

The Videophile's Newsletter

\$2



July & August
Issue 14



Special Tubing & Tubbing Issue



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JIM LOWE

Editor/Publisher

Contributing Editors:

Joe Mazzini
Marc Wielage
Bob Burns

Contributors:

Steve Comet
Art Vuolo
Alan Hutchinson

Correspondents:

Ralph Gordon
The Big Nate
Jim Gibbon

Photography:

Cathy Pickett

Dirty Work:

Sharon Wright
Joyce Hilliard

Postage Meter:

Pitney-Bowes

P.M. Operator:

J.R. Lowe

Printed at:

The Printing House
Tallahassee, Florida

The Videophile's Newsletter



CONTENTS...

	Page
Video News.....	5
Where have all the flowers gone?..... Jim Lowe	7
Dealers' Doings/Beta X-2 Time Chart.....	9
Rambling Outtakes..... Marc Wielage	10
The Ultimate Video Room..... Marc Wielage	14
Video Composite..... Bob Burns	17
VCR News & Views..... Steve Comet	20
Video Voice of Canada..... Ralph Gordon	21
Michigan Update..... Art Vuolo	22
Big Nate Talks on VHS.....	23
For Beginners Only.....	24
Reviews.....	25
Consumer Electronics Show report.....	28
Advertising Section.....	30
Joe Mazzini's U-Matic & Beta Notes.....	45
"Cash-In" Products.....	51


Editorial and Executive offices, warehouse, museum, and wildlife refuge are located at 2014 S. Magnolia Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32301. Unsolicited contributions will be published only at the whim of the editor and cannot be returned unless accompanied by return envelope and postage (even then, you had better not hold your breath). Letters of comment are assumed to be intended for publication unless a contrary intention is clearly stated. The Editor/Publisher keeps forgetting that this magazine is not still just a letter to a few friends. All uncredited items herein, having that warm casual tone were penned by him. The Videophile's Newsletter springs from the private sea, and is produced by the Small Potatoes Publishing Company every two months. A six issue subscription is \$10 within the United States, its possessions, Canada and Mexico (US funds). Entire contents, in so far as he can beat back adverse claimants, are Copyright 1978 © 1978, by James R. Lowe. World and Intergalactic rights are reserved. This is Vol. 1, No. 14, the July/August issue. I appreciate the fact that you are reading this. After all, I went to the trouble of writing it.



THE VOICE OF VIDEO FANDOM



TV Wiggles

Summertime  and the livin' is easy
Marc Wielage and Ralph Gordon, eat your hearts out! You can have your "ultimate" video room. Me? I'll take the great outdoors, a few close friends, and simple pleasures everytime.

Yes, that unassuming fellow, indulging himself in the finer things of life on the cover of this issue, is none other than that dashing young man about town, the mild-mannered editor of this very magazine. Welcome to the "First Annual Tubing and Tubbing" issue. Actually, there is nothing in here about Hot Tub Jacuzzi baths, but I find that I am a little impatient with people who demand that everything proceed in an orderly and predictable manner. Video-philies seem to be able to accept the notion of investing their valuable time in editing commercials out of "Fantasy Island", while the real world spins away half-cocked, and yet there are those who have the audacity to inquire about the pigs. I can only say, along with Alice, that things are getting curiouser and curiouser. As evidence of this statement it was pointed out to me the other day that Mr. Donald Duck was shown as the proud purchaser of a video tape deck in the Sunday funnies (5/28).



"Tubing and tubbing" ... indeed!

Paid readership of TVN has now passed 2000. Counting mates and moochers I suspect that this would add up to a readership of some 5000. (WOW!) The plugs in MONEY Magazine (June) and the Detroit News Sunday magazine (June 11) [Thanks, Art!] accounted for much of the increase. Many of you have done a lot to pass the word, and I hereby encourage all such activities. If your position is such that you could distribute some subscription flyers, let me know and I will send you a supply. Also, I am happy to have you plug our humble efforts on radio or otherwise be interviewed by the media. I do, however, request that you make it abundantly clear that ours is not a bootleg operation nor a means by which illegally duplicated tapes may be obtained.

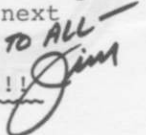
This issue Bob Burns' VHS column assumes the dimensions that I had hoped for. Feel free to contact him directly with regard to VHS format contributions and inquiries. Also, I am pleased as punch to announce that Alan Hutchinson, whose art has graced the cover of TVN #10, as well as appearing a couple of times since, is joining the staff. You may expect his highly enjoyable work to appear on a regular basis from now on. Our bulk has spawned a contents page this issue, and also some staff credits. As many of you know, there isn't really any office or organized (paid) staff as such, and the display of credits herein is in no way intended to slight the very valuable and continuing contributions from such folks as Ray Glasser, Guy MacMillin and, especially this issue, Jim Janeczek. It's just that there are some who are actually assigned tasks to complete or from whom info is regularly solicited or who otherwise work with me directly by phone or otherwise and deserve credit on the masthead.

It is definite! Your editor will be at the San Diego Comic-Con July 27-30 at the El Cortez Hotel. It is anticipated that Marc Wielage, Joe Mazzini, and The Big Nate will be too. My journey west will also include a couple of days visit to Hollywood. Don't be shy. Say Hi!

An outgrowth of the booming home video phenomena will be the first HOME VIDEO EXPO, to be sponsored by the C. S. Tepfer Publishing Company in late September in Los Angeles. This is the same outfit that publishes Educational and Industrial Television, and the folks that sponsored the industry show reported on by Marc Wielage this issue. Now, if I were Mr. Tepfer, I'd be looking around for a special guest of honor. Someone, who is a central figure in the home video scene, has a couple of years experience with the equipment, an intimate knowledge of the copyright lawsuit, and generally has his finger on the pulse of the average home video enthusiast. Someone whose activities in the home video arena have already been noticed and reported by the national press. I'd be considering such a someone who, if his expenses were paid, would be more than willing to attend this affair and share his knowledge and experience with all concerned. But where to find such a person?

As usual, I owe thanks to many of you for contributions that have made this issue possible. Foremost among those not otherwise mentioned are Ed Fleming, Patti, Vicky and Patty. A tip of the hat is also in order to: Robert Runde, Sandy Winoker, Bob Hagan, Robert Odel, Geary Johnston, Jim Lucas, Ira Gallen, Christopher Pearson (whose article got bumped 'til next time, Ray Glasser (ditto), and to all those who I have inexcusably omitted.

Don't forget, if your mailing label says (14) on it, your subscription just expired!!!

MY BEST TO ALL -


VIDEO NEWS..

Allied Artists' complete library on tape... programmable timers...metal base 1/4" tape...disc wars... piracy stuff...satellite stations...new TV shows...



Big news this time is that Allied Artists is going to offer its complete library of more than 500 films on videocassette. All upcoming features and those now in production will also be made available, reportedly with little delay, after theatrical release. Films in the AA library include "Cabaret," "Papillon," "The Man Who Would Be King," "The Story of O," "The Betsy," a portion of the "Charlie Chan" series and many old westerns and other "B" films. Allied Artists' President and Board Chairman Emanuel L. Wolf said that this "... means more and more people, tired of interminable interruptions for commercial announcements and insensitive editing on TV, will be showing movies of their choice uninterruptedly at home. It means home film libraries will be the new 'in' item, taking their natural place alongside book collections and record albums." [Hear, hear!] AA will market tapes itself, rather than through such firms as Magnetic Video, and may have them on the market by Fall with prices in the competitive neighborhood of \$50. You may congratulate them at Allied Artists Industries, Inc., 425 Park Avenue, New York NY 10022.

RCA has announced new model VCR's that will give the consumer a choice of features. Expected to be available in August is a new Selectavision with a programmable timer, allowing user to pre-set timer to automatically record as many as 4 programs at various times over a 7 day period. List is expected to be about \$1200. The basic "Selectavision" is also being replaced with an improved model said to deliver sharper picture, improved cassette-loading system and timer which turns off as well as on. Optimistic RCA spokesman says: "... there's no way of us having less than 25% of the market." Hitachi has shown its 2 speed VHS deck which, like JVC's step-up model, has freeze-frame when pause control is engaged. Unit claims highest signal-to-noise ratio of any home VCR at 46 db. Hitachi is expected to have a portable version as well by Fall. Sony single-speed SL-8600 is now available. See Steve Comet's assessment in this issue.

3M's ("Scotch" brand) "Metafine" tape will soon be available in audio cassette version. But same technology is expected to be used to create metal-alloy tape capable of providing 16 hours recording time at quality comparable to today's 4 hours, or greatly improved quality at lesser decrease in speed. (Is there a 3-speed machine in our future?) Biggest potential may be in area of ultra-miniaturized portable records and camera combos.

Several issues back we noted that BASF was working on an 8mm (just over 1/4") format called the "LVR." Company officials now say that it will start production of new 8mm portable videocassette system at plant in Los Angeles area in 1979 or 1980. Naturally, this would throw the "standardized format" struggle into even greater chaos. Two-hour cassette would be half the size of Beta cassette, and technical characteristics are such that mass duplication could occur in 1/48 real time, as opposed to minute-for-minute duplication requirements of present systems. BASF sees system as a natural for the "compact portable, plus camera" market. At present they do not intend to utilize new metal base tape (reported above) to even further reduce recording speed and cassette size. Spokesman says: "We think digital technology may overtake metal tape as next major video recording development."

THE DISC Despair over the battle between VHS and Beta format VCR's may look like the happy hour compared to the struggle that is shaping up between no fewer than 4 would-be video disc manufacturers, not counting the possible JVC system mentioned last issue. Latest status of each incompatible system is:

MCA/PHILLIPS--First public sale of "Magnavox" brand optical system video disc may be as early as December 1. Minneapolis and/or Atlanta areas said to be prime contenders for test marketing. MCA Discovision plant in Carson, California was scheduled to begin production of 20,000 units this summer. MCA plans to have 200 titles at first, half of them movies.

RCA--All plans for mechanical system disc are still on "hold," as previously reported, but publicly firm remains optimistic. RCA is said to have achieved ability to produce \$400 player (retail) with \$12 2-hour disc. Tests are supposedly underway to determine consumer appeal of video disc players which could also serve as a super high fidelity audio turntable.

MATSUSHITA--The "VISC" video disc (also a mechanical system) was shown, by invitation only, at the June Consumer Electronics Show. The picture reproduction is reported to have been "excellent." No marketing plans were announced but spokesman said that "we can produce ours as economically as any system yet announced."

SONY--Johnny-come-lately, Sony, recently presented a paper on and demonstrated new half-speed (900 rpm) optical system capable of providing up to one hour per side on 12" disc. Each track has 2 full frames per revolution, as opposed to 1 in the MCA system. It is reported that the alternate display of 2 frames in stop-action mode, while noticeable, is not objectionable. In addition to stop-action, the prototype unit featured double and triple speed forward, reverse, and slow motion. No marketing plans have been announced, but production cost is said to be a relatively high \$700.

For those of you who are more confused than long time readers of these pages, the "optical" systems (MCA/Phillips and Sony) utilize laser beams and reflective discs, while the "mechanical" systems (RCA and Matsushita) use a needle and disc more similar to the familiar phonograph record.

copyright Little is new here. Your editor has not been subpoenaed lately and the trial in the Universal/Disney/Sony lawsuit is still scheduled for "early next year." The June 20, 1978, issue of ESQUIRE magazine has an interesting article entitled "Will Betamax Be Busted?" The author, Steven Brill, seems to think that all the law is on the side of the movie studios ("... with the law as it is now written, I cannot imagine a way the judge could write a credible opinion upholding the Betamax."), but concedes that "the judge may look beyond the law to the competing values and interests involved." Of greater interest is an article in the July-August issue of AMERICAN FILM (\$2.50 from Back Issues, American Film Institute, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC 20566, or \$15 for an annual sub to AFI, PO Box 966, Farmingdale, NY 11737), by James Monaco, entitled "Stealing the Show: The Piracy Problem." I cannot recommend this too highly. It is very comprehensive and superbly written. I'd say a must for those who are interested in the history and present posture of the copyright law vis-a-vis duplication of films and tape. In contrast to Mr. Brill, Mr. Monaco says that the copyright law "mentions audio home recording for private use and considers this an example of fair use. It seems likely that video recording will be similarly treated. If it is, collectors will be given a license to pursue their hobby within certain guidelines." This particular issue of AMERICAN FILM has other items of interest to videophiles, as well. Get it!

The Sony L-750 tape which has been awaited with sweaty palms for so long is expected to be available in limited quantity by the time you read these words. The Betamax changer? Well, we here at TVN have become philosophical about that one. There is nothing new to add to last issue's report that an improved version is being tested. I hope you will enjoy Alan Hutchinson's view of the situation as much as I did.

Hughes Aircraft Co.'s Electron Dynamics Division has been awarded a contract by NASA to develop a low-cost, mass-producible 12 GHz receiver for TV reception from broadcast satellites. The goal is to make the receivers available for less than \$1000 each in quantities of 1000. Current earth stations, 4 1/2 to 5 meters in diameter, are in the 4 GHz range and cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000, according to Hughes.

A long-awaited rewrite of the Federal Communications Act was made public in June. It may take a year or two to pass Congress and go into effect, but a number of its provisions are of interest. Cable TV and Radio (except for technical rules) would be completely de-regulated, giving these media the same freedom as the press. Broadcasters would be assessed fees for use of the airwaves with the resulting revenue of literally hundreds of millions going to such things as public TV and development of rural telecommunications. Also, the "fairness doctrine" with regard to treatment of controversial issues would be overhauled, and the "equal time doctrine" would be eliminated with respect to candidates for national and statewide elections. Write your congressman for details.



