



JAG
Jersey Access Group

Your Municipal Communications Resource

..... Connecting Your Town to Your Residents

Newsletter

SEPTEMBER

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 9

Trustees 2021

Bob Duthaler Pres.- 2023

Dave Garb VP – 2021

Dave Ambrosy

Recording Sec.- 2021

Linda Besink Treasurer- 2023

Stephanie Gibbons

Corresponding Sec. – 2022

Jeff Arban- 2021

Anthony Pagliuco - 2022

Darryl Love- 2021

George Fairfield- 2022

President's Message

Bob Duthaler

Executive Board Retreat

Your Board ... Working Hard For You!



There are two components that help to make a great organization, its members and its board. I am happy to report that JAG has both. This organization is made up of people who really care about our industry, its future, and its impact on our community. JAG members take an active role in participating in monthly meetings, engaging in our webinars, and attending our conference. Members understand the value of JAG. In turn, the JAG Board recognizes this, and is dedicated to give members the best value for their dues, and then some.

To ensure the organization continues to grow, progresses with the times, keeps up with changes in the industry, and legislation, the JAG board participates in an annual retreat in August. This year we meet again virtually for several days over a two-week period.

This is the board's chance to reflect on the year past, evaluate and plan the goals for the upcoming years, and review the organizations Policies & Procedures and Bylaws. In an ever-evolving organization this is an important task the board assigns itself each year.

Each year prior to coming to this retreat, board members are given a list of goals which our organization strives to achieve. Board members are asked to grade our organization on accomplishment of these goals on a scale of 1-10. You can imagine, each board member might view things slightly different from another, but this gives us an understanding of both the organization's strengths and weaknesses. This becomes the foundation of our retreat.

Next, we examined our operational structure, management structure and our action plan. Committee chairs and board members use the action plan as a tool to guide our organization, keep on top of our goals and report back to the members. The reporting on the action plan takes place at both membership

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General Meeting Schedule 2021

Sept. 29- Virtual
Presentation –Varto Technologies

Oct. 27- Virtual
Presentation- DeSisti

Dec. 1- Virtual
Presentation- Municipal
Captioning

Jan. 26, 2022- Virtual
REORGANIZATION

Presentation-TBA

Feb. 23- Virtual
Presentation- TelVue

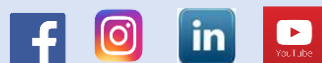
Mar. 31- Virtual
Presentation- Cablecast

Apr. 28- Virtual
Presentation- RUSHWORKS

May 27- Virtual
No Presentation

Jun. 24- Virtual
No Presentation

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meetings and in this monthly newsletter. The action plans for all standing committees and ad-hoc committees were explored in addition to receiving a yearly update from the committee chairs.

We concentrate going through all our financials, getting updates from our treasurer of financial filings and more. I am happy to report out that our organization is financially solvent, on track with all our financial filings and reports. The board also reviews the financials monthly at our executive board meetings as presented by the treasurer. Again, I am happy to report that we are on the track and working closely with our accountants and tax preparers to keep moving forward in a financially sound manner.

Examining our future legislative battles, the FCC being one of them, and preparing the organization for what is to come is another task the board takes seriously. We are aligning ourselves with other organizations in the same fight, keeping on top of the national battle from NATOA and working with our partners and lawyers to keep JAG members informed. JAG keeps a close eye on state legislation with our statewide partners who have a vested interest in cable franchising and broadband. By reaching out to other organizations including the League of Municipalities, Board of Public Utilities – Office of Cable Television our goal is to help steer the legislative battle. Our legislative chair Dave Garb and his committee, along with our managing director and myself, take an active role in keeping up with anything on the hill or state capitol that might affect our industry and getting that information out to our members in a timely manner.

Our policies and procedures are an ever-changing document, although at its core remains steady. The Policies and Procedures along with our bylaws are the very heart of the JAG Organization. It is important to look through these with a fine toothcomb, see what is working, what needs to be adjusted and sometimes what just needs to be cleaned up. The Leadership Development Committee is also tasked with reviewing these documents throughout the year and bringing changes to the board for a vote. Our board takes these documents very seriously, understands the value of them and that they are the very core of the JAG Organization. Some proposed bylaw changes will be introduced to the members at our September Meeting and will be voted upon by the general membership in October. These are strictly house-keeping items and language clarification.

The board uses all that we learn during our annual retreat to help determine future goals, the direction of the board for 2021-2022, and inform the membership moving forward. As always, I invite you to take an active role in this organization by sitting on committees, running for board positions, and actively attending and participating in our monthly meetings. There is a good chance that some board members might be retiring from the board after many years of service, so the board eagerly looks forward to new members stepping up and filling their shoes.

I urge you to carefully read through this newsletter for organizational updates, committee reports, peer reviews and more. In addition, take advantage of all JAG has to offer by attending our monthly membership meetings and scheduled webinars and social hangs. Find something in this organization that interests you, participate in a committee and even run as a board member. The future of JAG is in your hands, and knowing that, I know we are going to be in good shape.



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NJ Chapter of NATOA & Affiliate of the NJ League of Municipalities

GENERAL REORGANIZATION MEETING AGENDA – 12:12pm Start Time
Wednesday, September 29th, 2021

Join the online meeting: [To be sent to members](#)

12:12-12:20p.m. *Welcome*

- Call to Order & Additions to Agenda [Chair or vice chair if chair not available].
- Approve minutes of June 2021 meeting [JAG Secretary or as designated by the president].
- Member Introductions [Roll-Call by Chair]
- Welcome new members [Membership Chair].

