

Summer 1994 Newsletter

June Meeting

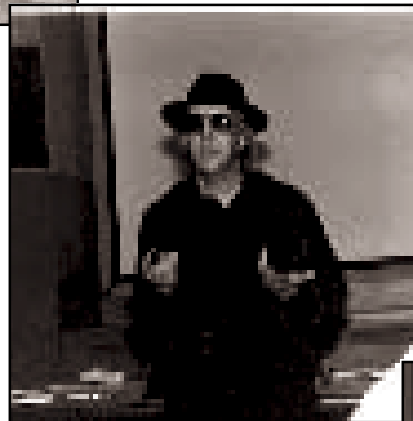
Fred Jones and Recording Media



Left: Fred Jones speaks at the KCTS meeting venue.

The PNW Section returned to PBS affiliate KCTS-TV's "pledge room" for its June meeting, to conduct some AES business and to hear Fred Jones speak about recording media.

Section Chair Van Browne opened the meeting by asking for nominations for next year's section officers. Tom Stiles was nominated for Chair, Rick Smargiassi for Vice-Chair, Gary Louie for Secretary, Terry Denbrook for Treasurer, and Bob Moses, David Scheirman and Bill Ford were nominated for new committee positions. Next, suggestions for meetings were solicited. Then, Van introduced Laurel Cash Jones, the AES Western Region Vice President. Laurel greeted the attendees, and spoke about the upcoming fall AES Convention in



Above: Fred Jones

San Francisco.

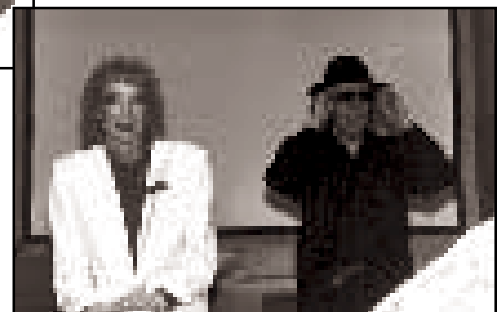
The evening's speaker was Fred Jones, recording industry expert, former studio owner and Firesign Theatre engineer. He began on DATs, noting their consumer origins and shell construction problems. Reliability and robustness of a medium versus track and format size was debated. It was explained that certified data DATs were taken from the center 1 foot of a 3 foot wide web of tape, and that it must pass a mysterious

burst error test. The same thickness of DAT tape was used in all lengths, but data DATs can have different thicknesses.

Next came CD-R, compact disc - recordable. It should be an interim technology, until CD-E (erasable) is widely available. Longevity, handling and labeling on CD-Rs was also discussed.

Analog tape? Essentially, it will die. Optical storage is what's coming. When blue lasers become available, we will have 17 hours of audio on a standard size CD. Fred

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Above, left: Western Region AES VP Laurel Cash Jones, and right, Fred Jones.

Inside:
New PNW Officers
March, April, May Recaps

Election results

PNW Section Officers 1994-1995

- Chair: Tom Stiles - 8315 Lake City Way NE, Seattle WA 98115
phone (206) 524-1389; Jack Straw Prod (206) 634-0919
- Vice Chair: Rick Smargiassi - 22722 102nd Ave SE, Woodinville WA 98072
work phone (206) 684-7191; home phone (206) 668-7016
- Secretary: Gary Louie - 4522 Meridian Ave N #201, Seattle WA 98103
Home phone (206) 633-3246; Work phone (206) 543-1218
FAX (206) 685-9499
- Treasurer: Terry Denbrook - c/o KUOW-FM, DS-50, Univ of Wash, Seattle WA 98195
Work phone (206) 543-2710; FAX (206) 543-2720
- Committee:

Last year of two year term

Dan Mortensen - 1515 NE 96th St, Seattle, WA 98115
phone (206) 525-2113

Allen Goldstein - Symetrix, 14926 35th Ave W, Lynnwood, WA 98037
work phone (206) 787-3222; FAX (206) 787-3211

Rick Chinn - 20412 NE 41st St, Redmond WA 98053-9362
work phone (206) 787-3222; FAX (206) 787-3211
home phone (206) 868-0442; pager (206) 994-1236

Starting two year term

Bill Ford - 1630 228th St SE, Bothell WA 98021-7415
phone: not available yet

Bob Moses - Rane Corp., 10802 47th Ave W., Everett WA 98204
work phone: (206) 355-6000

David Scheirman - Lone Wolf Corp., 2030 1st Ave., Seattle WA 98121
work phone (206) 728-9600; FAX (206) 728-9604