***** Search For Tomorrow *****

Beginning with this issue TVN will bring you capsule info with regard to new shows both on- and off-network that are in production or have otherwise been announced. Herewith, our first report:

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION has just announced a new upbeat musical series for September availability. The 26 half-hour series stars Twiggy. The series will feature such top line entertainers as Rod Stewart, The Bay City Rollers, and Marianne Faithfull. . . . I.T.C. will have a new series of 8 entertainment specials. They are all off-network and the list is expected to include BEATLES FOREVER, BOB HOPE, 3 or 4 JULIE ANDREWS specials, SAMMY DAVIS, JR., RAY CHARLES, RITA MORENO and HARRY BELAFONTE. . . . THE DONNA FARGO SHOW, a new half-hour musical-variety series produced by The Osmond Brothers, has been sold in 47 markets since its introduction two months ago. . . . "HOLOCAUST" proved to be a winner in Cannes for Worldvision Enterprises Inc., who did an excellent business. The hot property has been sold to the British Broadcasting Corporation, Australia, Canada, Japan, all nine ARD stations in Germany, Brazil, Uruguay, Panama and Guatemala. . . . "IMUS PLUS. . ." a new 90-minute talk-show starring noted radio personality, Don Imus, has been sold in 20 markets and will begin airing this summer. The series, which features controversial and outrageous guests, will premiere on New York's WNEW July 1. Markets where the show has been sold include WFLD-Chicago, WKBD-Detroit, and KBHK-San Francisco. Imus is one of the country's major radio personalities. His radio show, "Imus in the Morning," was the top-rated program on WNBC in New York for six years. "IMUS, Plus. . ." marks his television debut. . . . In the more distant future look for KOJACK and THE ROCKFORD FILES which will be available in syndication to local stations in the Fall of 1979.



Where have all the flowers gone?

I have an idea for a little muscle flexing. There are now a few thousand of us with an interest in the future of home video as a serious endeavor. Maybe, just maybe, enough to have an impact on the decision makers. For some time now, I've been considering the idea of initiating a letter writing campaign. A letter from Brian Garfield in New Jersey (who has been thinking along similar lines) has prompted me to develop the idea.

As something of a nostalgia buff, I would much rather snuggle up to an old rerun of "The Millionaire" than be titillated by the latest eye-popping adventures of Charlie's Angels. [Better make that just "rather," not "much rather."] But, so far as I know, "The Millionaire" is not in syndication anywhere just now. The same can be said of countless other old favorites. Some, like the \$64,000 Question, do not lend themselves to being marketed by the syndicates. Others, oh, say Sky King, though fondly remembered, would probably not hold up well enough to attract repeated viewing. Yet there is very obviously an audience for these old chestnuts. The networks have done very well indeed with their 50th and 25th anniversary retrospective specials. CBS ran an entire week of clips from a wide variety of old shows, and NBC even cranked out two sequels to their First 50 Years special.

Take the seeming success of these broadcasts, put that together with the paucity of interesting new shows that are being offered up, and an idea springs forth that is so simple, inexpensive and attractive that it is difficult to understand why it has not already been done. Imagine this . . . a weekly series, half-hour, hour, whatever, in which selected episodes of old shows are shown in their entirety. In order to maintain the level of nostalgic curiosity of the audience, a different program could be run in the same time slot every week. The budget for such a thing would be only a fraction of that required for much of the schlock that is being ground out now and, properly promoted, I cannot believe that such a show would be anything less than a hit.

To their credit, CBS took a small step in this direction last summer by rerunning four episodes of the Jack Benny Show in prime time. I don't know what the ratings were, but my general impression is that the show was well received. If you are anything like me, it's like eating only one potato chip to watch these retrospective shows and see a few seconds of James Dean, Paul Newman or Gracie Allen fleet by in the time that it takes to warm up the memory bank. Most older shows are not in syndication, so the result is that there is virtually no opportunity to ever enjoy these shows in their entirety.

What I would like for you to do is join me in writing the program executives of the networks suggesting that such a series would be a winner. Point out how inexpensive it would be, the good ratings that the retrospective shows got, and the embarrassing failures that their other ideas have turned out to be. To help you a little, the following is a list (admittedly incomplete) of some of the shows that have run on the networks in the past, and which are either not in syndication, or are certainly not as commonly available as the Andy Griffith Show:

CBS

The Abbott & Costello Show
Beat the Clock
Captain Midnight
Checkmate
Coronet Blue
Damon Runyon Theatre
Dick and the Duchess
Four Star Playhouse
The Gary Moore Show
George Burns & Gracie Allen Show
The Goldbergs
Halls of Ivy
He and She
I Remember Mama
Jimmy Durante Show
Judy Garland Show
The Millionaire
My Friend Irma
My Little Margie
Pete & Gladys
Private Secretary
Richard Diamond
The \$64,000 Question

NBC

Armstrong Circle Theatre
Boston Blackie
Bracken's World
Colgate Comedy Hour
Girl from U.N.C.L.E.
Girl With Something Extra
Great Gildersleeve
I Married Joan
I Spy
Jimmy Stewart Show
Kaiser Aluminum Hour
Laugh In
Life of Riley
Loretta Young Theatre
Milton Berle
Mr. Peepers
Nichols
Please Don't Eat the Daisies
The Saint
Science Fiction Theatre
This is Your Life
Your Show of Shows
You Bet Your Life

ABC

Amos Burke
Ben Casey
Burke's Law
The Continental
A Date with Judy
Dick Tracy
The Fugitive
Gidget
Green Hornet
The Guns of Will Sonnett
Honey West
Stoney Burke
Tombstone Territory
Trouble with Father



In case you have wondered why it is that local stations everywhere are running Andy Griffith, Bewitched, Gomer Pyle, Gilligan's Island, The Partridge Family, etc., etc., but no one is running Peter Gunn, or He and She, there is a reason. Local programming

directors are a little lazy, so instead of making a special effort to search out and make requests for certain very popular older series, they sit back and allow themselves to be sold syndicated "packages" that are being promoted by the large syndication houses like Viacom. Broadcasting industry magazines carry full page ads from the syndication houses proclaiming that "Hogan's Heroes" is pulling big ratings in such-and-such a market. Your local station managers look at that and say: "Hey! This is for me!" Believe it or not The Andy Griffith Show is reported to be capturing phenomenal ratings in literally dozens of markets, as compared to other "fringe-time" programs, so there is little wonder that in many areas you can see it 2 or 3 times every day, if you are so inclined.

I would suggest to you two avenues of relief:

1. Write the Network programming directors at the following addresses (the names were current as of April):

Alan S. Cohen
Director of Program Planning
ABC Television/Entertainment
Division
1330 Ave. of the Americas
New York NY 10019

Dorothy Fielding
Director of Program
Planning
CBS Television Network
51 W. 52nd St.
New York NY 10019

Irwin Siegelstein
Exec. Vice Pres./Program
Planning
NBC Television Network
RCA Building
New York NY 10020

2. Write or call your local station manager or program chief and request that he/she purchase series other than those that are being repeated time and time and time again. Suggest that they could get a step up on other stations by doing so, perhaps getting five such shows, running a different one each night at 7:30 and properly promoting the "nostalgia time" theme of the series. You'd think it would do as well or better than "Cross Wits," "Green Acres" or some other such.

Now, lest I forget, I said at the outset that Brian Garfield's letter had prompted me into action on this. His is another idea. But let him tell it in his own words: ". . . it seems to me that your 'videophile' readers should not simply beef about the Disney studio's misguided anti-VCR lawsuit, but should lobby actively to encourage the studios and distributors to cash in on the new VCR market rather than fight it. The studios and distributors have reacted blindly to the "threat" of VCRs, much as they did to the threat of network television a generation ago; they ought to be shown that the VCR market need not be a threat to them, but can be a source of great profits and benefit to them. I'm a screenwriter and novelist; I've had several movies made; I certainly do not favor piracy or invasion of copyright; but I do see the VCR market as a potentially vast and lucrative new market for our work and it seems to me that the movie industry ought to do everything it can to get into this market rather than fighting it all the way to the finish - a finish which, as far as I can see, can only end up with a defeat for the studios and distributors. . . . You can't stop new technologies with lawsuits. You have to accommodate to them. It seems to me (and I don't think this is unrealistically utopian) that most 'videophiles' are not crooks, that most of them would prefer to buy films rather than steal them (assuming the films were sold at reasonable prices), and that as soon as films are made available as widely and easily as phonograph records and audio tapes, the level of piracy will dwindle to a level comparable with that suffered by the music recording industry - an annoyance to be sure, but not a nightmare. . . . your newsletter is in a position to lead a strong lobbying effort to encourage the legitimate marketing of films on videotape. Why not provide your readers with a list of the names of studio and distributor executives, and organize a letter-writing campaign that may help persuade the studios that there is a big market out there for them to tap?"

Your wish is my command, Brian. As you will read elsewhere in this issue Allied Artists is planning to release its entire catalog on videocassette. Some of the other studios' addresses are listed below (and when you write to Universal or Disney, better act a little naive):

American International
Productions
9033 Wilshire Blvd.
Beverly Hills CA 90211

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.
10202 W. Washington Blvd.
Culver City CA 90230

United Artists Corp.
10302 W. Washington Blvd.
Culver City CA 90230

Columbia Pictures
Colgems Square
Burbank CA 91505

Paramount Pictures
5451 Marathon St.
Hollywood CA 90038

Universal Pictures
100 Universal City Plaza
Universal City CA 90230

Walt Disney Productions
500 S. Buena Vista
Burbank CA 91521

20th Century Fox Film Corp.
Box 900
Beverly Hills CA 90213

Warner Bros., Inc.
4000 Warner Blvd.
Burbank CA 91522

Folks, I see this as a real opportunity for us to bend the shape of reality just a little to our own liking. A couple of thousand letters to networks, studios and local stations will make an impression. Let me know what your response you get so I can share it with us all.

NOW, ABOUT THOSE TIME CHARTS..

I told you VHS folks last issue to "look for the much longer one next time." Well, I'm afraid you will look in vain herein. See the comments in The Big Nate's column. We haven't given up by any means. Bear with us a while.

As for the Betamax X-2 timing chart, there were two of you tireless stalwarts who took the time and effort to prepare these babies having increments of every 30 seconds. They were so close in results as to indicate that there is good synchronization between tapes and machines. One ends at #882 after 125 minutes, the other at #885 after 125½ minutes. My hat is certainly off to John Bush of Richton, Mississippi for his incredible effort in timing and typing up this information. I have not reproduced his version simply because the other one better fit the requirements of this page. The other one? Well, I hereby nominate Jim Gibbon of Ellisville, Mississippi (apparently there is a good deal of leisure time in Mississippi) to the Videophile's Hall of Fame for coming up with his 3rd time-used/time-remaining chart to be published in these pages. It appears at the right in a size that you can photocopy and keep handy on top of the machine. Many thanks to both John and Jim for jobs very well done.

DEALER'S★DOINGS★



A continuing series in which we report on and plug those who pander to our weaknesses:

UNITED TELETRONICS 3860 Tenth Avenue (207th St.), New York, NY 10034 (212-569-2330), has been very highly recommended to me by Paul Hill, up New Hampshire way. Most likely, they have in stock for immediate delivery the Sony Betamax part (belt, motor, whatever) that your local dealer, or even distributor, will tell you that you have to wait 6 weeks for. If you get in a bind, give 'em a call.

NATIONAL VIDEO MARKETING One East 57th St., New York, NY 10022, has been very slow in delivering its catalog and "International Club Erotica" membership package, that some videophiles have had their \$25 deposit in for since last March. One reader reports that his inquiries have not resulted in a satisfactory response. Let me say at this point that some dealers have been simply overwhelmed by orders and have not been able to get duplication from their suppliers as hastily as promised. My own order to THE VITAPHONE ANNEX remains unfilled, though paid for, since February. Still, I recommend caution in dealing with firms whose promotional material does not clearly convince you that they are a going concern, as opposed to one which is "planning" to offer a catalog not yet readily available.

VIDEO T.E.N. 121 LaVeta Dr. N.E., Albuquerque NM 87108, has a cassette exchange program by which for 20% of invoice you can exchange name brand prerecorded tapes. Tell John Ralston that TVN sent you, and ask about his special \$30 features and \$70 series.

SHOW/TAPES P.O. Box 610-686, No. Miami, FL 33161 (305-940-6691), is putting together a pre-recorded tape swap club. They will be happy to send you details. For those of you who are not easily embarrassed, they have an extensive "XXX" list for Betamax and U-Matic.

VIDEO REQUEST, INC. of N. Las Vegas NV is working up a club too. See their ad on page 36.

NORTH AMERICAN RADIO ARCHIVES c/o S. and G. Bland, P.O. Box 11962, Reno, NV 89510. A \$10 bill will enroll you as a member and entitle you to their quarterly publication (NARA NEWS) of about 50 pages. A sample copy is \$1.00 to Al Inkster, Editor, at the same address. Membership includes access to a lending library and lots of other goodies. NARA was brought to my attention by Roger Hill, 1615-A Emerson, Honolulu, HI 96813. Roger will be teaching a college-level broadcasting course this Fall and would appreciate hearing from those of you who want to share materials illustrative of early TV. He may be able to offer some trades of similar stuff. In the same vein:

"HELLO AGAIN" is a monthly newsletter from Jay Hickerson, Box "C," Orange, CT 06477 (203-795-6261). A one-year subscription is \$6.00, and I am told that it is an excellent information sheet on what's happening in "Old Time Radio." This newsletter has been around long enough to reach Vol. 9, No. 6.