12:20p.m.- 12:50p.m. *Discussion*- “Your Value Beyond Operating a Station”

- Future Topic Ideas

12:50-1:40pm *Presentation*- Studio Production demonstration using new technology

- Yervant Keshishian, Sales Engineer, Varto Technologies

1:40pm-1:50pm *Committee Reports* Attached

- Committee Reports

○ Standing Committee Reports

- Executive [Bob Duthaler Chair, Dave Garb Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- Finance [Linda Besink Chair, Jeff Arban Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- Production [Lee Beckerman Chair, Anthony Pagliuco, Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- External Relations [Geoffrey Belinfante Chair, Dustin Dumas Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*

○ Ad Hoc Committee Reports

- Membership [Stephanie Gibbons Chair, Darryl Love Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- Legislative [Dave Garb Chair, Linda Besink Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- JAG Awards [George Fairfield Chair TBA Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- Leadership Development [Dave Garb Chair, Doug Seidel Vice Chair]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*
- Conference [Bob Duthaler & Geoffrey Belinfante Co-Chairs, George Fairfield Vice Chair,]
 - *Report Highlights and Questions*

1:40pm-1:50pm *Continuing Business*

1:50p.m.-2:10p.m. *New Business*

- Discussion & Assistance: Who needs help?
- Other New Business

2:10p.m. *Announcements/next meeting.... Adjournment*

Register for the JAG website by sending an email to bduthaler@jagonline.org

Look For Webinars and Ongoing Virtual Social Hang/Happy Hour Sessions throughout the year.

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 27th.

Details can be found in upcoming JAG Newsletter.



Upgrade to a Modern Broadcast Facility: Simplifying Production with New Tools

By Yervant Keshishian, Sales Engineer & Technical Director, Varto Technologies

Vendor Presentation

Modern broadcast facilities don't quite look like they used to, and that's okay! As we look to upgrade and future proof there are several innovative solutions and workflows available that can drastically improve productivity and give us new opportunities to create high quality content.



Today I will dive into a few of these solutions, but I look forward to our presentation on September 29th where we will virtually demonstrate these concepts and more in our new IP-based REMI control room & studio in East Rutherford!

Everything over IP, Integrated seamlessly

With protocols like NDI for video & Dante for audio we can leverage your existing or new IT networks to easily integrate solutions from hundreds of different manufacturers. This integration can create new workflows that are just not possible with traditional analog or digital cabling. IP moves us past uni-directional XLR or SDI to a world where every source is available anywhere in your facility. Think of this as your own 'audio & video internet'.

At its core, **NDI** moves video, audio, and data across any network; global, wireless, mobile or local, between cameras, mobile devices, production equipment or desktop machines and is the most used standard to move content in the world. NDI has constantly pushed the boundaries of video production over IP and now, with WAN and audio capabilities never seen before, NDI 5 offers unprecedented integration and power to move video, audio and metadata between devices anywhere around the world.

Hardware devices with NDI baked in can range from simple HDMI to NDI Converters from NewTek to high quality PTZ (Pan/Tilt/Zoom) cameras from major brands like Panasonic, Sony & Canon that can send video and receive control data over a single ethernet cable.



*NDI & Dante Used for full IP workflow
(Array of Hope, Integrated by Varto Technologies)*



*X32 Compact w/ Dante Expansion - Supports 64 Channels of Dante
32in/32out (Varto Technologies, East Rutherford, NJ)*

Dante is the leading Audio-over-IP solution in the world, found in over 2000 products from more than 400 manufacturers. Dante replaces point-to-point analog and digital connections with a standard IP network that delivers completely lossless audio, massive channel counts and near infinite signal routing flexibility, all while being incredibly easy to deploy and use.

Audinate, the developer of Dante, has a line of AVIO Adapters that let you use your favorite legacy audio gear with any Dante-connected system, delivering the interoperability, performance, and scalability that only networking can bring. Also, major audio console brands like Allen & Heath, Behringer and Yamaha build digital mixers with integrated Dante cards that can support dozens of channels of Dante in and out.



Mobile REMI Production Cart (Includes TriCaster, LiveU, 8 Zoom PCs, Dante Audio Mixer, 48TB Network Storage Solution & More! (Varto Technologies, East Rutherford, NJ)

“REMI” Production

Remote production, or REMI (for Remote Integration Model), refers to the workflow of sending camera operators and minimal crew on-site to events and leveraging advanced technologies like IP bonding, 4G and 5G cellular, and HEVC compression to feed live camera and audio signals to a centralized control room. This central control room located in your facility replaces the need for an on-site production truck, hosts all your video switching, audio mixing, and is where your final transmission takes place.

This room can range from a fly pack to a full dedicated control room. Generally, this includes a video switcher, audio mixer, graphics system, record & playback system, intercom system, inbound & outbound transmission capabilities.

In today's climate, with people unwilling or unable to leave their homes, a REMI production workflow makes sense. And it's one that's being heavily utilized by production companies and content creators throughout the country. REMI production helps production companies significantly reduce production costs and setup time, increase productivity & expand creative coverage surrounding events.

REMI production was on the rise before the pandemic, and COVID-19 has certainly expanded its use. But like video conferences and work-from-home, REMI will remain a dynamic trend in broadcast long after the pandemic wanes.



REMI Production w/ In-Studio Host & Multi-Camera cut of 3 LiveU Feeds for guests (Varto Technologies, East Rutherford, NJ)



Host standing in front of Cyclorama while being composited live into a 3D Virtual Set (Varto Technologies, East Rutherford, NJ)

At Varto Technologies we are partnered with industry leading manufacturers who are developing cutting edge solutions that are changing our industry. These relationships, combined with our decades of experience, allow us to build modern, reliable & cost-effective integrations that are truly mind blowing. It's one of those see-it-to-believe it situations... so join us virtually on September 29th to see our demo facility pictured above in action!



