NAB TV TechCheck

The Weekly NAB Newsletter for Television Broadcast Engineers

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Sterling Davis and Jack Sellmeyer to Receive 2009 NAB Engineering Achievement Awards

NAB presents its Radio and Television Engineering Achievement Awards each year at the NAB Show in Las Vegas. The awards, first established in 1959, are given to individuals for their significant contributions which have advanced the state of the art of broadcast engineering. This year's winners, Sterling Davis (Television) and Jack Sellmeyer (Radio) will be honored at the Technology Luncheon on Wednesday, April 22.

TV Engineering Achievement Award Winner
Sterling Davis

Sterling Davis is vice president, Engineering for Cox Broadcasting, a veteran with over 40 years of broadcasting experience. He has been involved with every step of TV engineering, from production to distribution, and has been a prime force in helping to move the television and radio industry into the digital age. He has demonstrated time and again the ability to successfully balance his energy and drive to reach organizational goals, with the necessary diplomacy required to build consensus across a variety of represented businesses and organizations.

Sterling began his broadcasting career as an audio engineer for the ABC network and was then with KTTV in Los Angeles, California for five years. Following 3 years as operations manager for the Vidtronics Company, he returned to Metrotape (KTTV) as chief engineer responsible for operational and production responsibilities for six network sitcoms per week.

In early 1978 Sterling became vice president, operations, for one of the original post-production houses in Hollywood—the Vidtronics Company division of Technicolor. Later in 1978 he joined Telemation Productions in Seattle, where as chief engineer he designed and rebuilt their facility. In 1982 he joined Cox Broadcasting's VU in Oakland as director of operations, managing all aspects of engineering and production including ENG, editing, and traffic. He also began producing and was the executive producer for the MDA and Easter Seal Telethons, Giants' Baseball, and the Chinese New Years Parade. Promoted in 1998 to vice president of engineering for Cox Broadcasting in Atlanta, he assumed responsibility for 15 television and 80 radio stations.

Along with the daily responsibilities of overseeing engineering for Cox, Sterling holds the leadership role of key decision maker in advancing the group towards file-based newsgathering as well as automated news production. He also is responsible for shepherding Cox's transition to digital for both television and radio stations.

Another leadership role for Sterling has been in the advancement of broadcast engineering standards and technologies vital to the evolution of the broadcasting industry. Since its formation in April 2007, he has been chairing the technical activities group of the Open Mobile Video Coalition (OMVC), and is also currently the chair of MSTV's Engineering Committee. For three years, he chaired the ATSC Planning Committee, studying the next stages in the evolution of DTV.

Sterling is an elected member of the ATSC Board of Directors and participates in several technical committees, most notably the ATSC Specialist Group on Mobile/handheld DTV (TSG-S4). He has been active in the in-band/on-channel (IBOC) digital radio standardization efforts of the National Radio Systems Committee (NRSC). He is also a member of IEEE, SMPTE, AES, RTNDA and SBE.

Radio Engineering Achievement Award Winner
Jack Sellmeyer

Jack Sellmeyer is a professional engineer and principal engineer for Sellmeyer Engineering, broadcast engineering consultants. He has spent his 50-year career devoted to the development of radio engineering. He is the consummate radio broadcast engineer, who began his career working in radio stations then moving to the manufacturing side of the business designing products for the radio industry. He then combined these aspects of his career to become a consulting engineer handling all aspects of radio engineering from FCC applications to transmitter plant design and construction supervision, broadcast studio facilities planning and construction and AM directional antenna design and adjustment and measurements.

Jack began working in broadcasting while in high school and his first position was as a board operator and transmitter operator for radio station KPBM in Carlsbad, New Mexico. He received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Arizona State University in 1965. By that time, he had overseen the construction of an addition to the studio/transmitter building, construction of new studios and the installation of a new 5 kW transmitter for station KGRT in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and served as Chief Engineer at station KRUX in Glendale, Arizona, among various other pursuits too numerous to mention here.

While at the Gates Radio division of Harris Intertype, Jack was a senior design engineer of FM products. He developed a new Modulator and Automatic Frequency control module for the TE-1 Solid State FM Exciter to correct frequency stability problems. He worked for the Collins Radio Division of Rockwell International as Senior Engineer in FM exciters and on the 5 kW and 1 kW pulse-width modulated transmitters. Jack worked with Forest Cummings to design low-level solid state circuit boards used in the Collins 828E-1 pulse width modulated 5 kW AM transmitter. Collins received three patents on technology used in this transmitter and he was listed as co-inventor on the patent covering automatic modulation sensitivity control.

In November of 1980, when Collins closed its doors after 50 years in the broadcast equipment business, Jack formed Sellmeyer Engineering, where he remains to this day. He has lectured at and helped NAB organize NAB technical seminars and workshops dealing with AM directional antennas and he has published numerous articles. Jack is a member of a number of industry professional societies including AFCCE, IEEE, NSPE, SBE and TSPE.

2008 NAB Broadcast Engineering Conference Opening Keynote

2020 Why I Can't Wait
Gary Arlen, President, Arlen Communications Inc.
April 19, 2008 • 9:00AM - 9:30AM

Keynote Abstract: Our business and personal lives are going through a period of accelerated change, fueled by technology and economic factors that often seem beyond our control. Broadcasting has been in the center of these changes and will continue to be affected by breakthroughs and new developments in diverse technologies. That puts greater demands on TV and radio engineers to be ready for the next opportunities. For broadcasters, confirming our role in the media mix depends on creative, innovative use of the new palette of technologies and especially their applications.

Gary Arlen, a veteran communications and futures analyst, will focus on breakthrough technologies in key sectors. He will identify tactics that broadcasters can use to spot trends and validate effective new technologies. With his focus on the "interesting future" (5 to 10 years out), Gary will look at ways that broadcasters can prepare for and be ready to use the technologies that will bring even greater changes – along with productivity and enjoyment – to the ways we live and work.

For a complete list and summaries of each paper that will be presented at the 63rd NAB Broadcast Engineering Conference, April 18 – 23 in Las Vegas click here. For additional conference, housing and registration information visit the NAB Show Web page at www.nabshow.com.