BETAMAX TIMING CHART IN MINUTES AT X2 SPEED

Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left	Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left	Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left	Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left	Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left	Time Used	Counter Index	Time Left
000	000	125	026	256	099	051	451	073	077	616	048	103	765	022			
000	009	124	026	261	098	052	454	073	077	619	047	103	768	021			
001	015	124	027	265	098	052	458	072	078	622	047	104	772	020			
002	021	123	027	269	097	053	461	072	078	625	046	104	773	020			
002	028	123	028	273	097	053	465	071	079	628	046	105	776	020			
002	032	122	028	277	096	054	468	071	079	631	045	105	777	019			
003	037	122	029	282	096	054	471	070	080	634	045	105	778	019			
003	043	121	029	286	095	055	475	070	080	637	044	106	781	019			
004	048	121	030	290	095	055	478	069	081	640	044	106	784	018			
004	054	120	031	294	094	056	482	069	081	643	043	107	787	018			
005	059	120	031	298	094	057	485	068	082	646	043	107	789	017			
005	064	119	031	302	093	057	488	068	082	649	042	108	792	017			
006	069	119	032	306	093	058	492	067	083	652	042	108	794	016			
006	075	118	032	310	092	058	495	067	083	655	041	109	797	016			
007	080	118	033	314	092	059	498	066	084	658	041	109	800	015			
007	085	117	033	318	091	059	502	066	084	661	040	110	802	015			
008	090	117	034	322	091	060	505	065	085	664	040	110	805	014			
008	095	116	034	325	090	060	508	065	085	666	039	111	807	014			
009	100	116	035	329	090	061	512	064	086	669	039	111	810	013			
009	105	115	035	333	089	061	515	064	087	672	038	112	813	013			
010	110	115	036	337	089	062	518	063	087	675	038	112	815	012			
010	116	114	036	341	088	062	521	063	088	678	037	113	818	012			
011	121	114	037	345	088	063	525	062	088	681	037	113	821	011			
011	125	113	037	349	087	063	528	062	089	684	036	114	823	011			
012	130	113	038	353	087	064	531	061	089	687	036	114	826	010			
012	135	112	038	357	086	064	534	061	090	690	035	115	828	010			
013	140	112	039	360	086	065	537	060	090	693	035	115	831	009			
013	145	111	039	364	085	065	541	060	091	695	034	116	834	009			
014	149	111	040	368	085	066	544	059	091	698	034	117	837	008			
014	154	110	040	371	084	066	547	059	091	701	033	117	841	007			
015	159	110	041	375	084	067	550	058	092	704	033	118	844	007			
015	164	109	041	379	083	067	554	058	092	706	032	118	846	006			
016	168	109	042	383	083	067	557	057	093	709	032	119	849	006			
016	173	108	042	386	082	068	560	057	093	712	031	119	852	005			
017	177	108	043	390	082	068	563	056	094	715	031	120	854	005			
017	182	107	043	394	081	069	566	056	094	718	030	120	857	004			
018	187	107	044	397	081	069	570	055	095	721	030	121	859	004			
018	191	106	044	401	080	070	573	055	095	724	029	121	862	003			
019	196	106	045	405	080	070	576	054	096	726	029	122	864	003			
019	200	105	045	408	079	071	579	054	096	729	028	122	867	002			
020	205	105	046	412	079	071	582	053	097	732	028	123	869	002			
020	209	104	046	415	078	072	585	053	097	735	027	123	872	001			
021	213	104	047	419	078	073	588	052	098	737	027	124	875	001			
021	218	103	047	422	077	073	591	051	099	740	026	124	877	000			
022	222	103	048	426	077	074	594	051	099	743	026	125	882	END			
022	227	102	048	430	076	074	597	050	100	746	025						
023	231	102	049	433	076	075	601	050	100	751	024						
023	235	101	049	437	075	075	604	050	101	754	024						
024	240	101	050	440	075	076	607	049	101	757	023						
024	244	100	050	444	074	076	610	049	102	759	023						
025	248	100	051	447	074	076	613	048	102	762	022						
025	252	099															



Rambling Outtakes

by Marc Wielage

Greetings, and welcome once again to another edition of Rambling Outtakes. These past few weeks have been more than difficult living through, what with the unhappy non-appearance of Sony's long-awaited L-750 cassette and changer, at least on the West Coast. I just heard unofficially from a local Sony rep that the longer tape has again been delayed, this time pushed back to September, but as yet I have no confirmation of this fact. In any case, let's hope that in just a few more weeks, we'll have this tape to add to our collections, and perhaps a working electronic changer as well before Doomsday. Or maybe Christmas, if we're lucky.

I guess the most interesting thing that's happened since last time is the request from Messrs. Kroft and Dunlavey (representing Universal and Sony, respectively) for a half-dozen tapes of mine to be duplicated and a set of each given to both law firms for use as evidence during the upcoming trial in January. This way, they'll be able to say "this is an example of the poor taste of these Betamax collectors, your honor" as they show the court a dub of The Man They Could Not Hang. It was apparently fairly difficult to convince Mr. Dunlavey to agree to their borrowing of my tapes, as first suggested by Mr. Kroft, for in my deposition from April they bantered back and forth as follows:

MR. KROFT: Mr. Dunlavey, I am informed and I don't know if I understand correctly that at the commencement of this deposition a suggestion was made that we collectively borrow the titles of Mr. Wielage that he has copied of Universal and Disney films, and copy them for our respective uses, and return the originals to him, and that you said you would think about it since Mr. Wielage only indicated he would let Sony do the duplication. Is that right or wrong?

MR. DUNLAVEY: Whatever it was that Mr. Smith [the other MCA attorney] proposed, I said, yes, I would think about it.

MR. KROFT: It's something that we ought to, I think, conclude so that we don't have to bother Mr. Wielage again [and I was all for that!]. I wonder if you could give us an answer by the end of the day tomorrow, so if necessary, we could bring it to the Court's attention and he might order you to do it. I don't think it's a matter of great consequence, but it's one of these little things that must be taken care of.

MR. DUNLAVEY: No, I can't give you an answer by tomorrow. I have other things to consider. There are other people I have to talk to. The thing that I want to preclude is for you to get possession of the tapes, as you have in the past, and we have to come with a bowl and beg for them.

MR. KROFT: I am not suggesting that. I have got the bowl and you have got the tapes now.

MR. DUNLAVEY: I think we are finished.

And that pretty much ended that exciting chapter of the Galactic Battle of the Big Corporations, round number 93. All worked out happily: the tapes were duplicated, everybody got a set, and the judge in the case can look forward to viewing The Man They Could Not Hang, Saboteur, and Chip and Dale starring in "Mixed Nuts" from the Wonderful World of Disney. When all this stuff finally comes out on videodisc, I'll probably give Kroft all my original tapes, if he's still interested in them by then.

Turning on to other news, I'm happy to say that as of last week, I'm the proud owner of two Betamax decks with the purchase of an SLO-320 X-1 industrial recorder (mentioned in several past Ramblings). Now I can dub X-1 to X-1 at the drop of a hat...or an L-500, as the case may be. I hope to add either an X-2 8600 or an improved switchable X-1/X-2 deck, like the SL-8300 mentioned last issue, later on this year. Then I'll *really* be able to get into trouble--financially as well as legally.

And speaking of the 8600, I must say that I'm very impressed with this new X-2 only deck. It's remarkably well-styled, and seems to edit almost as well as its half-brother the 8200 does at half-speed. The solenoid remote pause works like a charm, and I think that the 8600's performance is actually a bit better than any two-speed Beta deck at X-2, since it's been optimized for recording only at that slower speed. Steve Comet's got a full report on the new deck elsewhere in this issue, so read on for the full scoop.

Back to the 320: aside from the fact that it's an X-1 only deck, it's by far the best-performing Betamax I have ever seen. Marginal edits often seem to be somewhat improved when played back on the 320, and its wealth of features (audio dubbing, still-frame, etc.) are a joy to use. I've found the RM-300 Auto Search Control really nifty to use, too; it allows me to assign a highly-accurate index number to every second recorded on a tape, enabling me to dial up any selection at will, wind to that spot automatically, and begin playing the segment at the touch of a button. Also, because of its solenoid-operated transport, full-function remote control is possible, even from over a hundred feet away. All in all, a very handy and well-made unit, though its relatively high price (\$1650 with random access controller) may lead me to eating peanut butter sandwiches for dinner for the rest of the year.

On the VHS front, I was somewhat disappointed to see last issue the highly negative reactions of some of our readers to this step-brother of Sony's Betamax system. Aside from the fact that it's incompatible with our Beta decks and came out a couple years late for us to have gotten in on it at the

beginning of our video collecting activities, there's nothing much basically wrong with the format. Having done quite a bit of duplicating to and from VHS via some local collectors, I've can say that I've had very little trouble with at least the Panasonic decks. And I have yet to see any half-speed incompatibility problems that couldn't be taken care of with a small adjustment of the tracking control. The two-speed VHS decks seem to edit better than Sony's 8200 (at X-1), and their picture quality is easily equal to Betamax recordings at the appropriate speed. Still, their cassettes are a bit bulkier than Beta tapes, and I find the operation of VHS recorders to be a little clumsy, particularly in trying to rapidly recue the tape for editing purposes. But there's one thing you've not to admit--having a full-speed two-hour capacity, or 4-hour half-speed capacity, is damned handy to have. The rest of VHS' alleged "advantages", such as reduced head wear with the tape not coming in contact with the heads during fast-winding, and the M-loading system (shown in Mr. Burns' column last issue) are to me somewhat questionable because for both of these advantages there are some pitfalls as well. I plan a kind of mini-debate between proponents of both formats for next issue, comparing the good and bad sides of Beta and VHS. Or maybe we should just square off Mr. Vuolo and Mr. Burns in a locked room, with one dull butter knife between them.

TVN GOES TO THE L.A. VIDEO SHOW AND MOVIE/EXPO '78

In early April of this year, I was surprised and amused to get a phone call from Mr. Charles Tenfer, who publishes a number of interesting video publications (Educational and Industrial Television and Video Systems, to name a couple), asking me to appear on a panel at his upcoming LA VideoShow in May representing the home video consumer/collector, discussing video piracy and copyright problems. I figured, well, it'd be one way to get free admission into the show, so what the hey.

Come May 8th, I found myself bedded down with a semi-raging fever and a stren throat, feeling certainly not up to my usual shenanigans. But being a true show-biz troupier, I went ahead and took the smog-filled traffic-jammed route to downtown LA the following day and made my way over to the huge LA convention Center. After a quick mini-breakfast with the other panel-ees (Mr. Bob Gerletti and James LeMay, representing the Educational side of the copyright problem, and Mr. Homer Porter of the FBI's Film and Video Piracy Dept. and myself representing the consumer side of the problem), we went over to a lecture hall packed with an audience of at least a thousand videofolks and began our discussion at about 10:45 AM. Gerletti and LeMay told their side of the difficulties in preventing schools from unauthorized duplication of educational films and tapes. Mr. Porter told some extremely entertaining horror stories of a few folks he had visited who make their living by foisting off illegal duplicates of films and tapes on poor but semi-honest collectors. He mentioned that the most pressing problem was that of sneaky theater owners around the world showing illegal film prints for ill-gotten gains. He also emphasized that the FBI isn't all that much interested in collectors per se but rather the pirates who initiate the duplicating in the first place. I made the rather long-winded statement that "we [collectors] operate on the point of view that any home videotaping is legal, so long as it's done purely for personal use only, without any actual selling of the tapes for exhibition or profit. Our position is similar on duplicating tapes--that it's legal under the fair use section of current copyright laws...again, for trading purposes only." I went on to mention several times that there'd be no need for pirates if the studios would only get on the ball and offer their current features on tape or disc, and mentioned that they could easily make a fortune doing so, in addition to exhibiting them as usual in theaters.

I concluded by saying that hopefully with the outcome of the Universal/Disney/Sony case, our rights would be clarified in regards to off-the-air recording and that perhaps we'd then be able to proceed with our taping and trading activities as before, without the clouds of fear some of the members of our ranks are currently going through.

Soon after, Mr. Porter made a humorous point regarding the definition of an accessory copyright infringer when he said that I had just defined it pretty well with my explanation of the position of video collectors. I got a good laugh with a worried, pained look on my face when he said that, and I later jokingly expressed some concern over whether I'd be able to leave the panel un-handcuffed. Jokingly, that is.

Porter also mentioned that if some of the tapes we trade for non-profit purposes somehow end up on the selling block of a pirate, we could at least theoretically be liable for starting the chain of illegal duplicating. He also mentioned that they have confiscated well over 40,000 feature titles on film and tape as of May '78, and that of these over 90% of the tapes were master recordings right off the film chains. He later told me in private that in the cases where they had successfully convicted people for video piracy, the illegally-used equipment would later be destroyed--up to and including film chains sometimes worth well over \$100,000, to which I began to choke. All their tapes are likewise destroyed, not merely bulk erased or otherwise disposed of.

All in all, a most interesting panel. Also interesting, if not comical, was one I saw a month later at the National Film Society's MOVIE/EXPO '78 in Beverly Hills, with two representatives from the Motion Picture Association of America's Film Piracy Office, plus Mr. Peter F. Nolan from Walt Disney Production's Legal Dept. and two collector/representatives from the National Film Society. Among other things, they defined the four types of film and tape owners: first, the "legal collector", who owns only non-copyrighted or legitimately available films and tapes (like the 20th Century Fox titles from Magnetic Video); next, the "infringing collector" which is pretty much what we all are--folks who own copies of copyrighted films and/or tapes, including items recorded off the air; "traffickers", who sell or trade copyrighted films or tapes; and the semi-bloodthirsty "pirates" themselves, who initiate the activity by making the tapes and films available from illegally-duplicated masters.

Mr. Nolan did not exactly gain the affection of the audience by drily mentioning that just about all Disney features and shorts are copyrighted, despite claims to the contrary from several people in the audience. One man held up a copy of a letter he got from the U.S. Copyright Office which stated that certain WDP titles were not copyrighted, to which Mr. Nolan replied that the Copyright Office was obviously in error and that if the man were to come by his office in Burbank, Nolan would gladly show him copies of the films' renewal certificates. Yeah. Also, another angry gentleman told how he had purchased several 16mm prints of certain Disney titles from the U.S. Government Customs Office in New York, who had somehow confiscated the prints during the course of their business. Nolan replied that since the Customs office had no right to sell property which they didn't really own, the FBI could legally seize the man's prints and return them to Disney, which did not make the gentleman at all happy. Mr. Nolan also mentioned that all theatrical trailers of Disney feature films are protected by copyright since the original films themselves are copyrighted, to which many dealers loudly disagreed.