You Never Stop Learning in This Business

The Eastern Video Expo: A Personal Reflection

Geoffrey Belinfante, Cable Committee, Summit TV

Conference Review

I hate to admit it, but I've been in this business for almost 50 years. During that time, I have attended numerous trade show and conferences as both a potential client and as an exhibitor. Because of my experience at trade shows, I was genuinely concerned when JAG decided to stage this year's Eastern Video Expo virtually. Of course, during the pandemic, I attended other virtual trades shows and numerous workshops on a variety of topics, but, in the few years I have been associated with JAG, I have come to really look forward to meeting with all my colleagues at the show. That said, I must confess, I was pleasantly surprised at how informative, and in some cases entertaining this year's virtual conference proved to be.



One of the things I have learned over the years is that you never stop learning in this business. Whether it's hearing about the latest technology or discussing how to better tell a story, there's always something new to absorb. From the perspective of a person who has been creating some form of communications my entire professional life, I found the workshops that dealt with storytelling, interviewing techniques, editing and lighting fascinating and informative. I know I'm probably not the best person to address those workshops since I hosted several of them, but I really did learn something from the impressive list of professionals that participated in the panels. It's always good to hear how others find their ideas, pitch them and then go about organizing the production. No two stories are ever the same, and no two executions ever go as expected. Knowing how to identify the important parts of your story, and being able to pivot if something doesn't go as planned, are truly important when you are creating documentary programming.

It's also important to understand different organizational techniques, and the methods people use to collaborate with a creative team. Clearly, collaboration has changed because of Covid 19 and will probably continue to change as technology evolves. No longer are you expected to get on an airplane to pitch a show; no longer do you have to be in the same room or even the same state as your editor; and no longer do you have to attend large recording sessions as the composer works with your footage. While I might miss those elements of the "creative" process, these are the realities of creating media in the post pandemic 21st century and it's truly helpful to hear about them from those who create award winning programming. Of course, learning how to better light an interview seems like something I've been working on my entire professional life!

Although I personally may be partial to the workshops that dealt with the creation of compelling programming, there were certainly other elements to the Eastern Video Expo that were informative. As we all face the coming need to closed caption, it was valuable to learn about the options available to help us serve the hearing-impaired community. I also continue to be impressed by the changes that companies like TelVue and Cablecast make in their products to make our jobs as program directors and station managers easier. In addition, it continues to amaze me how integrators like Varto Technologies use these new tools to make our productions look better and reach more people through new streaming technologies. I also was able to learn more about social media marketing and analytics, something that mystifies old farts like me. Finally, it's important to hear about the new methods of over-the-top distribution that are available to our channels. These tools will surely become more significant to PEG channels in the ever-changing media landscape.

Compared to others, I am relatively new to the world of PEG and Community media. I am always fascinated by the way things in Washington affect the way we operate. In my previous life, all I had to worry about was getting a program done, making it to length, delivering it on time, staying within the budget, and making it great. Now there's a whole world in DC which I need to understand so I can evaluate what effect it will have on our business. I always find it interesting to hear about the things our legislators find important. The lawyers and directors of the various organizations that represent us always seem to have an interesting perspective on what we need to do to advance the things that are important to our JAG members. The Eastern Video Expo always seems to give them a forum to keep us up to date on what's going on, and our legislator of the year, Congressman Donald Payne reminded us all of the important work we do.

Finally, our virtual conference wasn't just informative, but it was entertaining as well. Simon Mandal made a potential dull keynote speech fun and informative. His performance on the virtual red carpet and at the JAG awards made the evening enjoyable even if you didn't win. Did I miss seeing everyone in person? You bet, but did I find the virtual Eastern Video Expo informative and entertaining—absolutely, and I didn't even have to get dressed and drive to a hotel to prove that you can still teach an old dog new tricks.



'Editing Techniques in Story Telling':

A look into the presentation at the 2021 Eastern Video Expo

Joshua Vorensky, Associate Producer with ESPN

Tech Talk

Editing to me brings any story to life; the music, the pacing, the selection of shots...everything helps the viewer connect to the subject on a visceral level.

When I was asked by Rich Desimone to present at the conference this year, I was both excited and honored. Since the last time I presented a few years ago, I had the opportunity to expand my knowledge of the craft in producing longer form features for ESPN (my employer) that truly challenged me. The topic I would be discussing in the panel would be 'Editing Techniques in Story Telling'. I could not think of a more important and appropriate topic for the two main features included in the panel – El Paso Strong and 17 Hours: The Chris Nikic Story.



El Paso Strong told the story of a youth soccer team that lived through one of the worst mass shootings in American history. The feature documented the team for an entire year and showed how their sense of family and togetherness helped to guide them.

17 Hours: The Chris Nikic Story told the power of human spirit. Chris Nikic from Florida attempted to become the first person with Down syndrome to complete an Ironman Triathlon. Both of these features under the ESPN's SC Featured series utilize music, pacing, natural sound and shot selection to effectively tell these stories.



To effectively give a full perspective of the editing techniques utilized, I reached out to two people who worked on the features in different roles - Diego Martini, ESPN Lead Post Production Editor who crafted El Paso Strong, and Paul Moessl who composed the music for 17 Hours: The Chris Nikic Story. Diego would speak on pacing, shot selection and the use of natural sound while Paul would talk about the process of creating original music. For the latter, I felt this was a process that some may be unfamiliar with (myself included until recently) and could be beneficial as well.

The week leading into the Expo, I discussed with Geoffrey Belinfante (who helped to moderate the panel) on the overall structure of the presentation. Geoffrey correctly pointed out that it was also important to give a viewer a sense of how you helped to find/pitch the idea and start with the production. The panel was scheduled to be an hour and I created a Power Point presentation to ensure that we covered everything while leaving room for questions.

