



BIL BRESLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Spring spruce-up

Heeneey-Sundquist Funeral Home, a historic fixture in downtown Farmington and the oldest funeral home in the state, got a new roof this past week. Co-owner Mark Ziegler said in addition to new materials, workers re-routed some furnace chimneys and stacks, as well as vents for smoking areas, to clean up the roofline. "We saw that we were going to begin having trouble," Ziegler said. "We prefer to do preventative maintenance than to wait until we have a disaster, because we're in such a sensitive business." The materials, installed by L&D Exteriors, Inc., are synthetic but have the old-time look of cedar shake shingles.



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Report details what's new at SWOCC

New was the word for 2002 at Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission.

SWOCC moved into its newly renovated 10,000 square foot facility. This meant new state-of-the-art digital equipment, which enabled us to do some new production (like live, simulcast and call-in shows). We also incorporated some new things with

previous equipment purchases, like adding channels 8 and 13 to playback on the Vela file server.

But the best news comes in production numbers. Despite the "down-time" to allow for installation, set-up and training in the new facility, production numbers actually increased over the previous year.

Sometimes, it's like comparing apples and oranges. An hour-long studio shoot may take two hours to produce from start to finish, whereas a two-minute remote piece could take weeks to put together. SWOCC Studios employs a variety of production techniques including digital graphics and non-linear editing which adds to the overall creative appeal of a production. At other times, we may tape a councilperson in the new studio and have the piece on the channel within minutes.

CITY SHOWS

Farmington Hills Video Division Channel 8 moved into the new SWOCC facility, sharing space, resources technical compatibility and digital media. SWOCC took over playback of Farmington Hills Channel 8 (from Farmington Hills City Hall to SWOCC Studios) resulting in better quality playback, a quicker turn-around in new programming and longer playback blocks.

SWOCC staff continued to assist Farmington Hills with productions like Farmington Founders Festival, Heritage Festival, Hazardous Waste Day and various studio shoots. The Farmington Hills Video Division produced 34 more remote shoots in 2002 than the

previous year. And they received eight regional, state, and national awards.

SWOCC facilitated Farmington 15 programming on the Vela file server resulting in increased playback schedules to run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. SWOCC built on the city's annual live Santa Call-in program by cablecasting live out of both studios (Santa in one, musical acts in the other) while increasing new production values, the new TV/phone system, live CG and new IFB communication.

SWOCC executed new programs including weekly Farmington Road Construction Updates, Downtown Biz, Islam: The Faith, The Culture, The People, the Farmington Pavilion program and charitable event promo, and the Grand River Corridor Project. SWOCC also continued with old favorites: Student Government Day, Heritage Festival, Roundtable, and the Award-winning Around Farmington.

SWOCC took over playback of Novi Channel 19 (from Novi City Hall to SWOCC Studios) resulting in better quality playback, a quicker turn-around in new programming and longer playback blocks. SWOCC established new programming with Novi's new Community Relations Director including Sheriff In The City, High School Hockey tournaments, regular Novi Road Construction Updates, and Novi Police: AED. SWOCC also helped the city continue with old favorites including: Happy Reading, Ask The Answer Man, Theatre Performances, The Memorial Day Parade, Annual River Day, Puerst Farm Events, and Novi Police Streetbeat.

SWOCC also turned around Novi's important Sandstone decision meeting from broadcast to an intense round the clock rebroadcast schedule for Novi residents within hours.

PUBLIC ACCESS

A majority of former public access users returned to the new SWOCC Studios to begin volunteering on Public Access shoots. SWOCC restructured workshops to make them more user-friendly and facilitate the greatest amount of usage. SWOCC created a new Studio

production for Public Access users, Community Connection. This monthly production features community organizations while providing a venue for new Public Access users to receive studio certification.

Although Public Access users were unable to produce in the studio for four months during the transition to the new building, there were almost 75 percent more productions in 2002 than in 2001. The 107 studio shoots and 60 remote shoots totaled 167 new programs compared with 99 for 2001. On top of that, 56 different "outside" projects (those not produced at SWOCC or with SWOCC equipment) were submitted for a total of 561 shows for playback on INFO TV-12.

SWOCC strengthened its commitment to covering community events such as: Founder's Festival events and Parade, Multicultural Community Council's Rainbow Recognition Breakfast, Festival of the Arts, Novi Ice Arena Ice Shows and Hockey Games, and the New Citizen's Swearing-In Ceremony.

SWOCC produced programming of interest to its residents such as: Lansing Connection, Commission's Corner: Oakland County, Call to Action Coalition, Jaycee Candlelight Vigil, Candidate Forums, Election Promos, How to Judge a Candidate, and Japanese Juggling Performance Troupe for playback on all city channels. SWOCC also produced programming on our new facility and Open House to keep the community updated. INFO TV-12 promos helped educate the public on access and training. SWOCC's coverage of the Farmington Youth Assistance Recognition breakfast was directly responsible for netting at least four new volunteers for their organization.

The move from 3,000 to 10,000 square feet permitted SWOCC to share space with the video staffs from Farmington Hills and Novi. SWOCC not only expanded its building, but its hours, to provide regular nighttime staffing and production coverage.

Caren Collins is the Executive Director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission.

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