Questions from the audience were submitted to the panel via handwritten notes to preserve the identity of the inquirer; my question, which was offered to Mr. Nolan, was "is there any chance Walt Disney Productions will offer to the public any of their feature films on videodisc or tape, and if so, when?". He answered that yes, their films probably will be made available on videodisc someday, but that "they probably won't be the ones you'll want to see," apparently alluding to the animated films. Oh, well.

At any rate, both conventions were very interesting and had a lot to offer both film and tape collectors. The VideoShow boasted a large equipment exhibit, featuring the just-out SL-8600 X-2 deck and several new giant-screen TV's (including the MGA screen mentioned in TVN #12). Movie/Expo, too, had a large dealer room featuring all kinds of posters, films and even quite a few pre-recorded videotape titles on display. I was able to meet at least a half-dozen TVN at our booth there where we hawked current and back issues of the newsletter; most of the folks I met either mistook me for Jim Lowe or wanted to know why I was called the "infamous Marcus F. Wielage". At any rate, it was certainly an intriguing experience, and who knows--maybe someday we'll have our own Video Collector's Convention. I can just see it now--complete with a "throw-a-pie-in-the-attorneys'-faces" booth, featuring appearances by some of our local LA friends. Three shots for a quarter.

BOOK REVIEW DEPT.

While at the LA videoShow, I had the good fortune to drop by one of the local video dealer's booth where they had copies of Charles Bensinger's new book The Video Guide on display (available from the publisher, Video-Info Publications, at P.O. Box 1507, Santa Barbara, CA 93102 for \$11.95 + 50¢ postage). This 230-page large-size paperback is chock-full of fascinating video information, including details on even such current models as Sony's 320 and 8200 Betamax decks, though it's mostly concerned with industrial and semi-professional 3/4" production. The only reservation I have about the book is its fairly high price, which at \$11.95 is pretty steep for a paperback; also, I was disappointed to see the lack of information regarding VHS decks, which get only a few passing remarks. Still, The Video Guide remains the best I've ever read on the subject. It'll pretty much take you from the level of a neo-videophile to almost that of a professional video engineer. One oddball thing, though--author Bensinger occasionally goes a little overboard as to the philosophy behind operating video equipment, advising the reader to treat their machines as if they were human. Sheesh. Whoops, excuse me--I've got to cheer up my distraught 7200, who's still jealous of my new 320 and is having fits of depression.

Another fine paperback that's just come out is the TV Guide Quiz Book, a 307-page pocket book put out by Bantam Books (#1181-0) for \$1.95. This one is set apart from most TV nostalgia question-and-answer books that I've seen by the inclusion of 192 original pages from the New York City edition of TV Guide, some over 25 years old, which I thought was pretty interesting. So if nostalgia TV's your game, you might look out for this pink paperback at your neighborhood newsstand--along with the latest issue of the real TV Guide.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Ken Winslow of Tepfer Publications, I was able to get a review copy of the new Beta Videocassette Program Catalogue, an 84-page paperback listing thousands of pre-recorded Beta format tapes available from many different sources. There aren't as many feature films listed as I would have liked to've seen, but then I think this is due to the current lack of availability of many such films on the market. With Allied Artists' announcement of last month that they'll be offering all 500 of their titles on videotape (presumably in both Beta and VHS formats), I think this situation will change by the end of the year, with hopefully more studios following suit. I understand that 20th Century Fox is expected to add another 50 titles to the Magnetic Video line soon, as well. In any case, this large-sized paperback goes for \$4.95 from Charles Tepfer Publishing Co., P.O. Box 565, Ridgefield, Conn. 06877.

MISCELLANEOUS TIPS AND TRICKS

I know both "Big Nate" and Joe Mazzini had some words of wisdom on the best head cleaning materials and methods to use on our videotape recorders last issue. One solution to this problem that I've heard from several servicemen and The Video Guide (mentioned earlier) is using an aerosol can of head-cleaning Freon with a 6" spray extension nozzle to reach those hard-to-get-to areas. After letting the ma-

chine cool for a half-hour or so, you can spray all over the video and audio heads for a few seconds, which should extricate all but the most stubborn oxide particles. I've been using Miller-Stenhenson MS-200 Head Cleaner, which goes for about \$4.00 for a 12-ounce can. Q-Tips can be very tricky to use, because of the possibility of getting a few stray wisps of cotton from the swab trapped on the head surface or breaking the delicate video heads by pressing on them too hard. Be sure to clean the heads with the machine turned off and the round head assembly motionless.

On blank Betamax cassettes: I've continued to have lots of trouble with Scotch Beta-format cassettes, mostly with excessive dropouts (those nasty little white lines that zing horizontally from left to right all over the screen). Also, in the case of at least 5 tapes from 3M, I've had the leader pop right off the hub and get sucked back into the cassette shell, never to return, requiring me to open up the cassette and repair it--which is a real pain. Although Scotch tape is indeed often less expensive than other brands, I've found all Sony-manufactured Betamax cassettes to be better in terms of this dropout problem. You can generally find Sony tape sold under other brand names (Zenith, Toshiba, Sanyo B-Cord, etc.) for as little as \$12 or less for an L-500. Meanwhile, I've had a few acquaintances complain to me about experiencing some defective Sony-branded cassettes recently. After doing a little checking, I found that only the Betamax tape manufactured in Dothan, Alabama ends up on dealer's shelves in Sony boxes, whereas a lot of the Sony tape manufactured in Tokyo goes to the other manufacturers for packaging. Very little Japanese-made Sony tape ends up in America in a Sony package. My conclusion is that the Japanese-made tape seems to be slightly more reliable than the American-made tape, again, based on my experiences over the past two months. For the utmost in reliability, you might do what a few local diehard collector/friends of mine do: run a test on every blank tape you buy by taping an hour or two off the air and playing back parts of the tape as a quality check. That way, you'll never be surprised by a tape's performance.

To All You Great American Time Machine Owners: I'm sorry, folks, but all I know is that I've played with the Quasar-format decks for at least two or three hours recently and have found them to be inferior in every way to most Betamax and VHS decks I've seen so far. The GATM cassettes are large and clumsy, to say nothing of being too expensive, and I find the decks to be none-too-intelligently designed, either. That, plus the fact that no other manufacturer has come out with other GATM decks makes it clear to me at least that the format's in trouble and any owners of these recorders would be wise to check out purchasing a replacement or additional Beta or VHS deck to prepare for the future. Incidentally, while I was at the TVN booth at the Movie/Expo con, two deaf-mute gentlemen approached me and asked via sign-language and written notes how they could play Betamax tapes on their Quasar machine; they seemed very unhappy that the salesman who had led them to purchase a GATM hadn't informed them that the two machines were incompatible and that pre-recorded programming on the Quasar format was virtually non-existent.

And on the best cables to use for dubbing: I must disagree with Mr. Tom Joy of Framingham, Mass. who claimed that "an audio cable has too much loss of video frequencies to give a good copy". Actually, if the length of cable is kept as short as possible, and if it's properly shielded against stray RF interference, you should be okay no matter what kind of cable you use. I have yet to see the difference between using standard RG-79 75 ohm video cable and good ol' shielded audio cable, while viewing either on a waveform monitor or on my set. But again, it's a good idea to keep the lengths as short as possible on your cables, and keep them away from AC power cords if possible. I must admit, however, that I do generally use 75 ohm or at least low-compliance cables during my dubbing if only because it, choke, "looks more professional".

Finally, the answer to the 7200 Hiss Problem: For those of us old-timer Betamax collectors, who started off with the "Model T" X-1 deck, this has generally been a symptom guaranteed to drive all but the most patient and well-informed serviceman up the wall. For some inexplicable reason, Sony 7200's seem to develop a kind of hissing, staticy kind of noise in the audio during recording, generally after the machine has seen a good year or so of use. The cause: a defective audio recording component, a switch located on the right side of the machine, on the side of one of the inner circuit boards. This switch sells for about \$2.50 from Sony (part number 1-514-976-41), takes a serviceman maybe an hour to replace and should prove a welcome relief to sickly 7200's with this dread disease.

At any rate, that about wraps it up for this issue. Read on for the long-awaited article on the Ultimate Video Room. Next time: hopefully, an interview with Madman Earl Muntz of giant-screen TV fame, plus elementary editing for neo-videophiles, a list of suggested products for Sony, and the usual array of rumors, subpoenas, and mis-information. See you then.

Marc Wielage, P.O. Box 480315, Los Angeles, CA 90048

Effective with this issue, The Videophile's Newsletter expands its horizons somewhat. On page 44 of this biggest-by-far ever issue, you will find an ad for a collection organizing system (boxes, labels, etc) being offered through the offices of "TVN/West", none other than our own Marcus F. Wielage. I rather suspect that Mr. Mazzini will join this venture as soon as he gets settled in his new digs. In addition your editor will be meeting with these gentlemen around the first of August to plan the future of this stuff and see if it is going to be something other than a haphazardly run little video empire, or what.

The Ultimate Video Room

* or all the video equipment you've ever wanted to buy for \$160,000,
but couldn't even afford to drool about... by Marc Wieland

I'm sure that all of us at one time or another have toyed with the idea of what we'd do if suddenly a couple dozen bars of solid Swiss bullion fell into our laps from heaven. Me? I'd probably fall on the floor with a grimace on my face. But seriously, given enough in cold hard cash, one of the first things I'd attend to is building a kind of Media Room/Theater in which I could enjoy my favorite music films and television shows. It'd have to have seating for at least a dozen people, a large-size video screen at the front of the room, and have almost enough audio and video equipment to rival CBS' Television City Broadcast Control Room.

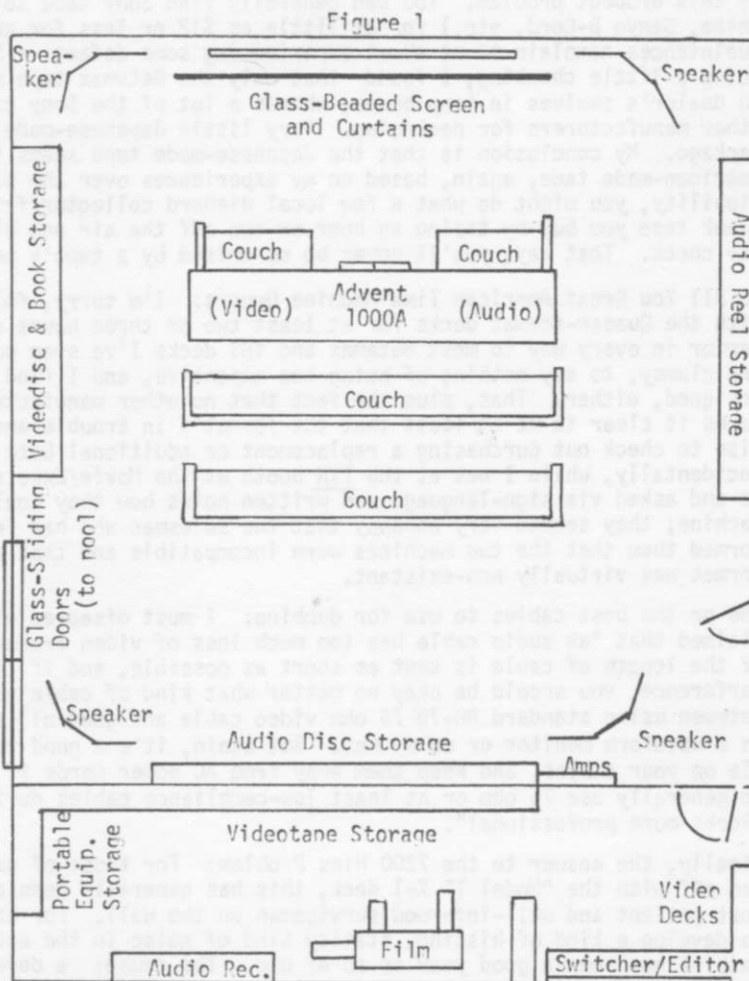
As seen in figure one (right), the screen I've selected for my Media Room is the venerable Advent 1000A, specially modified for several improvements in picture quality and brightness. The D-120 conversion lenses are used to enlarge the picture to a full 6' x 8' glass-beaded screen. Directly in front of the screen are theater-style curtains that rise directly up into the ceiling at the touch of a concealed button; at the same time, the room lighting is subdued sufficiently for optimum viewing. These hidden ceiling-mounted lights are carefully focused away from the screen and onto the equipment controls and seating areas to avoid diffusing the projected video image.