We started by discussing how the pieces came to production, and then transitioned to the importance of music and the process of its composition for the Chris Nikic Feature. To illustrate this, I took a 1-minute segment and showed the audience the feature with/without music. This was important for two reasons. First, it showcased the importance of music. Second, it gave Paul time to talk about his process of crafting music.



After all, when Paul starts his process we give him the raw piece without instrumentals so he's able to work from there. Paul was able to explain the full process including our initial discussions, well before I even send him the raw element. It's important to give a composer sources of inspiration, providing examples and sample instrumentation.

Next, we transitioned to the importance of natural sound and pacing. Never was this more important than in El Paso Strong. In the segment I showed, the team was honored during a professional soccer game in El Paso. The fireworks set off during the national anthem caused severe distress in the group. The natural sound of the fireworks and team in distress helped to illustrate that these tragedies can have long lasting impacts.



Once we finished the main presentation portion of the panel, it was time for questions. I think one of the many benefits of the expo is the experience that every attendee brings. As we went through the presentation, there were important follow up questions including detailing the timeline of production, the pitching process and how the features were received. I thought the answers provided much needed discussions on the production process. As we wrapped up right at the hour mark, I was very taken with the reception from everyone.

I would like to thank Rich Desimone, Geoffrey Belinfante and JAG for their efforts to organize such a successful conference and giving me the opportunity to share my experience.

*About the Author: Joshua Vorensky is an Emmy-Award Winning Associate Producer with ESPN. He has worked on features from the NFL to Golf to the Special Olympics. His feature - El Paso Strong is nominated for a Sports Emmy this year. Josh got his start at MEtv in Metuchen, New Jersey when he was in high school and graduated from Ithaca College in 2011.***His opinions for this article are his own***Photos courtesy of ESPN*

The video of this session is now available on the JAG website in the Members Only section.



In this column I regularly cover topics helpful to independent producers. Today's column will cover some of the lessons I learned during the 2021 Eastern Video Expo that I will be placing in my virtual toolbox. I will focus on interviewing techniques, lighting and editing techniques.



Interviewing Techniques

Being able to tell the story means that interviewing skills are important. During the Expo, I learned some great strategies on how to tell a good story and was also reminded of strategies I currently use in telling a good story.

Be prepared and research your subject

An interview is not the place for you to "wing it" and hope for the best. The best way to engage is to know your subject. This means going beyond the fact sheet your guest sends. Learn about the industry and subject matter. You do not have to be an expert, but you should know enough to ask intelligent questions and engage your audience.

Ask "What happened next?"

A solid way to elicit an expansive answer is to ask, what happened next? This helps pull the story along in a linear fashion and it allows your subjects to tell the story at a pace that is comfortable for them. I have experienced a few interviews where my guest answered monosyllabically and asking this simple question would have elicited better responses.

Do a pre-interview

Part of being prepared is doing a pre-interview. This does not necessarily mean doing an actual interview but rather asking your guests what they would like to talk about. When you determine what they want to talk about, it will help you stay on topic and make sure you cover these areas if you find you are running out of time. Doing a pre-interview helps with a successful interview.

Do not ask the most important question first

This was a great piece of advice. How many times have you interviewed someone and asked all the important questions too early in the interview and the rest of the interview was anticlimactic? Asking the background questions that should have proceeded those important questions are not as engaging since you have already asked the most important questions.

Can you imagine having been granted an interview with the late Neil Armstrong and the first question is "What was it like to walk on the moon?" The questions that come after: Why did you decide to become an astronaut? How long was your training? Why were you the one to walk on the moon first? would pale in comparison.

Be silent after asking a question

Silence is important when asking a question. Sometimes an inexperienced interviewer will want to fill up every available moment with words since silence feels awkward, however, leaving that extra space may elicit a more thoughtful or sincere response.

Interviewing Tips

Be prepared

Ask "What happened next?"

Do a pre-interview

Do not ask the most important question first

Be silent after asking a question

Lighting

One of the trickiest but most rewarding things to accomplish is good lighting. Lighting can take years off of subjects, create a mood or even tell a story. This session impressed how important lighting is beyond making sure that there is adequate lighting for the camera. Lighting can complement the story. The session was quite comprehensive, so I will focus on: using the correct lighting based on skin tone, storytelling and softening facial features.

Skin tone

It is rare that a studio adjusts the ceiling lights or even uses the floor fill lights for a show but doing so will improve the overall quality of your shows. For example, our studio often has guests who have both light and dark skin on the same show. Guests with lighter skin look fine as most lights and light set ups default to lighter skin. However, guests with darker skin should have extra light on the side, otherwise the skin can appear grayish and unnatural looking. Good lighting enables everyone to look natural and increases the overall quality of the production.

Storytelling

We were given great examples of how using shadows and darkness can help tell the story. We were shown video examples demonstrating how where the light was placed, (sides, back or front) in relationship to the subject, could create a story. For example, since the eyes follow the brightest point, wherever you place the light will physically lead the story in that direction. You can have a person seated and have a bright light to the left and the eyes will naturally be drawn in that direction. You can use light to create drama, fear or evoke other emotions you would like to use to tell a story. Using light and dark is a unique part of storytelling that is often overlooked.

Softer facial features

Everyone wants to look great on camera and depending on how well-rested your subject is, you can help them attain that rested look by how you light them. One strategy we learned was that if subjects have bags under their eyes, you can relax that look with correct light placement and a diffuser. In this case, you would place the diffused lights at ground level in front of the subject, pointing toward the face. This allows the face to soften, and it will not create a shadow on the face.

Lighting: Things to Consider

Skin tone

Storytelling

Softening facial features

Editing Techniques

I was really looking forward to this session because I do a lot of editing for our studio, and I was looking forward to learning new techniques. This was another session with many good strategies so I will focus on the music because it was very interesting how they explained how important it is. Most independent producers have a music library available to them but how many know to correctly use music to create an engaging story?

