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Inside This Issue

- Technology: Elevating Your Local Broadcasts pg2
- Legislation: News from Trenton & Washington, DC pg4
- Spotlight: Piscataway Community TV: A Local Treasure Promoting Unity and Diversity pg6
- Communications pg8

General Meeting Schedule 2024-25

- Sept. 25- LIVE @ Varto Technologies Presentation- Varto
- Oct. 30- TBA Presentation- TBA
- Dec. 4- TBA Presentation- TBA
- Jan. 29, 2025- TBA Reorganization Presentation- TBA
- Feb. 26- LIVE-TBA Presentation- TelVue
- Mar. 26- TBA Presentation- TBA
- Apr. 30- LIVE TBA Presentation- DeSisti
- May 14-15- @ Crown Plaza, Edison JAG Conference
- Jun. 25- TBA Presentation- TBA

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President’s Message

Bob Duthaler



HELP.... I Need Someone

Running a station there are times when you may need additional support and information. How do you get that information? Who is available to give you that added help? With JAG as a resource, you there are many places you can get the information and help you need.

Information: Tell me how to get it! The first and easiest way is on the JAG website. There is a source of information and resources available on the site. The website contains everything from access to past newsletters with pertinent information, articles and posts, conference information, videos from league presentations, members only section and much more. This resource should always be your first stop when looking for information.

What if you can’t find what you are looking for on the JAG website? Where can you turn to next? Look no further then you email inbox. As a JAG member you have access to a very powerful tool: the JAG Email List Serve. It’s a place where you can ask questions of both JAG members and vendors alike. You get the advantage of multiple responses from multiple resources. Plus, you get the benefit of asking others who may have already experienced what you are seeking to find out about.

Another powerful resource: For JAG members is our organizational members. These are vendors who have already committed themselves to working with JAG and our membership by being part of the organization. You should always consider them as a valued tool. These are companies and people who understand the unique nature of what we do, the budget constraints we are up against and the need for updated technology. Whether looking to update your current equipment, adding new technology or just planning for down the road, avail yourself of their expertise.

What if I need just a little more? That is a question many people have asked and where did they turn to? A consultant. First, I must reveal that professionally, I am a consultant. With over 35 years of experience in the television industry, my knowledge (and the knowledge of others like me) becomes a valuable tool for stations just starting out, wanting to make the next move or just need additional support to help them operate. Paying to “pick the brain” of a consultant, one who is qualified to analyze your unique needs, plan a course of action, and help you achieve your goals is another tool in the toolbox. Consultants can help in technology, management and financially through franchise negotiations.

Many station managers in JAG reach out to each other to share a very important asset: crew. So many of us in this industry might be operating a station part-time, as a volunteer or even a full-time staff, but also do freelance work on the side. In addition, you may have camera operators and editors that freelance as well. JAG understands the importance of these resources and has made a special section in the JAG website that allows freelancers to share their information and experience. JAG members can reach out and hire them for additional production support. You never know when you might need an additional camera operator, editor or all-around production support. When you do, look no further than JAG members.

My goal in this article is to help you realize that your membership in JAG is an extremely valuable tool to help you achieve a higher level of quality of operation, content and understanding of the industry. Most of this is easily accessible from your computer, web browser or email. But you need to know that in most cases you need to reach out and make the first move to ask for help and commit yourself to the next level of paid support. Whichever path you choose, the goal is the same: to help you move forward in your knowledge and operation of your station.



Elevating Your Local Broadcasts: Strategies and Tools from Varto Technologies

**Yervant Keshishian Sales Engineer, Authorized Trainer & Technical Director,
Varto Technologies, Inc.**

Technology

This month, Varto Technologies is excited to host the Jersey Access Group (JAG) meeting at our office in East Rutherford, NJ. As a company committed to supporting local access stations, we're eager to share practical demonstrations and innovative ideas to help you enhance programming, engage your community, and streamline workflows.



Here are some actionable insights to help improve your broadcasts, regardless of your station's size or budget.

1. Building a Reliable and Flexible Video Network



To deliver high-quality local programming, stations need a network setup that minimizes interruptions and maximizes flexibility. Establishing a dedicated network specifically for your audio and video (A/V) production needs (separate from general internet traffic) ensures stable performance during live broadcasts.