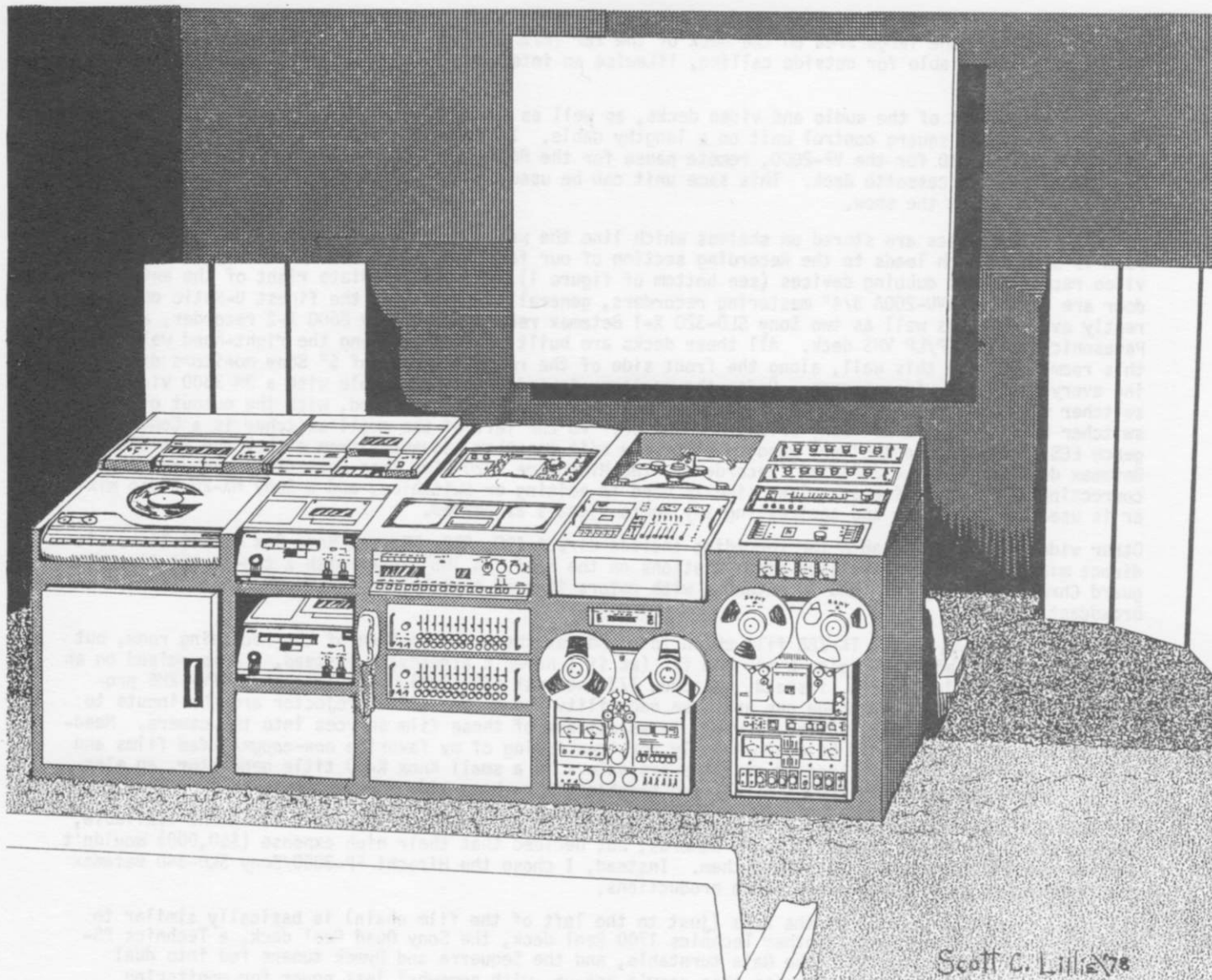
By far the most complex portion of the room is the large 12-foot console about 8 feet in front of the screen (see figure 2). This console houses most of the electronic playback hardware for the Media Room, and incorporates the Advent 1000A in the center of its cabinetry. To the immediate left of the projector are all video playback sources: two Sony SLP-300 Betamax X-1 players with RM-300 Random Access Controllers provide the bulk of the video playback; also included is a Sony VP-2000 3/4" player, the eventually-to-be-available Magnavox DiscoVision Player, and the new Sony SL-8600 X-2 Beta deck, probably to be used sparingly because of the low image quality of half-speed recordings blown up to more than 25 times normal size.

A custom-designed switching system from Dynair, Inc. allows me to select any of these playback decks for viewing on the big screen by means of the two rows of switches directly in back of the Advent. Two small 5" Sony color monitors on either side of these switches can likewise display any source selected, for auxiliary viewing of more than one program at once. Off-air programming can be selected on the Panasonic TV-100Q Programmable Timer/Tuner located just under and in front of the Sony monitors. At the bottom of the center of the console is a large blank panel covering a Microtime 2020 Plus Time Base Corrector with complete image enhancement and dropout compensation options; this device can be connected to any one playback source for cleaning up and correcting all but the most poor quality recordings. Finally, a small microprocessor/controller (not shown) is used to automatically change over videocassette players for uninterrupted programming.

Built-in Atari II and VideoBrain home computer games are located directly under the two SLP-300 Betamax decks. Either game can be selected on the switcher to appear on the Advent in full color, with 4 remote-controllers that plug in at the very bottom of the middle of the console.

The right of the console houses the bulk of the audio playback equipment. Although the expenses for the video equipment all but dwarf the cost of the audio facilities, this area hasn't been skimped on by any means. Two Audio Research SP-4 Pre-Amps (operated in tandem for discrete quad sound) are employed as the master audio switching system, allowing the selection of any of the console's video decks or other audio sources as needed. Immediately under the SP-4's is the Dymek AM-5 AM Tuner, along with the esoteric Sequerra Model 1 FM Tuner with Panoramic Oscilloscope tuning; the Sequerra can be modified for discrete quad broadcasts once the FCC makes up their minds on what system broadcasters will be using, and the Dymek can likewise be updated to AM Stereo operation as well. Directly under the Sequerra, on the back of the console, are 4 Peak/Averaging Technics SH-9020 Meters, which constantly monitor the audio output of the pre-amps, for an instant visual indication of the audio levels.





To the immediate right of the Advent Projector is the futuristic-looking Gale GT-2101 Turntable, recessed into the console with a hinged plexiglass dust-cover; the turntable comes equipped with the new SME 3009 Type III tonearm and Denon DL-103S cartridge. Next, there's the exotic Nakamichi 1000 II cassette deck, long renowned for its superb near-professional performance. But since the bulk of my audio collection is on reel to reel tape, I'll probably be using the console's Panasonic/Technics 1700 Auto Reverse deck for most of my music listening enjoyment. This brand-new unit (located directly under the Nakamichi on the middle right side of the console) is the first to incorporate a 6 head/Isoloop direct-drive transport design for non-compromising performance equal to the best studio recorders. Rounding out the audio decks are the Sony TC-854-4S Quad Reel and TC-258 Quad Cartridge playback decks, both selected for their performance and multitude of features.

I might mention here that a new tape type has just been introduced by 3M and BASF, a pure metal tape called "Metafine", which is reported to be the all-time top-performing recording tape. In video, such a tape could be marketed in Beta and VHS cassettes to give a good-quality recording even at 1/4 normal speed! And in audio, it should give us unheard of (if you'll pardon the pun) sound quality with decks adjusted to accept the new super-high output tape. Of course, all the equipment outlined here will be modified to accept either regular or Metafine tape formulations, as needed.

All the audio playback sources can be fed into either of two noise-reduction devices. I chose a professional DBX I 124 encoder/decoder unit (not shown) out of personal prejudice, but Dolby A or B devices could be equally well employed. Also, two stereo Technics SH-9090P Equalizers are used for specific sound-shaping problems. These two units are located on the back of the center of the console.

Four 75-watt Audio Research 76A Stereo Amplifiers (at the rear of the room) drive the four bi-amped Magneplanar Tympani IIIA speakers (in all 4 corners of the room), generally considered to be among the very best available. Each screen-sized speaker utilizes 2 separate amplifiers for the bass and mid-range/tweeter elements for best aural performance.

Since I'm sure my guests might want a snack or a drink during our entertainment, a small refrigerator/bar is located in the large area on the back of the far left side of the console. Also, a multi-line wall phone is available for outside calling, likewise an intercom system for contacting others in the house.

Full remote control of the audio and video decks, as well as the volume of the pre-amps, is accomplished with a portable 8" square control unit on a lengthy cable. Included on it are the two RM-300's for the Betamaxes, an RM-410 for the VP-2000, remote pause for the 8600, and full-function controls of the two reel decks and the cassette deck. This same unit can be used to dim the hidden room lights, open the curtains, and start the show.

Audio tapes and discs are stored on shelves which line the walls of the View Room. At the back of this room is a door which leads to the Recording section of our facility, which houses all the audio and video recording and dubbing devices (see bottom of figure 1). To the immediate right of the entrance door are two Sony BVU-200A 3/4" mastering recorders, generally regarded as the finest U-Matic decks currently available, as well as two Sony SLO-320 X-1 Betamax recorders, a Sony 8600 X-2 recorder, and a Panasonic PV-1000 SP/LP VHS deck. All these decks are built vertically along the right-hand wall of this room. Next to this wall, along the front side of the room, is a row of 5" Sony monitors displaying every available video source. Under the monitors is a desk-sized console with a 3M 3300 video switcher with which you can mix between any of these video sources as needed, with the output of the switcher displayed on a 25" Sony Trinitron monitor. To the left of the small switcher is a Convergence ECS-1B Editing Controller, used to precisely edit together sequences from either the two 320 Betamax decks or the two 200A 3/4" recorders. Two Microtime 2020 Time Base Correctors are used for correcting and stabilizing any video signals used in editing or switching, and a Sony MX-20 audio mixer is used for selecting and controlling any audio signals as needed.

Other video sources available for recording include direct ABC, CBS, NBC and Home Box Office lines via direct microwave and/or satellite earth stations on the roof. A 100' tower with a top-of-the-line Wine guard Chromestar VHF, UHF, and FM antennas with rotors is used to pull in all but the most distant broadcast stations.

I considered adding an RCA TK-28B film-chain to round out the video portion of the recording room, but decided that that might be going a bit too far (as if I haven't already). Instead, I compromised on an Hitachi FP-1010 color camera, instead, at about 1/3 the cost (\$20,000). Two 16mm Kodak TV-12M6 projectors modified for Cinemascope pan and scan capability and a 35mm slide projector are the inputs to the Telemation multiplexer, which allows me to select any of these film sources into the camera. Needless to say, this unit would be employed only for transferring of my favorite *non-copyrighted* films and home-type movies. (Ahem.) Located near the projectors is a small Knox K-50 title generator, an electronic video typewriter for adding titles and graphics to my home video productions.

For portable location recording, I looked over some of the professional broadcast equipment available, such as RCA's TK-76 and Ikegami's HL-79 cameras, but decided that their high expense (\$50,000) wouldn't justify the limited use I'd be giving them. Instead, I chose the Hitachi FP-3060/Sony SLO-340 Betamax combination for my do-it-yourself video productions.

The audio recording section of the room (just to the left of the film chain) is basically similar to that shown in the View Room: another Technics 1700 Reel deck, the Sony Quad Reel deck, a Technics PS-858US Quad Cartridge recorder, the Gale turntable, and the Sequerra and Dymek tuners fed into dual Audio Research SP-4 pre-amps comprise this room's set-up, with somewhat less power for monitoring through smaller JBL speakers.

And that pretty much describes the basic physical set-up of the complex. Needless to say, the Media Room has been acoustically designed and equalized for near-flat audio response, necessitating great care in the selection of draperies, furniture and carpeting materials. The floor from the back couch to the Advent screen is tilted at a 25° angle to provide optimum viewing for the audience. And to provide back-up power in the event of an electric failure, solar batteries automatically switch over for uninterrupted AC voltage.

The cost of this near-insane undertaking? Well, figuring about \$27,500 for the video equipment in the View Room and \$21,000 for the audio equipment, plus \$74,500 for the video equipment and \$18,000 for the audio equipment in the Recording Room, we come up with an equipment expenditure of right around a mere \$141,000. That leaves around \$9,000 for the other acutriments, including the design and construction of the room.

All told, a nice round \$150,000+ would be needed to build this entertainment center as described. The prices I estimated were accurate at the time of this writing, but they may well be higher by the time this issue reaches your mailbox. You could skimp here and there, mostly be eliminating the film chain and using the console as a recording center as well as playback, but we're still talking about well over \$50,000 for even this minimized set-up.

So now only one problem remains: how to get my idea for this thing off the printed page and into my tiny apartment. I'll let you know when I come up with that solution. In the meantime, if anyone want to provide me with enough capital, I'll be glad to build it in the home of my choice...preferably in Acapulco. Cash, check, money orders, green stamps, gold bricks or jewelry freely accepted.

Your comments on my Ultimate System are welcomed. Write: Marc Wielage, "One of dose ca-razee guys" Dept., P.O. Box 480315, LA, CA 90048.

THE VIDEO COMPOSITE

by BOB BURNS

I read with great interest Joe's article in our last issue concerning the "flagging" problem experienced with 25-inch TV's. I have a 25-inch Zenith and was finding it a real problem, especially since I do so much dubbing. I was ready to blame the problem on everything but my television. I've tried his suggestion and it works great. It was necessary, however, for me to get inside the AFC circuit, as my '78 Zenith had no horizontal hold.

Much has been said about the VHS format's incompatibility at the slower "LP" speed. I personally have experienced no such problem. Videocassettes recorded on the RCA "Selectavision," which I review in this issue, were played back on a Panasonic and a Magnavox VHS unit with only a minimum amount of adjustment needed to the tracking controls. In any format (U-Matic, VHS, or Beta) the tracking control should be fine tuned when playing back a tape recorded on another machine. A question has been raised over the fact that Magnetic Video was not offering VHS cassettes in the "LP" speed. Those who are critical of the VHS format refer to this in their claim of incompatibility. A phone call to Magnetic Video confirmed that the incompatibility had nothing to do with their decision not to use the "LP" speed. As the gentleman said, "What's the point?" They are able to purchase 2/4 hour VHS cassettes at a comparable price to the 1/2 hour Beta cassettes. Also, they were aware that the "SP" speed is available on all VHS machines, whereas the "LP" speed is not.

I won't make it a habit to use this column as free advertising for anyone. However, I feel that I would be doing our Ohio readers a disservice by not mentioning the repair facilities available at Jimmy Rea Electronics in Columbus, Ohio. They've been in the video business over 12 years and, take it from me, they have an exceptional organization. The fact that they are the largest video distributor, dealer, and duplicator in Ohio helps a little. They also have an excellent sales force, people who are very knowledgeable in both home and business/industrial applications and are "factory reps" for over fifty video suppliers. So, if you happen to live in Ohio, or plan to be in the Columbus area, stop by at 540 West Broad St. and ask for Rick or Dan.

I've decided my first "user report" will be on the RCA "Selectavision" since it seems to be the most popular of the VHS models. As a matter of fact, RCA reports sales in 1978 to be far outnumbering the Sony SL-8200. The unit was provided by Tri-State Video Products, and to them I express my thanks. Since I don't have, or have access to, any sophisticated technical equipment, the reports will be nontechnical in nature. (You'll just have to rely on my experience.)