Mood board

The music you choose can create the overall mood of the production. Think about how the music from Sesame Street complements the series. Just as you would probably not put jovial music over a funeral scene, you would also not put typical funereal music over a children's show intro. One thing I try to do when choosing music is to create an emotional feeling which is what the presenters recommended. One example that immediately comes to mind is Spike Lee's use of jazz music in his movies. The tempo, the selection and the type of jazz music all align with what the audience sees. This not only helps to move the story along, but the music also helps tell the story.

Another thing mentioned in the session was that it is perfectly acceptable not to have any sound at all. I have used this when a sensitive subject has been addressed on an episode. Having no music is more impactful on what has just been viewed. The mind can focus on what has been seen instead of competing with music that does not add to the story.

As an independent producer, using the right type of music can let your audience know what to anticipate even before they see a frame, and silence can be just as powerful as a full orchestra if used correctly.

Pacing

The presenters said that once editing is complete, then add the music. This was an excellent tip because until you have seen the finished product, you cannot fully expect to know how any music will fit in with the final edited video. You may have an overall idea of how the music will fit, but depending on the pace of the video, the end result can be quite different. Is the video capturing a national park with wildlife or is the video capturing an interview of a person graduating from college? The music for each of these videos is going to be different because the pace of each video will be very different. Another great suggestion was to set aside the entire project for a day and then come back to it. This is good advice for most projects but especially when you have been editing projects for long periods of time. This gives editors the ability to see things they may have missed by being so close to the project.

Editing Techniques: Things to Consider

Mood board

Pacing

I have mentioned just some of the things I learned at the 2021 Eastern Video Expo that I will be placing in my virtual toolbox for future use, and I will be adding more tools as needed.

Dustin Dumas is the host and producer of *Dustin's Kaleidoscope* and *What's Up Around Town*. She is the station manager of South Orange Maplewood Television (SOMAtv) and serves as Vice Chair on the Jersey Access Group, External Relations Committee. She has been part of community television stations in Illinois, California and New Jersey and enjoys helping people tell their stories.



Transition from Analog to Digital

Dimitry Mikhaylov, Vice President, Fair Lawn Television

Spotlight

We in Fair Lawn were just dreaming to switch our old analog plant to digital. In fact, the digital upgrade didn't begin until 2019 when our old Leightronix server was suddenly dead, and we got a chance to replace all our outdated equipment at once. As late as 2019 seems, there are some surprising advantages to coming late to a new technology. Digital workflow was a mature, robust system that was adopted by broadcasters at every level, and we had the advantage of learning from all those who were on the bleeding edge of adoption.



The town management authorized a modest budget to accomplish our conversion, but as a small PEG channel we surely couldn't afford the same equipment as the broadcast stations around the country. We knew that we needed to work with someone who truly understood the marketplace, someone who could design a facility that would do what we needed to do within our budget. We began talking to Varto and Yervant at Varto Technologies about our needs and it soon became apparent they understood both the technical requirements and the financial constraints that faced our project.



Our analog control room was in the basement of our Municipal building, but the meetings we needed to cover were on the second floor. This immediately presented a challenge. How could we get the video and audio we needed from the council chamber back to our control room without pulling multiple cables. Varto introduced us to the concept of using NDI technology. It would allow us to send all the video and the control signals to and from the three cameras in the council chamber to the control room on just one Cat 6a cable.

We purchased three PTZ Optics cameras for the council chamber and the Cat 6 cable allowed us to run power and pan-tilt-zoom control remotely from the control room over the same cable. To ensure reliable signal flow, Varto designed a standalone IT network to carry the Video over IP signals without relying on the existing network within the building. Once the signals reached the control room, they were converted to SDI and routed to a Black Magic 12X12 Router Switch and sent to a Tricaster Mini with an outboard control surface and Skaarhaj controller that is the heart of our studio. We added a 50-inch Samsung LCD Monitor as a multiviewer that allows us to monitor the feeds from the cameras and the preview and program feed from the Tricaster.



We were faced with a difficult decision regarding the nature of the audio feeds from the council chamber. We could have run them digitally over the IP network, but that would have cost a fair amount of money and required us to purchase a new audio board. We already had a single analog line that carried the mixed signal from the PA system in the council chamber to the control room so we decided just to use what was already there. We ran that feed into a Shure 6-port portable mixer and then into the Tricaster. This audio mixer was the only device we were able to use from our previous control room. Although our audio is still analog, the IP network that Varto installed will allow us to deliver digital audio to the control room in the future.

We also purchased a LiveU 2000 server in anticipation of the day when we will do remote productions in other places around the town. We experimented with the LiveU cell phone app, but we have not purchased a professional transmitter yet.

Now that we could produce a complete show with our new equipment, we needed a new server to schedule live and pre-recorded programming and to run our community billboard. This was one of the most difficult decisions we had to make. After carefully reviewing the marketplace, we decided on a Cablecast VIO server. As you know, there are many servers on the market and they all will allow you to program your station and send a signal to your cable provider. It became a matter of which system was easiest to program for our staff. The Cablecast interface was intuitive, and the billboard was easy to program. In addition, while the pandemic hadn't started yet, we were able to program both the station and the bulletin board remotely. Of course, this feature proved invaluable during the pandemic. While we liked the TelVue system a lot, the Cablecast server also turned out to be a bit cheaper than the other options. Their billboard software seemed to be a bit more advanced and the additional bulletin board services such as weather, news and traffic were included in their price. The other suppliers required additional payments for these services.



Ironically, now that we can make beautiful, digitally created HD pictures for the channel, we have to downgrade the signal with a Black Magic converter to a 16X9 SD signal to supply to our Altice cable provider. Luckily, we don't have to downgrade the signal for our Verizon FIOS feed anymore. Hopefully we will be able to provide Altice with an HD signal too in the very near future.

