: Sue Buske will coordinate this part of the conference and workshop coordination.

Task Timeline:

Task 5:

Plenary Session: Thursday, July 10 and Friday July 11 Keep US Connected: Report from Capitol Hill Visits

Task Coordinator: Sue Buske will coordinate this part of the conference and workshop.

Task Timeline:

Task 6:

Debriefing, Evaluation and Follow up to the Visits

Paul LeValley's organization has volunteered to establish a site and procedure to debrief everyone who participates in Keep US Connected as soon as possible after returning from the hill. The room, currently being referred to as the **Hill Visit Bureau**, equipment, and questionnaire need to be determined.

Task Coordinator: Paul LeValley through the conference; National Office after Conference

Task Timeline: Debriefs will happen as soon as possible after the *Keep US Connected* visits on Thursday and Friday during conference; and with the National Office immediately following visits that take place in home Districts after conference.

Task 7:

Begin Creating Solutions to Save PEG Access through a new Administration and Congress in 2009

Based, in part, upon the information from the debriefing sessions the PPWG and staff will begin to develop strategies and tactics for impacting the new White House administration and Congress during the first 100 days of the new administration. The results of the November elections will have a major role in this plan.

Task Coordinator:

Task Timeline:

Task 8:

Local Follow-up and Press

All organizations and individuals are encouraged to send out a press release soon after the conference describing the Congressional visits and subjects discussed. ACM will provide a template press release with basic factual information which may be modified for local use.

Task Coordinator: Rob McCausland will draft the template press release.

Task Timeline: For distribution to *Keep US Connected* participants no later than at the ACM conference in July

List of Documents and Materials to be Developed or Gathered for *Keep US Connected*

1. Script for phone call to schedule the House/Senate Visit (call from the PEG constituent) **Drafted by – Paul Berg**
2. Information/legal opinion about lobbying and/or talking to elected officials (the basics of what can be done by whom, i.e., nonprofits, educational institutions, government agencies, general public). Documents that may be used are available on the website of the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest – www.clpi.org
The documents available include: “Make a Difference for Your Cause,” an IRS letter from the year 2000 which explains the legality of lobbying, and several informative articles, all which can be found at:
www.clpi.org/Nonprofit_AdvocacyandLobbying_Basics.aspx and
www.clpi.org/Lobbying_and_the_Law.aspx
3. Results on research of harms done to PEG Access by state legislation, FCC actions, industry activities which undermine Congressional action and intent in current federal laws **Drafted by – (the activity is being led by Barb Popovic and Michael Eisenmenger.**
4. Examples of good and bad language from state franchise laws **Drafted by – Jim Horwood**
5. Talking points for constituents to use for PEG Access in their visits **Drafted by – Alan Bushong and Sean McLaughlin**
6. Narrative for the funding appeal from PPWG or national board or fundraising committee to members to raise new money between now and July **Drafted by – ACM Fundraising Committee and Mike Wassenaar**
7. List of useful quotes about PEG Access from House Representatives and Senators **Drafted by – Carl Kucharski**
8. Charts of impacts by state **Could be a by product of the harms survey work**
9. The Alliance Current Public Policy Platform (the one page summary of issues and potential solutions which already exists) **Currently available**
10. Composition of the “Leave Behind” **Package/folder assembled by – ACM Staff**
Contents will include at minimum 1) Alliance Public Policy Platform; 2) Basic information handout/brochure about ACM; 3) FAQ about PEG Access; 4) Harms to PEG Access Document Summary; 5) Information about the community media organization(s) represented in the meeting (brochures, handouts, annual reports, DVDs of sample programming), and 6) business cards from the meeting participants and the ACM staff. It will also include a phone script for scheduling a meeting (done by **Barbara Popovich**); and national talking points (based on harms survey), **PPWG** that the **Regions** will localize and provide to the National Office

11. FAQ about PEG Access **Drafted by – Sue Buske**



Congressional Quotes About PEG Access January 2008

Commerce Telecommunications Subcommittee Hearing, *“Public , Educational, and Government (PEG) services in the Digital TV Age”* January 29, 2008

Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI) Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce

“I am opposed to any effort that would thwart the goals underlying a cable operator’s obligation to make PEG programming available to consumers. It matters little to me if such efforts are driven by technological change, the need for more network capacity, or the desire to compete with new entrants. PEG programming deserves first-class treatment, not second-class billing. That is why Congress requires cable operators to provide PEG programming on the most basic tier of service and why this Committee has stated that it should be available to subscribers at the ‘lowest reasonable rate.’”

Rep Ed Markey (D-MA) Chairman of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet

“PEG services play an important role in promoting localism and diversity in national media policy. They provide vital and vibrant services in communities around the nation and foster civic access and involvement in the best traditions of our democracy.”

Rep. Bart Stupak (D-MI) Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

“I am concerned that cable consumers are encountering barriers to receive their public, education and government access channels.”

“PEG channels serve an essential role in local communities and I was pleased to see the court block an effort to make these channels available only to digital cable subscribers. As media consolidation continues to increase, PEG channels become even more vital in providing a much needed local voice and diversity of opinion. The committee must make it clear to cable companies that we are serious about protecting access to PEG channel programming.”