Briefly, the unit is a consumer model with controls and features common to the many videocassette recorders currently on the market. In addition to the more common features, it has a built in timer, audio dub facilities, and remote pause capability. It provides both the Standard Play (SP) mode, which provided a maximum of two hours on one cassette, and the Long Play (LP) mode, with a maximum of four hours per cassette. (Panasonic/JVC have announced that they will market a 3/6 hour videocassette by late summer.) The unit provides a VHF/UHF tuner which allows the operator to record a program, for later playback, while watching another. The built-in timer has 24-hour capability and will turn the unit on to record a program at any preselected time within the 24-hours. At the end of the tape, in timer recording, total mechanism shut-off is effected. The audio dub facilities allow the operator to add or delete the sound portion of the recording without affecting the picture. This is especially useful when making "home movies" with the optional camera. The remote pause control allows the viewer to edit out commercials and

station breaks from his or her "easy chair". Although the editing out of this unwanted material can be a tedious job, it is well worth the extra patience to the video purist. This remote pause is in addition to the one located at the control keys. The screen goes to "black" when pause is engaged (no "still picture" being provided).

There is video muting (loss of picture) after engaging "play", releasing from pause, or if a change in speed is detected. There has been much controversy in the Beta format regarding the defeating of this video muting. However, users of the RCA "Selectavision" will not experience the 3 to 5 seconds of "black" found in the Beta format models. This VHS unit determines speed and locks in the picture within .6 seconds, thus causing barely 1/2 second of "black" after releasing from pause (or changing speed). This is due to a more sophisticated video control circuit used in VHS models. I personally feel that the average VHS owner will not find this 1/2 second bothersome; hence no reason to defeat it. Perhaps a "still picture" could be obtained by defeating this circuit, however, one should weigh this against the inconvenience of voiding the warranty. (I think someone should remind you Beta owners of this.)

In comparing the two speeds provided, I found the difference to be barely detectable, comparable to the Beta format's X1 and X2 speeds. I don't recommend the slower speed for maximum quality but it is ideal for general purpose recording, the recording of programs to be viewed at a later time, then erased, or when the conservation of tape is of paramount importance. If you are adding a tape to your library, or will perhaps loan it to someone to dub, I recommend the faster speed. (I'm sure any long time Betamax owner, as I am, would also recommend the same for its two speeds.) One notable feature is the provision for front panel switching of the built-in tuner or an external source. The unit also has a "dew" indicator which advises of excessive moisture on the video drum. This can be a real problem in high humidity areas and is a valuable feature for that reason. RCA recommends the machine be left on for a period of time while the moisture evaporates. Using any video recorder in the presence of excessive moisture can cause the tape to adhere to the video heads. I have one complaint with the "Selectavision" which I have found in all VHS models. When power is applied to the unit, the video head drum, and therefore all the video heads, begin to rotate. While it is true that the heads are not in contact with anything until "play" is engaged, this seems like unnecessary motion which could cause excessive wear on the rotation mechanism. I am in the habit of turning on all my video equipment with one master switch. One should keep this in mind and remove power when not using the machine. (Beta format recorders do not have this problem.)

I've had many inquiries concerning the availability of software (prerecorded videocassettes). There is a company in Connecticut which publishes a very complete catalog of videocassettes by title. It lists where they may be obtained and at what price. The catalog is titled Beta Videocassette Program Catalog. Don't let the title fool you, all sources listed provide videocassettes in both formats. The address is:

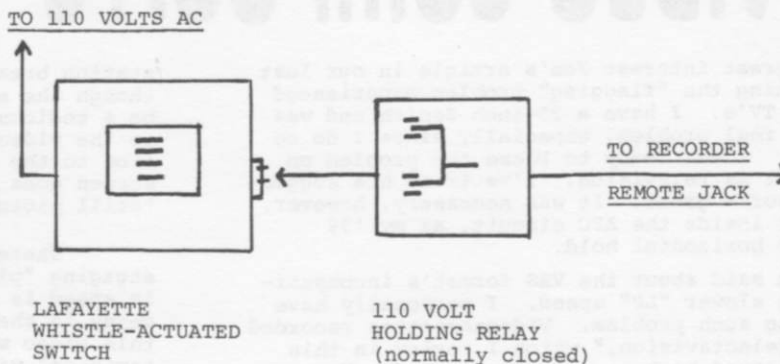
C.S. Tepfer Publishing Company
Box 565

Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877

The catalog contains nearly one hundred pages and includes complete addresses of all software sources. The price? \$4.95 plus \$1.00 shipping. Be sure and mention that you read it in TVN. (Jim reminds everyone periodically about mentioning TVN when contacting these companies, but I'd like to reemphasize the importance of letting these people know that we "Videophiles" are organized and have a great deal of clout.)

I've received several "tips" these last couple months, and I'd like to pass some of them along. A letter from Gerald Price, of Los Angeles, refers to a "wireless remote control" advertised as a \$250 option (for the RCA selectavision) by many video outlets in the Los Angeles area. He reports that the identical unit can be homemade for about \$20, using parts available from your local Lafayette Electronics Store (or through their mail order division). It involves their "sound actuated whistle switch," and he included the schematic at right:

Run the AC line from the holding relay plugs into the AC input on the whistle-actuated switch. The line running from relay to recorder should be two conductor terminated in the mini-plug. The relay can be mounted in a plastic box with pilot added to indicate status of relay.



(Diagram furnished by Gerald Price)

Another letter, whose author wished to remain anonymous, advised of a method to circumvent the problem encountered in videotape recording material from the new "over the air" pay TV system, now being offered in some areas of Southern California and the Northeastern U.S. His experience was with the system called "Box Seat" which is currently available in the Northeastern New Jersey market. While I am not personally familiar with the system, he reports that they (the pay TV company) use a "black box" at the set to decode a signal they broadcast on one of the upper UHF frequencies and then feed into the set, using either channel 3 or 4. The problem, he reports, is that, after the "black box" has descrambled the signal, it feeds only the video portion into the set, while the audio portion is reproduced via a speaker within the box. He suggests feeding the video portion into the recorder through the normal TV cable and then connecting a microphone to the recorder's "mic input" and placing it near the speaker on the "black box." He has encountered no problems with this method, except for "room noise" being picked up by the microphone. To keep this noise to a minimum, he recommends using a high quality microphone, placing it near the speaker, then covering them both with foam rubber, or some other type of sound dampening material while recording. He also says that best results are obtained by not turning the volume on the "black box" to a high level, but, rather, keeping it low to avoid distortion. I have a theory which might be applicable, but since I do not have access to this type system I cannot verify results. However, you might try using an "induction type" audio pickup like those available for recording telephone conversations. They usually have a suction cup, which should make it easy to attach to the "black box." You should try placing it on the sides, top, and bottom to determine where the best results can be obtained. Also, you should try it in both the "mic input" and the "audio input" (at the rear of the recorder) to see which provides the least distortion with the highest volume. Not having a system to try my theory on, I cannot guarantee success--however, it would eliminate the "room noise" problem if it works.

Another reader advised of an unconventional method to improve reception on his RCA Selectavision. He reports that, by leaving about a half-inch or so of the copper center wire of his 75-ohm TV cable exposed, he is able to connect it to the VHF input, without allowing the outer "barrel portion" to come into contact with the input. By using this method, he is able to substantially improve reception on some channels. Technically speaking, there is no way this should work, but it works for him, and it might work for you. I tried his suggestion on the Selectavision I was testing, but since reception is relatively strong on all channels in my area, I was not able to determine if any improvement was gained.

This is a good time to make a point that I think is very important. Unless you've had previous experience in video recorder maintenance, DO NOT attempt to clean the video heads on your recorder. I realize a lot of you audio recordists were in the habit of cleaning the audio heads before every recording, but, in spite of what you might have heard, there is NO similarity between audio and video heads. The instructions given by Joe in our last issue were very complete and accurate. However, I don't (and I'm sure he doesn't) recommend attempting this without some previous experience. If you've used your machine so much that the heads ACTUALLY DO NEED to be cleaned, there will be several other adjustments needed by this time which are just as important as head cleaning, so a trip to the repair shop is in order.

I have now heard from several sources that RCA will be marketing a machine in late summer which will offer a timer which can be set to turn on and off several times in one 24-hour period. Later on, they will add a programmable tuner, making possible the recording of shows from different channels in that same 24-hour period. This is probably just the beginning of a battle between Beta and VHS manufacturers to see who can come up with the most unique idea. By Christmas we will probably be "snowed under" (sorry) by a multitude of VCR models, gadgets, and accessories.

I must plug Tri-State Video, since they were nice enough to lend me their RCA "Selectavision" I reviewed this issue. I have dealt with them several times and I can assure everyone that they are dependable. They got off to a bad start about a year ago concerning some copyrighted material, but that is all straightened out now, and everything they offer is completely legal.

Not to be "nit-picking," but to prevent an acquisition of inaccurate specs: A typographical error was made in my last column. On page 15, in the 3rd paragraph, it should have read: "...to just over 40 db's. Actually this was a marginal drop in the Beta I's original S/N ratio of 43 db's. The VHS format, in the standard mode, boasts a S/N ratio of 45 db's. This is an exceptional figure...."

Next time I'll report on the JVC Vidstar and begin a glossary of video terms.

A last minute word about the dropout problem mentioned by RCA "Selectavision" owners sometimes. Evidently, the muting circuit is so sensitive that it "mutes" the picture at the slightest drop in signal strength. I'm now drafting a letter to the Director of Consumer Affairs at RCA, and I intend to take the unit to the RCA Service Center in Columbus at my first opportunity. Hopefully, I should have a solution by next issue.



What follows now is a question and answer section, intended as a response to the many letters received by myself and by our editor. I've tried to condense the questions most often asked and have provided my best answer as of this date. As for the many letters I've received: I'll try to answer them all personally sooner or later, but until that time I hope this information will help in some way.

Q: IS IT POSSIBLE TO ADAPT THE VHS RECORDER FOR "STILL PICTURE" IN THE PAUSE MODE?

A: Theoretically this is possible. However, it has not been established by any reliable source that this could be accomplished without major surgery to the VHS circuitry. Although the Betamax can be adapted with relative simplicity, no one has proved the same is true for the VHS.

Q: IS IT POSSIBLE TO DEFEAT THE AUTOMATIC SPEED SELECTION CIRCUITRY (IN PLAYBACK) SO THAT A TAPE RECORDED AT THE FAST SPEED CAN BE PLAYED BACK AT THE SLOWER SPEED, AND VICE VERSA?

A: Again, the idea exists in theory.

Q: IS IT POSSIBLE TO SEE THE PICTURE IN FAST FORWARD AND REWIND?

A: This is definitely not possible as the VHS format now exists. No tape-to-head contact is made during fast forward or rewind.

The three questions above are the ones most often asked by VHS owners. I have had no evidence that these three adaptations can be isolated within the VHS circuitry to the point that the removal of a single component or the disconnection of a certain wire would accomplish these features. All of us agree that these features would be a welcome addition to our units. If any electronic technicians or engineers have studied the schematics of a VHS machine and can offer any solutions or recommendations, please let me know--we'd all definitely be interested.

Q: DO ANY PROBLEMS RESULT FROM SLIGHTLY DEPRESSING THE FAST FORWARD/REWIND KEYS (RATHER THAN LOCKING THEM DOWN) WHEN JOCKEYING FOR A CERTAIN POSITION ON THE TAPE?

A: No. The reels are interlocked within the cassette to prevent either reel from turning without a comparable turn of the other reel. Also, all FF/RW functions are accomplished with the tape completely inside the cassette.

Q: WHY DON'T MANUFACTURERS PROVIDE "TAPE COUNTER" CHARTS SO THAT THE RECORDIST MIGHT DETERMINE TIME ELAPSED AND TIME REMAINING?

A: A "tape counter" is a very inaccurate method of determining the amount of tape used or remaining. It is usually connected to the take-up spindle via a rubber belt. The take-up spindle turns at various speeds, depending on how much tape has been used. Also, the use of the FF/RW keys can cause the "counter" to be off as much as ten digits. As the machine gets older, the "counter" belt stretches, causing an even greater amount of error. Add to this the fact that videocassette manufacturers provide different amounts of leader at the beginning of the cassette, and that even the same manufacturer might add or subtract an inch or two of leader, depending on production run, and you have a multitude of variables that makes a "tape counter" chart impractical. Sony now markets the only method of accurately locating a position on a 1/2 inch cassette, with their "random search control" associated with their industrial SLO-320 recorder.)

Q: HAVE ANY OTHER VHS OWNERS ENCOUNTERED INTERFERENCE PROBLEMS WHILE WATCHING ONE CHANNEL AND RECORDING ANOTHER?

A: There have been a few isolated incidents of this. An RCA Service Center advises that this is caused by a dislocated shield within the recorder's tuner section, probably dislodged during shipment. This should be brought to the immediate attention of your dealer.

Q: IS THERE ANY WAY TO AVOID THE "BLACKOUT" PROBLEMS INCURRED WHILE RECORDING CHANNELS PROVIDING ONLY MODERATE RECEPTION?

A: Again, this is a result of the video muting circuitry. However, I have heard that there is definitely a threshold level control associated with this circuit. Whether or not it could be adjusted to properly record weak signals is another question. (Any takers?)

Q: WHAT CAUSES "BLACKOUTS" DURING PLAYBACK, USUALLY SEVERAL TIMES IN A ROW?

A: This problem is similar to the one above, however, I believe in this case the videocassette itself is causing the problem. Incidents of this nature are more common at the slower speed and are found in the Beta format, as well. What happens is that the cassette, running at the slower speed, encounters a slight resistance in the supply reel. (This could be happening for several reasons: A very high or very low temperature could be causing the cassette housing to expand or contract, thereby binding the reels, or an extreme amount of humidity could be causing the tape to slightly adhere to the video drum, to offer two.) This causes the tape to "drag" or momentarily slow down, thus causing the loss of proper "sync" in the control track. The result is that the picture breaks up and the video muting takes over. This problem can be kept to a minimum by fast-forwarding and rewinding the cassette before each recording or playback. [See next question.]