At the JAG meeting, we'll demonstrate how to create a cost-effective video network using tools like NDI (Network Device Interface). Netgear's M4250 AV Line series of managed switches optimized for AV over IP workflows, connect multiple cameras and devices over a standard network to reduce the need for costly cabling and infrastructure. This setup helps manage A/V traffic effectively, providing smoother broadcasts and enabling you to cover events more dynamically.

A dedicated network with Netgear's M4250 AV line switches minimizes congestion and downtime, ensuring uninterrupted viewing experiences. This approach is ideal for stations that frequently cover local sports, town hall meetings, or other community events.

2. From Flypacks to Fully Remote Production: Innovating Your Workflow

Traditionally, local stations have relied on portable production kits (flypacks) to cover events outside the studio. Flypacks offer a compact, mobile solution quickly deployed to various locations. At the JAG meeting, we'll demonstrate how we built a custom flypack for the MTV Video Music Awards and discuss how this approach can be adapted for your station's needs.

However, advancements in remote production technology provide an alternative model offering even greater flexibility and cost savings. Imagine maintaining all your core production equipment in a central studio while capturing content remotely. Tools like NDI Bridge and LiveU bring in camera feeds from multiple locations over the internet. Operators can be anywhere, using platforms like Flowics to control graphics and other interactive elements in real time.

This hybrid model reduces the need for on-site staff and equipment, making it easier to scale operations based on your needs. It also cuts travel costs and simplifies setup, allowing you to cover more events

without the logistical challenges of traditional methods. Remote production tools enable stations to produce content as dynamic and engaging as on-site productions while covering a broader range of events, from government meetings to school performances, with minimal disruption.

3. Sneak Peek: New TriCaster Systems on the Horizon

We're excited to introduce two new TriCaster systems from Vizrt that will be featured at the meeting:

- **TriCaster Vizion:** Available as both a perpetual and subscription model, this system provides a comprehensive, flexible solution for live production, offering enhanced creative control and support for high-bandwidth 12G-SDI workflows.
- **TriCaster Mini S:** Designed as a subscription-only model, this compact system brings advanced broadcasting capabilities, perfect for stations seeking innovation without a large upfront investment.



Both systems are designed to simplify live production while enhancing creative possibilities. We'll give you an exclusive look at these new tools and discuss how they can help local stations create more dynamic and engaging content.

Get Started with These Innovative Approaches Today!

Whether you're attending the JAG meeting or not, we hope these ideas inspire you to explore new ways to enhance your local broadcasts. By adopting dedicated networks, transitioning to remote production workflows, and staying updated on new technologies like the latest TriCaster systems, your station can improve production quality, expand audience reach and better serve your community.

We look forward to welcoming many of you to Varto Technologies and sharing more insights in person. For those unable to attend, we encourage you to experiment with these ideas and reach out for additional guidance or support.





Because of its importance, I am going to bring up an article that we commented on last month. It is about the FCC's Docket No. 05-231 *Closed Captioning of Video Programming Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. Petition for Rulemaking*.



From NATOA:

Docket No. 05-231, will be of great importance to PEG operators. This proposal would exempt certain video programming providers from its closed captioning registration and certification requirements if they provide programming to public, educational, and governmental access channels (PEG) or to non-broadcast networks for distribution by a cable operator or other MVPD if the PEG channels or the network are exempt from or have certified compliance with the captioning rules.

Nearly 8 years ago, the Alliance for Community Media filed a petition in this matter requesting that the closed captioning registration and certification requirements be waived for program producers that provide programs exclusively over PEG channels. At that time, NATOA and a number of communities and access organizations supported ACM's petition.

ACM Rationale in 2016: *Although PEG programming is not categorically exempt from captioning, ACM states that the vast majority of PEG channels fall within one or more of the Commission's closed captioning exemption categories, e.g., because the channel produces annual revenue less than \$3,000,000. Therefore, ACM reasons, requiring PEG programmers to register and certify would be "needless" if they are exclusively distributing programs on channels that are exempt from captioning under the Commission's rules. According to ACM, more than 1.2 million volunteers and more than 250,000 community groups provide PEG programming in local communities across the United States. These include "ordinary citizens and organizations—Cub Scouts, gospel choirs, political candidates, and community groups of every possible type." Requiring each PEG program producer to register and certify compliance for its video programming on channels that are themselves exempt, ACM argues, would impose a significant and unnecessary burden on such programmers and needlessly clutter the Commission's registration system.*

The FCC published a Final Rule in the Federal Register on August 23, 2016 that imposed new reporting requirements on public, educational and governmental access programming with respect to the closed captioning of video programming on television. These obligations included:

- (1) New requirements to certify compliance with or exemption from the FCC's closed captioning rules;
- (2) Introduction of a "burden-shifting" model for the resolution of complaints about closed captioning; and
- (3) Introduction of a new "Video Programmer Registration" system in which PEG access stations will have to provide contact information into the FCC's website.