Two additional points: Thanks to the team from Varto Technologies - the entire job, from the cabling to powering up the equipment, was completed in just 5 days. Of course, with all this new equipment, we needed training, and again Yervant provided us with necessary training until we were up to speed on the operation of all the new gear.

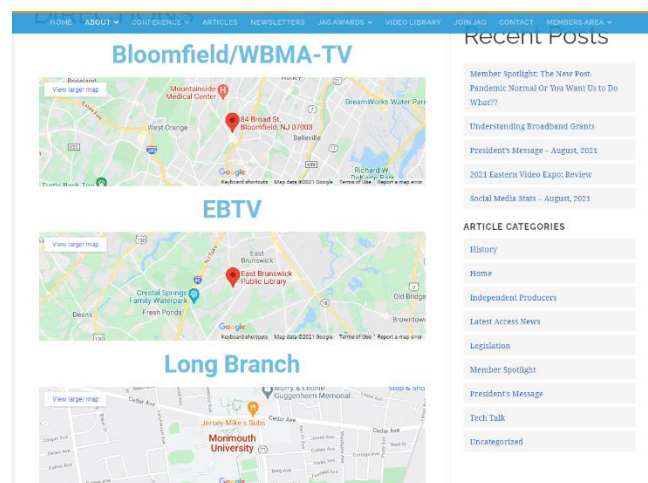
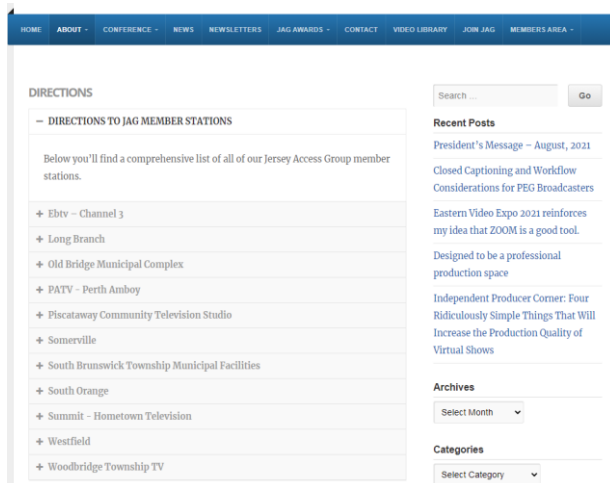
In addition to our linear cable channel, we now stream our council meetings live to Facebook once or twice a month, and we also now produce and stream a daily Russian Language program. In the future we hope to purchase a Cablecast Streaming server that will allow us to stream all the programming on the channel 24 hours a day.

Luckily, the entire job was completed before the COVID pandemic and with the new equipment, we can run almost our entire operation remotely. Physical presence at the station was needed only during live or zoom council meetings and for daily streaming.

While the upgrade was long overdue, we now have a digital facility that makes beautiful HD pictures at a price that we could afford. The installation was done professionally. All wiring was neat and the connections in our council chambers were all made with decorative wall plates for an aesthetically pleasing finish. Upgrading a facility is always a challenge, but with the help of the team from Varto Technologies, the process was painless, and the results were just what we needed at a price we could afford.



3..2..1..Launch. The brand new JAGonline.org is live! You should notice some changes right away when you visit the website. If you were familiar with the site before you should have no trouble finding what you need, the main navigation has stayed the same. A huge difference is that things are a bit more organized. Since the site has been around for a while, we had a good amount of information and now it is just archived so it looks cleaner. We also were able to add some plug ins that make the site look more modern - notice the difference in the old and new directions pages.



Take some time and look over the site. There are some big changes to our member lists and executive board members page. The articles also look better with the update, so you can have a better reading experience while visiting the site. I am sure you will agree that the site looks much better and information is easier to find.



JERSEY ACCESS GROUP

facebook.com/pegvtv linkedin.com/company/jersey-access-group instagram.com/jersey_access_group

EASTERN VIDEO EXPO

facebook.com/Easternvideoexpo instagram.com/easternvideox/

Do not forget to check out our YouTube channel! Have something you want on our YouTube channel? Send a link to dseidel@piscatawaynj.org for review.

New Content: [Mayor's Summer Concert: The Infernos](#) – WoodbridgeTV [Aging Insights 119](#) - NJAAW

NEW CONTENT ON WEBSITE- We have now posted 24 programs from the Eastern Video Expo events to the members only section of our website. To view the video content links below, you need a members only password.

Email ibesink@gmail.com for the password.

Lighting isn't for exposure – it's for communication
Dave Landau, Cinematographer, lighting director
Sponsored by DeSisti

VIEW VIDEO

Marketing with Social Media
Sabrina Teekah, Producer & Host of
"Now or Never" and Cyd Katz,
Founder/CEO New Jersey Isn't Boring

VIEW VIDEO

Storytelling from Concept to Completion
Joe Lavine, Emmy award winning director/producer
and Ouisie Shapiro, Emmy award-winning
writer/producer

VIEW VIDEO

Editing Techniques in Storytelling
Joshua Vorensky, Emmy-Award Winning
Associate Producer with ESPN

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Interviewing Techniques
Budd Mishkin, Broadcast Journalist and
William Weinbaum, digital journalist and producer ESPN

VIEW VIDEO

Paul Moessl, Film and TV Composer and
Diego Martini, Emmy Award Winning Editor at ESPN

Share the value of Jag's newsletter with your elected officials, cable committee, station volunteers, associates, and friends. Send this invitation: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/B7EMU1R/JAGnewsletter>



Committees

Rich Desimone, Managing Director

Volunteerism

All committees presented their Year End Reports at the JAG Executive Board Retreat. Committees had a very successful year and have set their Action Plan for 2021-2022, and they will need help. The chairs will be reaching out to members to join their committees.