Q: IN ALL TYPES OF TAPE RECORDING (AUDIO AND VIDEO), EXPERTS RECOMMEND REWINDING TAPES STORED FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME. ARE ANY PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WHEN STORING THE CASSETTES WITH THE TAPE FULLY FAST-FORWARDED, THEREBY CAUSING THE TAPE TO BE REWOUND BEFORE EACH USE?

A: Now, we are all aware that videocassette manufacturers tell us to rewind the cassette fully after each use. However, I can see no harm in storing tape fully forwarded rather than fully rewound. If anyone has any information on this, we'd all be interested.

Q: WHEN DUBBING, IS IT POSSIBLE TO BOOST THE SIGNAL SUFFICIENTLY (WITH AN ANTENNA BOOSTER, FOR EXAMPLE) TO IMPROVE THE PICTURE ON THE COPY?

A: No, it is not possible to improve on the original by any method. Just be certain you have connected the machine in the best possible manner. For more information on this, see Jim's article in Issue #12.)

Q: MOST NONDIGITAL TIMERS ARE INCREMENTED IN FOUR OR FIVE EQUAL DIVISIONS OF THE HOUR. IS IT POSSIBLE TO ALTER THEM FOR A MORE EXACT TIMER SETTING?

A: Probably the easiest method would be to set the timer to the nearest hour increment and then advance or retard the actual time setting to correct the difference.

Q: WHY IS IT THAT VCR'S CAPABLE OF ELECTRONIC EDITING, "STILL PICTURE," REMOTE CONTROL OF ALL FUNCTIONS, AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL FEATURES ARE NOT OFFERED BY ANY MANUFACTURER OF BETA OR VHS UNITS?

A: Home video recording is still in its infancy. All of these features, and more, will someday appear on a "Super VCR" machine, but we'll just have to wait until the corporate brains (?) decide we're ready.

Q: WHY IS THERE SO MUCH CONTROVERSY OVER THE SALE AND TRADING OF VIDEOTAPED MOVIES OR TV PROGRAMS, WHEN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN RECORDING RECORDS AND RADIO PROGRAMS FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS?

A: This controversy is not exclusive to the video industry. Thousands of "bootlegged" eight-track cartridges flooded the market during the early days of that entertainment medium (and still do, for that matter). It is the easy access to copyrighted video material that makes this such a touchy subject. Not to mention the fact that videocassettes are becoming a very marketable product. Only time will determine the outcome.

"STAY TUNED"

BOB BURNS
BOX 23-16
WHEELERSBURG, OH 45694



VCR NEWS & VIEWS

By STEVE COMET

SL-8600/NEW PRODUCT REPORT

On the 23rd of May, Sony Corporation introduced its third generation of consumer Betamax - the single speed Betamax - the single speed (X2 only) SL-8600.

At first glance it's obvious that the new machine differs greatly from its predecessor. The cosmetic changes are striking and numerous. Included in the most pronounced are the addition of an LED digital clock, redesign of the pause control (now a piano type switch) a four digit tape counter replacing the older three digit unit, and what appears to be the exclusion of a microphone input (now hidden on the rear panel) and the lack of tracking adjustment and aft controls (now concealed in a recess just below the front panel).

Some of the other refinements include a substantially quieter motor and transport system, function indicator lamps duplicated on the front facia (as well as on the top of the deck) and a less sensitive muting circuit - not as prone to blanking when confronted with minor sync loss.

All transport controls have remained mechanical with one exception. The pause key is electrically operated, and a remote control switch is supplied, with twenty feet of connecting cable. The feature works well - and because the scanner remains running in the pause mode, you get a locked picture when going from pause into play - no blanking!

Although technically more advanced the machine definitely does not feel as solid as the 7200's and 8200's. In Sony's attempt to reduce the 8600's weight (37 pounds - 8 pounds lighter than the 8200) they have apparently substituted light weight plastic wherever feasible. Even the wood veneer end panels have been eliminated in exchange for thin, brown plastic side shields. While disappointing - this somewhat less than "quality" feel in no way affects the operation of the 8600, and it remains most impressive.

For those of you who depend on your Betamax for making edits - you may be a little disappointed with the new machines editing ability - or lack of it - depending on how critical you are.

With the 8200, fairly precise edits are possible utilizing the play-pause-record method. The 8600, however, does not permit simultaneous use of the record and play keys - hence edits can be made only after the transport has come to a complete stop.

To perform the edit, you may review the tape and find your edit point - then you must push the stop key. Then you may set up the edit, by depressing the record and pause keys at the same time. Depressing pause once again - rolls the tape.

The edits are fairly stable - but are plagued by a split second of video noise. I attempted to make a number of "almost perfect" edits - similar to those which can be accomplished with the older machine, but was totally unsuccessful.



Sony's \$1095 Betamax SL-8600

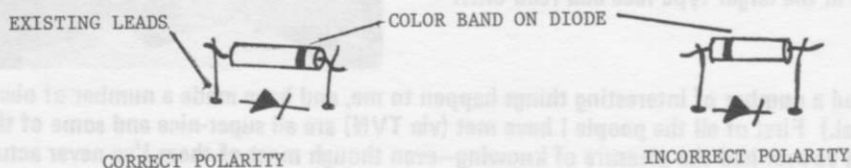
Off air picture quality is superb, as usual - thanks to a high quality tuner section, and all transport functions have a very nice feel.

There has also been a totally redesigned rear panel, complete with modified antenna connection inputs. The new system allows both UHF and VHF antennas to be directly connected to the Betamax and both signals may now be looped through the machine and out to the T.V.

All considered - for those who require an X-2 only machine, I think you'll be more than pleased with this latest Sony offering.

DIODE REPLACEMENT

For those of you who wish to replace the D-4001 diode (see TVN #13 pp. 16-17), proceed as shown, taking care to observe polarity as noted. Solder quickly and avoid excessive heat, as the diode is susceptible to damage if subjected to high temperatures. It will not be possible to replace the diode unless you have left the old diode's leads long. Do not trim the old leads at all - but leave them as they are. Mounting the new diode higher up than the other components on the board will have no affect on its performance in the circuit.



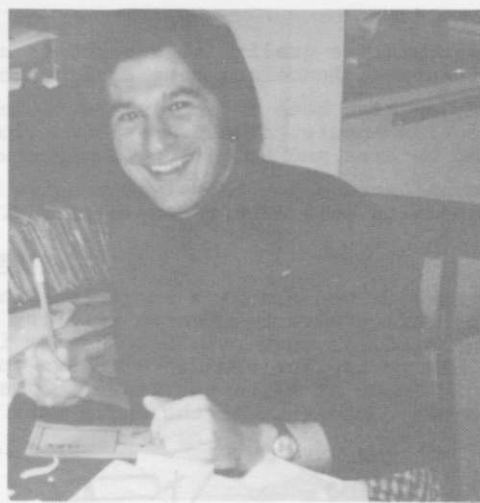
The banded (cathode) end of the diode must be positioned as shown, in relationship to the drawing board. Double check this before you solder.

VIDEO VOICE OF CANADA

Communication, that's what it's all about, and no one does it better than Videophile's Newsletter. The most valued thing is to reach other people with the same interests, namely video cassette recording. ** I received a letter today from a VHS Panasonic dealer who told me I had made a grave mistake in buying the Sony Betamax, the tapes were more costly, and the time was only one hour. He's wrong on both counts, if he had kept up to date he would know about the SL-8200 and the new 180 minute tape out now. BUT, I agree with another writer in TVN, let's stop the squabble between the Beta and VHS systems. They are like music, different strokes for different folks. It's what you like that counts. ** Summer is upon us, and time is of the essence, so I have decided to write for TVN only, and drop the other articles. However, I wish INSTANT REPLAY the best of luck. In theory it's a good idea, but to date I have NOT seen a sample offering, although they have asked me to submit material. ** I wish to report that the BETA PAUSE unit is superb, and well worth the money. Now available in Canada, it works very well on the 7200 and 8200 models, and lets you sit back away from the set and remove commercials. ** LOOKING THRU THE KEYHOLE (a new feature): Sony will release this month (limited to 2 tapes per machine sold to dealers) the new long play 90/180 minute tape. My dealer has promised me at least ONE of these hard to get animals. Gossip has it that Sony is holding back in reserve a huge supply of 8200 models to exchange with owners of 7200 models for a small cash difference. Probably happen this fall after the new model is released North-Americanwide. The sales meetings to dealers have been kept very hush-hush, but you can bank on Sony to do the right thing. The Video Tape Club of America, will NOT service people in Canada. Their rights are only for the USA, but there is a new franchised outlet in Montreal which for a slightly higher cost, can serve you with same club offerings, trade a tape, and discounts. ** The cost of L-500 tapes goes up June 1, more than \$1 per tape (why is this, I still dream of \$5 tape) ** Thank you JAMES for that comment on the editorial page (the man from the north with humour). I did not realize that my articles were humorous. Snide, direct, forceful, dynamic, ego ridden .. yes, but humorous, I did not know. Again, thanks to all who write me every week, I am still answering every letter, even those written on toilet paper. To date, I have not received one letter that wishes to contradict or argue about any of my comments. Many moons ago, Mr. Lowe stated he disliked "SOAP", (which I like) and yet he puts that kind of picture on issue 13 cover, probably the WORST show on TV today. There is no accounting for taste. [Amen.- Ed.] A special thanks to the girl who puts all this in such fine shape for print release. ** I am sorry, I cannot cope with the

Australian scene at present, but the power and machines run differently than ours at present, and the transfer of materials is just too complicated. ** I have met with Jay Hunt from page 28 of last issue, and rest assured he is a most honourable gentleman. Please feel free to trade with him in confidence. ** Latest and most professional way to label your cassette boxes is the GESTAFONT SYSTEM, produced by Gestetner in England. It has interchangeable letters, about 200 different kinds and sizes, works electrically, runs black and white or color tapes (2 simultaneously) so you get a print on print affair. Very professional and large enough to read, it is ready sticked to adhere perfectly. Ask me for a sample. It's marketed under another name in the USA. ** PLEASE NOTE: If you are a BOND or Poster fan, write Jerry at Movie Collectables, 6354 Delmar Ave., University City, MO 63130. He is tops in my book. ** I am still looking for a small metal box, with 6 toggle switches to control each of my Panasonic color TV sets which are fed with my Sony Betamax system, so I can control each set from the little output box at the recorder ... any ideas? ** Of special interest to American readers: No, we do not have Home Box Office in Canada, or anything like it. We do have cable TV which brings us 2 or 3 American channels. ** I have not met a collector in Canada yet, who likes EDITED or consensed tapes (like super 8mm or Castle movies, cut down to 200 feet from a 90 minute original). One of my dear friends sent me White Line Fever, with Jan Michael Vincent (one of my favourites) but to my amazement, it was chopped up and cut up no end, with no semblance of continuity. Question: Why would anyone spend \$49 for a 5 minute color Super 8 clip, when for \$39.95 you can get a 50 minute color BOND trailer reel on Beta-1 video tape? I hope Holland Video Co. puts out more like these, the quality and price are excellent. ** So many are carting their recorders to each others homes for trading and dubbing, I wish Sony would put handles on the ends of them. ** Does anyone out there have a tape of the film A VERY NATURAL THING? Would appreciate news on same. How about a picture called SCORE, it seems to have been lost? ** I have a very special reader of TVN who wishes to hear from anyone with tapes of religious feature length films. Please write me. ** Well, enough of this folksy, intimate, patronizing, plugging column, but I decided at 80 degrees outside all week I would get real neighbourly and write about things in videoland that have touched me personally. Have you noticed how professional the input is getting? Count yourself fortunate to be a subscriber and a reader of this publication. Some of my best friends read TVN, if not their own, then over somebody's shoulder. RALPH GORDON, P.O. BOX 5037 Station F, Ottawa, Ontario CANADA

MICHIGAN UP-DATE



At the calculated risk of sounding a bit like Ray Glasser—HELLO THERE! Welcome to another Michigan Up-Date on all that I have observed in the world of videotape since we last visited. This issue I even got bold enough to run this picture. So, excuse the error's and spelling—rejoice in the larger type-face and read on!!!

Since our last visit I have had a number of interesting things happen to me, and have made a number of observations about videophiles (in general.) First of all the people I have met (via TVN) are all super-nice and some of the most honestly sincere folks that I've ever had the pleasure of knowing—even though most of them I've never actually seen, face-to-face. Others I've seen only on tape. To Bob Frischman in St. Louis, you just might make it in television yet.

On the next page there is a reprint of selected portions of an article which appeared in the Detroit News revolving around myself. It was factual and very "up-front." I have tried to make the type on this page a bit more readable than last issue's microscopic attempt at squeezing tons of information on one single 8½ x 11 sheet. The reprint, however is a 50% reduction so we could get as much of it as possible on the opposite page.

In conjunction with the article came three (3) talk show appearances (all on radio). I was interviewed on The Russ Gibb Show (he's a real videoholic) on 50,000 watt WCAR at 8 PM. At 10 PM, the same night (June 11th) I drove a mile away to WDRQ(FM) to guest on Rick Shannon's Q-munication Program. Both featured phone calls from their listeners. The programs were about 30 minutes each and time flew by very fast. On Monday, the 12th, I was a guest on one of the most listened to radio shows in the Great Lakes area—"Focus" on 50,000 watt clear-channel WJR radio! The host, Hal Youngblood, was a perfect gentleman, and handled the interview with enviable professionalism. That radio station is so big that I drew mail response from Ohio and Wisconsin and a lunch invitation from an RCA video rep. that was tuned in at the time. TVN got heavy mentions on all three programs.