The Alliance for Community Media, the national association of PEG programmers and stations, filed a *Petition for Waiver* from the new reporting rules for all PEG access programmers. The waiver sought for video programming producers would exempt programmers that are not PEG access stations from both the compliance certification and the registration requirement. The petition for waiver didn't seek to change compliance certification and registration requirements for PEG stations so much as it is seeking an exemption for those who produce.

You can read the recent Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Closed Captioning of Video Programming Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Petition, CG Docket No#: 05-231, at:

<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-24-80A1.pdf>.

If anyone in the PEG community wishes to make their voices heard on this matter, we have a deadline of October 1, 2024 to comment on Docket No. 05-231

What will this exactly mean to PEG if this decision passes is still to be determined. There is still the DOJ's ruling from this past April that states we all will need to be captioning in the very near future. So be ready for a flood of possibilities.

In the meantime, at the JAG conference this past May, we held a session on the DOJ's ruling Titled: [*ADA Compliance-Updates on the DOJ Rulings and Closed Captioning for Municipal Websites and PEG Channels*](#). It relates what we must start preparing for in the very near future.

Either way it turns out, start budgeting for it now!

I would also like to bring up another important story that JAG has been following for over a year. It has to do with the threat from HR3557.

From ACM:

Bill HR3557 is misnamed and promotes the ability of corporations to break or alter agreements to provide cable and broadband in communities like ours. These cable agreements lie at the heart of our ability to receive funding in order to operate community television channels, teach production and communication skills, and create original content that represents the diversity and interests of our community.

Recently the wireless and cable industries have called on the House leadership to include the language under the guise of our national economic prosperity as well as its future broadband growth.

However, inclusion of HR3557 in any funding bills would fundamentally alter the power of our local communities to negotiate with corporations and would threaten the future of the over 1,600 organizations throughout the US that operate Public Educational and Government (PEG) access channels.

JAG urges all of our members in the House of Representatives to ensure that Public Educational and Government (PEG) Access media organizations like ours and others throughout the United States will continue to serve local residents by not including language from HR3557 (American Broadband Deployment Act) in any funding resolutions this fall.

HR 3557 is not a bi-partisan effort and was passed out of Committee with no testimony from local and state governments, which represent legitimate interests of residents and cable and broadband consumers throughout the country. The Bill's promoters talk of clearing "regulatory underbrush" to ensure that broadband is extended to all areas of the country. And yet, that "underbrush" ensures the rights of all communities – rural, suburban or urban - are respected when negotiating with corporate interests, and that communities with little power have a place at the bargaining table, and a voice in the media.

Opposition to HR3557 Video from JAG

JAG knows that our New Jersey Representatives appreciate the work that our organizations do to promote democracy, transparency, and culture at the local level. We can only do this community media work because of the rights that HR 3557 is attempting to eliminate.

JAG (Jersey Access Group) constantly advocates, analyzes and addresses emerging issues in areas such as: local government communications and internet policy. JAG promotes, and preserves the right to media production, distribution, civic engagement and education in support of diverse community voices, through public, educational and government access facilities and other forms of media.



**Spotlight on Piscataway Community TV:
A Local Treasure Promoting Unity and Diversity
George Fairfield, Station Manager Piscataway Community TV**

Members Spotlight



In an era dominated by global media giants and digital streaming services, hyperlocal community television channels like Piscataway Community TV, (PCTV) continue to play a crucial role in maintaining a sense of community, fostering local engagement, and providing residents with content that truly matters to them. PCTV is not just another channel on the dial; it is a valuable resource that serves the Piscataway residents and the residents of Central NJ by keeping them informed, entertained, and connected. That value was never more apparent than during the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy in October 2012 or during the World Wide Pandemic in 2020. During these crises, Piscataway Community Television was always a constant source for the residents to find necessary hyperlocal information for their local officials that kept them safe and informed.