Executive 2021 (as of 1.13.21) Meeting second Wednesday 12:00PM	Production 2021 (as of 3.8.21) Meeting first Monday 11AM	External Relations 2021 (as of 2.5.21) Meeting first Thursday 12:30pm
Bob Duthaler, President 2021-2024	Lee Beckerman (Chair) 2021-2023	Geoffrey Belinfante (Chair) 2021-2023
Dave Garb, Vice-President- 2019-2021	Anthony Pagliuco (Vice Chair) 2020-2022	Dustin Dumas (Vice Chair) 2020-2022
Linda Besink, Treasurer- 2021-2024	Dave Ambrosy: (Secretary) 2021-2023	Stephanie Gibbons (Co-Secretary) 2021-2023
Dave Ambrosy, Secretary- 2019-2021	Nick Besink	Dustin Dumas (Co-Secretary) 2021-2023
Stephanie Gibbons, Corresponding Sec.- 2021-2023	Dave Garb	Doug Seidel-Social Media
Anthony Pagliuco, Trustee 2021-2023	Robert Horvath	Bob Duthaler: NJLOM Join Session, JAG Session, Booth Staffing and rooms, Web Site
Jeff Arban, Trustee 2019-2021	Geoffrey Belinfante: Access NJ	Rich Desimone: JAG Newsletter Editor
Darryl Love, Trustee 2019-2021	Doug Seidel: YouTube Channel	Dave Garb
George Fairfield, Trustee 2021-2023	Bob Duthaler	George Bumiller
Lee Beckerman, Production Chair 2021-2023		Robert Horvath—Web design and Social Media
Geoffrey Belinfante, External Relations Chair 2021-2023		
Rich Desimone: Managing Director Action Plan/Policies & Procedures/Bylaws		
Finance 2020 (as of 2.9.21) Meeting second Tuesday 11AM	Legislation 2021 (as of 2.5.21) Meeting first Tuesday 11AM	Conference 2021 (as of 3.8.21) SUSPENDED ACTIVITY
Linda Besink: (Chair) APPOINTED	Dave Garb (Chair) 2020-2022	Bob Duthaler (Co-Chair) 2020-2022
Jeff Arban (Vice Chair) 2020-2022	Linda Besink (Vice Chair) 2020-2022	Geoffrey Belinfante (Co-Chair) 2020-2022
Geoffrey Belinfante (Secretary) 2021-2023	Linda Besink (Secretary) 2020-2022	George Fairfield (Vice-Chair) 2020-2022
Bob Duthaler: President	Bob Duthaler: NJLM	Doug Seidel (Secretary) 2020-2022
Dave Garb: Vice President	Ada Erik: NJ Legislation	Linda Besink: (Treasurer) APPOINTED
Lee Beckerman, Production Chair	Nick Besink	Anthony Pagliuco
	Jeff Arban	Dave Ambrosy
		Stephanie Gibbons
		Lee Beckerman
		Dave Garb
		Jeff Arban
Leadership Development 2020 (as of 10.12.20) Meeting second Monday 11AM	Membership 2021 (as of 1.7.21) Meeting first Tuesday 1PM	JAG Awards (as of 2.12.21) Meeting first Monday 11am
Dave Garb (Chair) Legislative Rep APPOINTED	Stephanie Gibbons (Chair) ELECTED 2021-2023	George Fairfield (Chair) 2020-2022
Doug Seidel: (Vice Chair) 2020-2022	Darryl Love (Vice Chairs) 2020-2022	OPEN (Vice Chair) 2022
Linda Besink: Finance Rep (Secretary) 2020-2022	Linda Besink: (Secretary) Data Management ELECTED 2021-2023	Valerie Stevens: (Secretary) 2020-2022
Stephanie Gibbons: Membership Rep	Bob Duthaler: List Serve	Dave Garb
Anthony Pagliuco: Production Rep	Dave Garb	Ronni Garrett
Dustin Dumas: External Relations Rep	George Fairfield	
George Fairfield: JAG Awards Rep	Geoffrey Belinfante	
Geoffrey Belinfante: Conference Rep	George Bumiller	



- Wednesday, September 29, 12:12pm — General Meeting via virtual video service
 - Topic for Discussion: Your Value Beyond Operating a Station
 - Presentation: Yervant Keshishian, Sales Engineer, Varto Technologies
- Monday, October 4, 11am — Production Committee Meeting via conference call
 - League booth video: Gather content from members
 - JAG You Tube Channel Management: Reviewing submissions requests.
- Tuesday, October 5, 11am — Finance Committee Meeting via conference call
 - Financial Reports
 - Billing 2021 follow-ups
- Tuesday, October 5, 1pm — Membership Committee Meeting via virtual video service
 - Delinquent Membership follow-up
 - Member Outreach Survey: Evaluating results
 - Managing Membership Benefits
- Thursday, October 7, 11am — JAG Awards Committee Meeting via virtual video service
 - Processing award orders
 - Looking towards next year's awards
- Thursday, October 7, 12:30pm — External Relations Committee Meeting via virtual video service
 - Membership Library: Collecting and management of member documents
 - Vendor Presentation: Scheduled September–December 2021.
 - Organizational Members: Searching for new members
 - Website updates: Reviewing launch of updated website
 - Newsletter Development & Management: Increase circulation.
 - Social Media Management: Drive JAG YouTube Channel subscribers and content submissions.
- Monday, October 11, 11am — Leadership Development Meeting via virtual video service
 - Marketing Plan: Developing strategy for increasing awareness and membership
 - Tool Box Development: Establish list of all related material from P&P and recommend update to Ex. Board
 - Membership Development: Review all form letters and send updates to Ex. Board.
 - Committee Assistance: Supporting interaction of committees.
 - Developing Pandemic Report: What towns did.
- Tuesday, October 12, 11am — Legislative Committee Meeting via conference call
 - League booth video: Gather content from members
 - JAG You Tube Channel Management: Reviewing submissions requests.
- Wednesday, October 13, 12noon — Executive Committee Meeting via virtual video service
 - League booth video: Gather content from members
 - JAG You Tube Channel Management: Reviewing submissions requests.
- Monday, October 18, 2pm — Conference Committee Meeting via virtual video service
 - Reconstitute committee / Election of officers
- Wednesday, October 27, 12:12pm — General Meeting via virtual video service
 - Topic for Discussion: TBA
 - Presentation: Paul Distefano, Sales, DeSisti