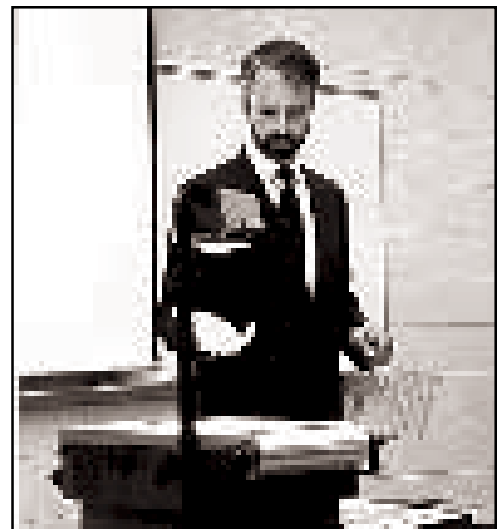
March Meeting

Cabot on Low-Bit Rate Coders

Dr. Richard Cabot, President of the AES and Vice President and Principal Engineer at Audio Precision Inc, spoke to the section about the performance of reduced bit-rate coders. Also known as perceptual coders and known by such names as PASC, they are used in products such as DCC and MiniDisc. These coders are inher-

ently non-linear and hard to test using traditional methods. Dr. Cabot described a test method which models the masking characteristics, and compared results of several systems.

This meeting was held in KUOW-FM studios on the University of Washington campus.





Hank Zumbahlen

May Meeting

Latest From Analog Devices

Hank Zumbahlen, Senior Field Applications Engineer for Analog Devices, spoke to the Section for the May meeting at Jack Straw Productions Studios.

He talked about the current trends in audio integrated circuits, including computer audio codecs for "MultiMedia", Asynchronous Sample Rate Converters and new



Prototype of Analog Devices AD 1891 sample rate converter.

multi-bit sigma-delta digital to analog convertors.

April Meeting

Computer Control of Audio Systems



Mark Lacas, left, and David Scheirman of Lone Wolf

While some of the ever present computer bugs were being worked on, David spoke on the history of computer control of audio systems, and noted the difficulties of having to use seven different computer systems to control your sound system when no standardization was available.

ciently. He went on to show how a "virtual nightclub" sound system could be shown on the computer, and

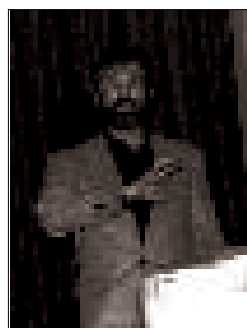


Mark Lacas, Lone Wolf President.

The PNW Section gathered at the Jack Straw Productions Studios in Seattle for its April meeting, more about computer control of audio systems. Last November, Bob Moses of Rane Corp. and AES SC-10 committeeman spoke, and this month new Seattle-ites from Lone Wolf Corp. came to speak.

PNW Chair Van Browne opened the well attended meeting (30+ participants) by introducing well known soundman David Scheirman, now the Professional Audio Liaison for Lone Wolf.

Mark Lacas, President of Lone Wolf, got the Macintosh presentation software running, and spoke on the background of Lone Wolf and the advantages of computer



David Scheirman, Lone Wolf's Pro Audio Liaison

how easily control could be custom programmed by moving on-screen faders and meters. Thus, control can be very simple and limited, say, for the bartender to run, or very complex for the engineer.



Dean Jacobs, PhD, Lone Wolf's Senior Scientist

control for sound systems. Originally, he only wanted to make his own studio work more effi-

Network chips for the hardware are pretty cheap and efficient now, with much higher speeds coming up very soon. An example of a good, simple engineering idea is their "sync-blink" LED on each

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Computer Control of Audio Systems

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unit, which blinks when on-line - and doesn't if its not on the net, making troubleshooting easy.

After a short intermission, Dr. Dean Jacobs, Lone Wolf Senior Scientist, ran his Powerpoint slideshow while speaking on networking for sound systems, industry standards, and AES SC-10.

Conventional computer control usually means a master computer controlling everything, whereas the Lone Wolf MediaLink bus network means everything talks to everything. This kind of architecture can be applied to much more than audio systems, and may have applications in multimedia and air

traffic control, to name a few.

Bridges to other networking systems are not entirely clear yet, nor is the AES SC-10 complete.

Many questions were asked by the audience, such as the viability of the fiber optic cabling (here, David Scheirman pulls out his gag "XLR to fiberoptic cable adapter" to get a laugh), the size of systems tried to date (a 64 amp system for the Jimmy Buffet tour was mentioned, and a diagram was shown of a complex Lone Wolf interoffice system), and compatibility of certain CAD programs for designing Medialink systems.

A final question was posed - will non-computerized audio equipment be gone in 10 years?

Audio Media

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believes that MiniDisc is failing in the audio marketplace due to sound quality, but that it should be viable as a data storage medium, allowing 128 MB on a \$14 Mini Disc.

At this point, a lively discussion on the poor sound of digital data compression schemes ensued, and then Fred continued with M-O (magneto optical) discs. These are popular for computer data storage, and should be popular for digital audio storage when access times come down.

To cap the evening, Fred was urged to recount several stories about the Firesign Theatre comedy group.