Keep Us Connected

SCRIPT FOR PHONE CALL TO SCHEDULE A HOUSE/SENATE VISIT

1. Before scheduling any Hill visits, please check in with Paul LaValley at Arlington Independent Media (703) 524-2388, to see if anyone else from your state is coming to the conference and has already set up appointments in which you could participate. AIM has volunteered to be the primary coordinator of all visits to House and Senate offices so as to avoid multiple and/or conflicting visits. They can also provide you the name, address, and phone numbers for your senators and representatives and their telecommunications legislative aides.
2. You are calling as a constituent of the elected official. That may be good enough to set up an appointment. But you also likely have your own bona fides -- title or affiliation. So, be sure to state this title or affiliation in the call.
3. Tell the receptionist you will be in DC from July 9-12, but that most of your colleagues are scheduling visits to their reps on Wed – Friday July 9th – 11th.
4. If your senator or rep is unable to schedule an appointment with you at any time during your visit, ask to schedule a meeting with their telecommunications legislative aide. If no meetings are available, ask for the address to which you may send the ACM Leave-behind packet. The receptionist may suggest an in-district or DC address. Ultimately, send it to both! Add a nice cover letter explaining who you are, and what you'd like your rep to know. Arrange to visit her/him back home. Here's a sample phone script:

Hello, my name is [_____], and I live in [_____] city/town & state].

I'd like to schedule an appointment with Rep. [_____] (or) Sen. [_____] while I'm in Washington attending the Alliance for Community Media conference July 9-12.

I am the [_____ executive director / gov't access director / producer / member] at [_____ name of access center] in [_____ city/town].

I would very much appreciate an opportunity to meet with Rep. (or Sen.) [_____] about our "Keep US Connected" campaign and my concerns for public-governmental-educational cable access tv. Will the representative (or senator) be able to see me during that time frame?

(TIP: Actually *use* the script. Print it out with blanks filled in. It will help you to not forget any important points. Add your own personalization, but keep it brief.)

Now, if this receptionist is able to make your appointment (even if she/he mistakenly thinks you're just a constituent who wants her/his picture taken with the rep!) accept the appointment, confirm it back, and say Thanks & Goodbye.

If, however, you are referred to speak to someone else, do so. Ask them if they've been informed of the purpose of your call. If not, make short work of repeating the above script, and beyond all else: **GET THAT APPOINTMENT!**



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

JUN 26 2000

Charity Lobbying in the Public Interest, a Project of
Independent Sector
2040 S Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is in response to a letter, dated April 18, 2000, submitted on your behalf by your attorneys, in which you request information on questions related to lobbying by publicly supported charitable organizations recognized as exempt from federal income tax because they are described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your questions and our responses are set forth below.

1. Is lobbying by section 501(c)(3) organizations permissible under federal tax laws?

Yes (except for private foundations under most circumstances).

2. How much lobbying may a "public charity" (a section 501(c)(3) organization other than a private foundation or an organization testing for public safety) conduct?

There are two sets of rules, and with the exception of churches, public charities can choose which set to follow. One rule is that no substantial part of the organization's activities can be lobbying. The alternative rule, that an organization must affirmatively elect, provides for sliding scales (up to \$1,000,000 on total lobbying and up to \$250,000 on grass roots lobbying) that can be spent on lobbying. (The scales are based on a percentage of the organization's exempt purpose expenditures.)

3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two options?

Organizations covered by the "no substantial part" rule are not subject to any specific dollar-base limitation. However, few definitions exist under this standard as to what activities constitute lobbying, and difficult-to-value factors, such as volunteer time, are involved.

Organizations seeking clear and more definite rules covering this area may wish to avail themselves of the election. By electing the optional sliding scale, an organization can take advantage of specific, narrow definitions of lobbying and clear dollar-based safe harbors that generally permit significantly more lobbying than the "no substantial part" rule. However, as noted above, there are ceilings (unadjusted for inflation) on the amount of funds that can be spent on lobbying. Thus, these dollar limits should be considered when making the election.

4. How does a public charity elect? May an election be revoked?

The organization files a simple, one-page Form 5768 with the Internal Revenue Service. The election only needs to be made once. It can be revoked by filing a second Form 5768, noting the revocation.

5. Does making the election expose the organization to an increased risk of an audit?

No. The Internal Revenue Manual specifically informs our examination personnel that making the election will not be a basis for initiating an examination.

6. Does the Internal Revenue Code allow public charities that receive federal grant funds and contracts to lobby with their private funds?

Yes. However, while it is not a matter of federal tax law, it should be noted that charities should be careful not to use federal grant funds for lobbying except where authorized to do so.

7. May private foundations make grants to public charities that lobby?

Yes, so long as the grants are not earmarked for lobbying and are either (1) general purpose grants, or (2) specific project grants that meet the requirements of section 53.4945-2(a)(6) of the Foundation Excise Tax Regulations.

8. May section 501(c)(3) organizations educate voters during a political campaign?

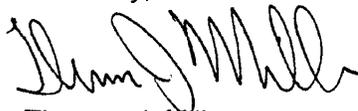
Yes. However, organizations should be careful that their voter education efforts do not constitute support or opposition to any candidate.

9. May public charities continue to lobby incumbent legislators even though the legislators are running for reelection?

Yes. Charities should be careful, however, to avoid any reference to the reelection campaign in their lobbying efforts.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (202) 283-9472, or John F. Reilly, Identification Number 50-05984, of my office at (202) 283-8971.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Miller
Manager, Exempt Organizations Technical

cc: Mr. Thomas A. Troyer
Caplin & Drysdale, Chartered
1 Thomas Cir., N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20005

cc: Mr. Marcus S. Owens
Caplin & Drysdale, Chartered
2005 Thomas Cir., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005