Organizational Members



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HELMER, CONLEY & KASSELMAN, P.A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW





EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: *Bob Duthaler (Chair) Dave Garb (Vice Chair)*

The board met three times in August as part of its annual board retreat. All committee chairs reported on the work that was accomplished this year. The board evaluated all its accomplishments and identified its challenges going into the new year. Look for a number of new initiatives.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: *Linda Besink (Chair), Jeff Arban (Vice Chair)*

This year's Board Retreat resulted in many wonderful ideas for and from all our committees. For Finance, we want to be more interactive with members all year 'round. This particular initiative was kicked off in early September when we announced a new members-only password. The effective date for the password change is only for 2021. In 2022 and going forward, this password change will be made every June 1. We will continue to communicate with membership on this and other issues.

Additionally, the budget process for next year will soon begin. After that we will see invoicing for 2022. So keep an eye out for your dues invoice. I will be communicating with membership to keep you apprised of where dues invoicing stands. As always, please consider joining the Finance Committee. No accounting background is necessary, only a desire to help keep up financial transparency.

PRODUCTION COMMITTEE: *Lee Beckerman (Chair), Anthony Pagliuco (Vice Chair)*

We have been getting new content for the JAG YouTube channel but will continue to solicit more participation. We have still not met the 100 subscriber threshold so we plan to send out solicitations for members to ask their friends and family to subscribe. Doug will work on a letter to the membership.

With the external relations and conference committees we have completed editing of all the conference videos. They can all be found on the JAG website in the Members Only section. Special thanks to Piscataway, East Brunswick, and Woodbridge.

We now have a working script for the "How to choose a location" video, the first of a "how to" series on shooting an interview. The next step is to break it down into locations (ironically), personnel needed and to put together a production schedule. We also are on the lookout for talent for two starring roles in the video.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE: *Geoffrey Belinfante (Chair), Dustin Dumas (Vice Chair)*

We on the External Relations Committee are very excited this month about our newly updated website. Thanks to committee member Doug Seidel - with some help from his friends, he has given the site a new look and hopefully made it more user friendly. The design is cleaner than before and he was able to make some design changes that were not possible with our old outdated software. All of the hard work on the site reminds me that it is, after all, a marketing tool. In some cases, it is the first impression that anyone gets about JAG, and you know what they say about first impressions. I think we have cleaned up the look so that we can all be proud of what people see when they log on.

The Website is also a tool that provides our membership with resources and valuable information to help them with their day-to-day activities. However, just like any tool, it's only good if you put it to use. I would urge all our members to watch the material that has been added to our video library, track our meeting schedule, and review our newsletters both new and old.

In addition, we on the committee are also preparing our marketing tools for the League of Municipalities convention in November. We have prepared a new handout on JAG and are hosting two seminars for attendees, one on Federal money available for Broadband improvements and the other on alternate methods available to Municipalities to communicate with their citizens. Marketing is also very important to our committee, and we are considering ideas to extend our brand on social media and using a mobile app to further the profile of JAG and the work that is done by our member stations. As always, we are looking for help. If you have any interest, please let me know at geoffbel512@gmail.com.



Legislation Committee: *Dave Garb (Chair), Linda Besink (Vice Chair)*

No report received

This committee will need to focus on building relationships with state and federal legislators. They are also working on preparing a document that explains how stations provided assistance during the pandemic.

Membership Committee: *Stephanie Gibbons (Chair), Darryl Love (Vice Chair)*

We would like to welcome new members: PREMIERE MEDIA-Independent Producer, and the Borough of Roseland.

We want to make sure you are getting the most of your member benefits so please let us know if you are not getting information from the listserv, newsletter, access to the member's only section of the website and access to the Connect server for sharing content. Please contact me at: Stgibbons@verizon.net.

Leadership Development Committee: *Dave Garb (Chair), Doug Seidel (Vice Chair)*

No report received

This committee will be focusing on developing a strategy for marketing JAG on social media. The objective will be to increase JAG's exposure and encourage membership. They will continue to build-a tool box of marketing material needed to support JAG's marketing efforts.

JAG Awards Committee: *George Fairfield (Chairs), TBA (Vice Chair)*

The JAG Awards committee has hit the ground at full steam. The Executive Board approved the committee's part two of their re-structuring plans. These plans include opening for submissions in January, having all entries adjudicated, having top awards presented to high scores in each category, along with high score awards for independent producer, nonprofit organization, and student categories. This will allow JAG to honor more members. In the coming months, we'll take a closer look at the new features, so stay tuned.

Conference Committee: *Bob Duthaler/ Geoffrey Belinfante (Co-Chair) George Fairfield (Vice Chair)*

The committee has completed its work for 2021. The committee will reconstitute on October 18th at 2pm and begin working on JAG's Eastern Video Expo 2022. Officers will be elected and ideas for the structure of the conference - live, virtual or hybrid, will be discussed.

Join now.

These two committees are beginning to develop these great events and need your help.



Remember to check out the changes to our website.