A Brief History of PCTV

Established as a response to the community’s need for a localized media platform, PCTV was established in 1984 through a federal grant from the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA). That grant money was used to purchase start-up equipment for a small TV operation and the studio was the council chambers when not in use.



Through the past 40 years, PCTV's location on the channel lineup changed and viewership increased with the addition of Verizon FiOS and streaming/on-demand opportunities through the support of JAG’s organizational member, TelVue, but the mission of the station remained the same. PCTV provides coverage of events and activities that are important to Piscataway residents and the residents of Central NJ.

Programming That Reflects the Community

One of the standout features of PCTV is its wide range of programming. The channel provides coverage of council meetings and other local government sessions ensuring transparency and keeping residents informed about decisions that affect their daily lives. This coverage allows citizens to stay connected with their local government, even if they cannot attend the meetings in person.



In addition to government coverage, PCTV offers a variety of educational and cultural programs. Local educational institutions often collaborate with PCTV to produce content that highlights academic achievements and educational events. This not only promotes the importance of education within the community but also gives students a platform to showcase their work and talents.

Community events such as parades, festivals, and local sports, are another key aspect of PCTV's programming. These events are often the heart and soul of the township, bringing together residents from all walks of life to celebrate their heritage and culture. By broadcasting these events, PCTV ensures that everyone, including those who cannot attend in person, can be a part of these communal experiences.



Another vital service PCTV provides to the residents is the daily dissemination of information. The Community Bulletin Board provides up-to-date information about events taking place in the community. Nonprofit organizations are able to submit announcements for their services and events.

Empowering Local Voices



One of the most significant contributions of PCTV is its role in empowering local voices. Since the beginning, PCTV has conducted training programs that produce volunteer crews. The staff teaches residents how to operate TV cameras, run the audio board, serve as floor manager during live and recorded productions, direct multi-cameras, field reporting and more. Without the involvement of the trained volunteers, PCTV would not be able to capture the large amount of programming shown

each month. These training programs are instrumental in producing high-quality content plus beneficial for young people who are interested in pursuing careers in media and broadcasting. It provides them with hands-on experience and a platform to hone their craft.

Since 1984, more than 400 people have been trained at the station!

Adapting to the Digital Age

Over the years, PCTV has evolved, embraced new technologies and adapted to the changing media landscape by expanding its presence online. The channel's website and social media platforms provide additional avenues for residents to access content, whether it's live-streaming local events, catching up on missed programming via on-demand, or providing current information. This digital expansion has allowed PCTV to reach a broader audience and engage with the community in new and innovative ways.

Looking Ahead

Piscataway Community TV has grown into a vital part of the township's communication infrastructure.



Whether it's a local talk show, a cooking segment, or a documentary on a community issue, PCTV offers the resources and technical support necessary to bring these ideas to life. This democratization of media is crucial in a time when large media conglomerates often dominate the airwaves, leaving little room for grassroots content.

PCTV remains committed to its mission of serving the residents of Piscataway and the surrounding towns. The station plans to continue expanding its programming, embracing new technologies, and finding innovative ways to engage with residents. Piscataway Community TV exemplifies the power of hyperlocal media in fostering community spirit and ensuring that every resident has a voice. In a world where media is increasingly centralized, Piscataway Community Television stands out as a beacon of local engagement, proving that sometimes, the most meaningful stories are those told right at home.





JAG General Meeting

September 26, 2024 @ 12:00pm, at Varto Technologies, Lunch at 11:30am

Presentation: Yervant Keshishian, Sales Engineer, Authorized Trainer & Technical Director,
Varto Technologies

For more information and access to the meeting email JAGinfo@jagonline.org

Don't forget to check out our YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/@jagjerseyaccessgroup>

Have something you want on our YouTube channel? Send a link to dseidel@piscatawaynj.org for review.

The JAG Job Board is currently being populated with opportunities. New password needed after June 1.
Contact Linda Besink lbesink@gmail.com for access

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>

EVENT SCHEDULE 2024

Oct. 30th at 12pm: General Meeting (TBA) Presentation scheduled TBA

Dec. 4th at 12pm: General Meeting (TBA) Presentation scheduled TBA

Organizational Members



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New Jersey Chapter of NATOA, Organizational Member of the ACM, and New Jersey League of Municipalities Affiliate

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