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AES Audio Engineering Society - Pacific Northwest Section

Around the Puget Sound, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

PNW AES Section

March Meeting Notice

Analog Tape Machines Basics of Alignment and Calibration

Presented by
Gary Louie and Rick Chinn
PNW AES Section

Thursday, March 27th, 7:30pm
Shoreline Community College, Rm 818 (music bldg)

[Directions to SCC](#)

Dust off those bell bottoms, and come back with us to the age when analog tape ruled the earth. While this is certainly a nostalgia trip for many, others never gave up on analog tape, while some have never known it, but hear that it imparts a mythic mojo. Others may have a need for archival playback and digitization. Hopefully we can demonstrate what it takes to keep these machines running.

This meeting will feature a live workshop demo of calibrating a vintage studio 2-track analog audio recorder. Within the time allotted, we plan to cover only a little background and theory, and instead concentrate on the nuts and bolts of what used to be a daily regimen in the old school studio. We plan to discuss basic transport alignment, head alignment, cleaning and demagnetizing, alignment tapes, head azimuth, reproduce calibration, bias and record calibration. This will be done with traditional, simple test equipment - the oscilloscope and signal generator, readily available to the budget conscious tech or hobbyist. If time allows, classic analyzers may be demonstrated for wow/flutter, THD, IMD, noise, etc.

We do not plan to cover extensive mechanical, electrical and magnetic theory. If you have an analog machine, or are Jonesing for one, this will give you the information you need to make it record and play back. If interest warrants, we may consider a longer workshop at a later date on the art and science of analog tape.

The Presenters

Rick Chinn PNW AES Committee-at-Large, and is owner of Uneeda Audio. At one point in his past, he got to align 5 Ampex AG440B and 1 3M Model 79 machine every morning, times two studios. He still has an AG440 two-track, and provides playback and digitizing services for the audio community. As far as recording goes, he now sips the digital kool-aid.

Gary Louie, PNW AES secretary, is the audio technician at the University of Washington School of Music, whose fleet of analog 2-tracks still runs tape (playback/digitize) nearly every day. He has a BSEE from the UW, and is co-author of the 3rd ed. of The Audio Dictionary, with Glenn White (UW Press).

Dave Tosti-Lane

AES PNW 2013-2014 Section Chair

n.b. *The material presented at our meetings is the opinion of the presenter and not necessarily that of the Society. You are encouraged to conduct your own research and to form your own opinions before adopting the presented material as Truth.*

Our meetings are open to anyone interested in Audio. AES membership is NOT required for you to attend our meetings.