In the merry month of May, business took me to Akron, OH, and I took the opportunity of mixing business and pleasure and incorporated it with a visit to the Video Collector's of Ohio. Never, in my life, have I ever experienced anything like it. Nine (9)—count 'em — 9 Betamax's in one apartment. Watch where you step! Among the stars we found the program director of a major Cleveland (top rated) radio station, an employee of a Cleveland.TV station, an unemployed disc-jockey and others, equally colorful. They all got together for what Ray Glasser called "Art Vuolo Day in Cleveland." I WAS impressed. At 4:10 AM I ran out of steam, and was told later that the last guest left at the socialable hour of 4:35 in the morning. What a great group of Buckeye's.

Cable TV is coming to Ypsilanti, Michigan, where I live. Unfortunately my subdivision is an all underground utilities area and will probably be the last area to be wired. They are bringing in "Show-Time" for movies—which is an excellent service and a couple of out-of-state TV channels are hoped for—one from Chicago and another from a major city so far away I can't announce it at this time. Details next time—film at 11. Tape at 5:30 (Tape is always quicker!)

It was a great thrill for me to make it to CES (the Consumer Electronics Show) in Chicago in mid-June. One can wear out a pair of quality shoes trying to see everything in one day. The displays were very exciting and the crowds were fantastic. Elsewhere in this issue there should be a more in-depth look at the show from those who could say it better than I can.

Still got a few boxes for those in need. Silver binded L-250 with stickers. Also, here is a special deal for fellow Videophile's. If you're planing on a vacation trip this summer and hate the frustration of dial searching on the ole AM-FM car radio dial, I produce radio station guides for a living and would like to send a couple to you FREE! Just let me know if your interest is rock, country, or a State of Michigan only guide. We also have an Indiana Guide. Those are the only two individual state publications. The rock and country guides cover the entire 50 states! Just send me 50 cents (in coin) for the postage and envelope only— to RADIOGUIDE, PO BOX 219, YPSILANTI, MI 48197. Be more than happy to help make your next auto trip a bit less frustrating—radio-wise. You remember radio—that's TV without the picture.

IN CLOSING: Do not like the idea of an X2 only Betamax—(SL-8600), see the full story on this new unit elsewhere in this issue. It's a very sharp looking set, but none of my X1 tapes will play in it. He who get's it first—shall be last—how biblical. Still like to hear from you all (313) 434-2712 after 10 or 11 pm is best. Write at PO box 219, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Just put new heads in my SL-7200, about \$150—save now, sooner or later it'll happen to you. Also, when the main drive belt breaks—the Betamax will eat whatever tape is in the machine. then—just before it digests it—the unit will go off. I tell you all this from "first hand" experiences. More later. Thank you for your attention and responses.

Is There a Videophile in the House?

GET OUT YOUR GOOD OLE MAGNIFYING GLASSES TO WANDER THROUGH THESE SELECTED PARAGRAPHS OF A WELL-WRITTEN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN THE SUNDAY, JUNE 11th DETROIT NEWS MAGAZINE.

Reprinted with permission from Alex Ben Block, The Detroit News, Detroit, Michigan.

PLEASE NOTE:

THIS IS NOT THE ENTIRE TEXT. ONLY THOSE PARTS PERTAINING TO THIS WRITER WERE INCLUDED. THE ENTIRE STORY WAS VERY COMPREHENSIVE AND LENGTHY. SPACE ALLOCATIONS IN T.V.N. WOULD NOT PERMIT A COMPLETE REPRINT.

The story, which centered on yours truly, was put together after the reporter, Alex Ben Block, spent several hours at my house asking lots of questions about the home video scene. The reaction from this article has been excellent.

EXCEPT FOR the gleaming electronics on either side of the unused fireplace, the living room is bland and sparse, a bachelor's landscape of utilitarian motel-like furnishings and odd mementoes crowding the small suburban ranch house. Everything seems to be green, gray or brown except the burst of color spilling off the 19-inch MGA television screen in one corner.

Pacing back and forth as he switches stations with a long, thin black remote control box, Art Vuolo, 32, is talking about the two chrome and plastic Sony Betamax video recorders stacked on a shelf in the corner next to a digital clock and a model mobile van unit with the legend: "WARV, Channel 3."

Since April of 1976 when he acquired his first VCR (video cassette recorder) it has become more than personal entertainment for Art Vuolo — it has become a friend who can help quell loneliness, a secretary who can store information until he returns home and has time to view its messages,

an ego massage that allows him to instantly replay his appearances on talk shows promoting his radio guides, a plaything to share with friends and dates, occasionally a sales tool and more and more a link with the rest of the wired-in world of videophiles who like Art are bursting to share the fruits of this joyous new technology.

Spitting out words in bursts Art is flipping through a card file itemizing all the tapes in his library. There are new and old television shows along with a variety of other material. Much he has taped off the air himself, or created with his own black and white camera, while the rest he has purchased or gotten by trading with other self-described videophiles.

Although he is over six feet with a full head of curly black hair he bounces on the balls of his blue and white Adidas shoes with childish delight as he discusses his theories about why the newest craze in home consumer electronics has found such rapid acceptance.

When asked how many of the \$16 tapes he purchases a month, and how many he recycles Art Vuolo lets out a long wheezing laugh. "This is the most addictive thing I've ever been involved with," he answers. "It can kill you financially. You record one and all of a sudden you think, 'this will be a collector's item.' Then all of a sudden you've got a shelf full of collectors items."

"The price of the machines is dropping, but the price of tapes is rising. Sony's not going to make it off the razor, they'll make it off the blades."

For many years Art Vuolo was mainly interested in radio. He makes most of his living off "Logos Unlimited," a company which creates, promotes and sells ads in small fold-out "radio guides," each listing radio stations and their place on the dial across the nation. He puts out one for each kind of radio sound — rock, country, sports — and then various editions for most states and many parts of the country. Travelers who stop at restaurants pick them up off the counter near the register and use them to dial in their favorite sound as they cross the country.

"I used to be Mr. Radio before the video bug bit me," quips Art Vuolo setting his Betamax to record a show later in the evening just before we head out the door.

"Now my friends call me Mr. Media."

BIG NATE TALKS ON VHS

Well, here I am again, wading (slowly) into the vast mists of video journalism. First of all, VIDEO COMPOSITE by Bob Burns in May/June was terrific! I really learned a lot (thanks to Bob). Also, three cheers for Cecil in Louisiana—I, too, agree that this mag should stop arguing over which format is best.

Anyway, on with the column: I have verified the price that RCA sells tape for to its dealers: 1/2 Hr format @ \$12.50 and 2/4 Hr format @ \$18.00. If you're still buying from department stores, forget it! \$25.00 is a total ripoff. Even most record stores now sell tape for \$19.95.

After 3 weeks of trauma, my machine has been repaired and works better than ever. Found out RCA has unlimited 3 year warranty so that if anything goes wrong with your VCR, RCA will repair it for free (parts & labor) the first 3 times. Any service afterward, the max that you have to pay is \$5.00. The warranty is \$200.00, and they let you pay in 10 installments with no interest or other charges.

The war to generate an accurate VHS time chart goes on. Jim, of Santa Monica, and myself have driven ourselves crazy trying to synchronize a chart, to no success. The upper counter limit on my machine is anywhere from 841 to 861, whereas on Jim's VCR, the counter shows the upper limit to be between 845 and 885. The limit is different for each cassette on each machine. However, individual cassettes remain highly consistent at same count when repeatedly played (above numbers for 4 Hr mode). After repeated benchmarking, it can be reported that the tapes always (or at least 98% of the time) play at least 4 hours and 10 minutes, with the upper limit being 4 hours and 17 minutes in the 4 Hr mode. In the 2 Hr mode, we count out at 2 hours and 12 minutes, with one tape going 2 hours and 17 minutes. That extra few minutes is nothing to sneer at when you can do two 2 hour and 7 minute movies on one tape, etc. My best advice is: Develop a time chart for your own machine and refine it by repeated use, to form a "time envelope" or range variation limit to gauge your own VCR. Use an egg timer to ring and remind you of the approximate time to check your watch and counter at the exact moment.

Also note: (This is really strange!) If you record on half of the tape in the 4 Hr mode, and then advance the tape (previously blank and virgin) by using the play key to gauge exactly how much time is left, the VCR will try to use the faster (2 Hr mode) speed, since it has speed sensor mechanisms built in. This does not happen every time, but will happen when new tape is involved. It's just as safe to advance using play/record to get a more accurate time-remaining measurement since tape length varies.

That's it for this time. For info, questions, answers, or B.S., write to:

THE BIG NATE c/o R & D Fernandez, 2617 Deerford, Lakewood, CA 90812

P.S. Anyone with an HBO (or equivalent) copy of DIRTY HARRY or ROLLERBALL—please help me out. Thanx.

FOR BEGINNERS ONLY

This column was well received last time, so let's do it some more. This stuff is old had to us smug veterans, but since we are gaining hundreds of new readers each month, this is for them:

For starters, here is a capsule glossary of terms which are commonly bandied about in these pages. I expect to be having a much more extensive one in the future, but these are primary:

VCR or VTR -- Abbreviations for "Video Cassette Recorder" or "Video Tape Recorder."

VHS or BETA -- Literally, VHS means "Video Home System," one of the two most prominent types of 1/2" VCR's. This system has been adopted by RCA, Panasonic, JVC, Magnavox, and GE, among others. "Beta" designates the other of the two prominent 1/2" VCR systems. The Beta format has been adopted by Sony, Zenith, Toshiba, Sears, and Sanyo (Betacord). [Tapes designed to be used with one of these formats will play on all recorders using that format, but will not be able to be played in a machine designed for the other format.]

HBO -- Home Box Office, one of the pay cable systems available in some parts of the country. These systems, some of which broadcast by satellite, feature uninterrupted motion pictures of recent vintage (eg. The Deep, Annie Hall) as well as other special programming.

X-2 -- With respect to the Beta format, this means that the VCR or cassette will play for 2 hours without changing tapes. X-1 machines will play a maximum of 1 hour. For VHS machines, "LP" (long play) or "SP" (standard play) are sometimes used to designate the difference between the 4-hour and the 2-hour mode on those VHS machines which have two speeds.

DUB -- To make a copy of one cassette from another, through the use of two VCR's. Also stands for the copy itself. Sometimes "dupe" is used to indicate the same.

PRERECORDED TAPE -- As opposed to a blank tape, this is a tape which you buy because it already has a film or other material recorded on it. Same as buying music on tape.

Q: Can you tell me if there is equipment available to record from a prerecorded tape? I have bits and pieces of recorded tape on several dozen tapes that I would like to put on one tape.

A: All you need is a second recorder and a copy of TVN #12 which contains the article "Hooking Up." It explains in very simple terms how to do this very thing.

Q: Are inactive channels necessary for playback? There's no such thing on some cable systems.

A: No, they are not. The recorder automatically blanks out the cable signal on channel 3 or 4 and substitutes its own. Those of you who are on antenna have greater need for a blank channel, but federal regulations have seen to it that there is not supposed to be any area of the country in which both channels 3 and 4 are occupied by strong signals. One or the other should be "available" wherever you are.

Q: What's with this color flashing? I recorded a black and white show that looked fine when I recorded it, but on replay the tape is full of some color mess. This sometimes happens for a moment when the station goes from its black and white film to a color commercial, too, and even for a second or two now and then during the show.

A: This is probably my all-time favorite question. Readers of issues #1 and #2 of this mag will recall that we wrestled with it way back then. As the man says: "The trouble is not in your set." Your problem is with the engineer at the TV station. Write or call him and remind him not to leave the "color burst" on the transmitting equipment when he is airing a black and white show. Call him again if he is lax. The moments that surround commercial breaks occur when the engineer (sometimes more careful than others) switches the color equipment on and then off in order to transmit the commercial in color. Why, it sometimes pops up in the middle of a show is still a mystery to me. One way to solve the problem is to use the fine tuning control on the VCR to tune out all color anytime you are recording a black and white show. You can do this on playback with the fine tuning on your TV set, too, but not with good results. Now that VCR's are more common, station personnel are more attentive to this sort of thing than they were 2 years ago, when what I dubbed "the purple snow" was plaguing nearly all of us.

Beginners will find lots of tidbits on this sort of thing in the first six issues of TVN which, coincidentally, are now available in portfolio reprint for a measly six bucks. Details are on the *CASH-IN PRODUCTS* page.

The following is presented without comment, except to say that it is intended as an editorial or critical comment within the meaning of the fair use doctrine of the Copyright Act of 1909.



Notions of a Tallahassee Ms. and a New York Tenderberry

a review of mags by Sharon K. Wright



We recently got the April and May '78 issues of *GADGET*, subtitled "The Newsletter for Grown-Up Kids," and we'd like to share it with you. a 12-page, consumer oriented wonder, *GADGET*, a sort of buyer's guide to everything, is published by G.A. Publications, Inc., 116 W. 14th St., New York NY 10011 (212-989-8001). While not a newsletter tailor-made for videophiles (as we humbly like to think TVN is), judging from these two issues, video products fairly new on the market are frequently treated. If you are a mail order maniac, or just like to be the first on your block with whatever, but hate the thought of getting ripped off, then you'll consider this one well worth the \$15 yearly they soak you for. Though 12 pages may not sound like many, *GADGET* is typeset, well written and illustrated, and crammed with interesting and usable info--lots more than your typical newsstand mag of many times its length.

One of the best things about *GADGET* is its direct approach to the items reviewed. Instead of noncommittally waffling around, the reviewers spare neither praise nor blame and seem to be making a diligent effort to cover those everyday things about which you, the potential buyer and owner, would be concerned. Some flavorful excerpts: *On an audio cassette recorder*--"One of the most easily toted machines available...." *On a mail order house*--"A company with a beautiful catalog and ugly customer service...." *On a combo tea kettle/lamp/alarm clock*--"...scalding water spilled out of the machine and all over its surroundings. It's outrageous...." *On some headphones*--"I felt I had finally found perfection....produced concert hall quality....extreme lightness and comfort." *On another mail order house*--"...sure fire disappointment....stay away from this mail order house at all costs." These people don't mince words! And, should they inadvertently misinform, they are quick to correct their mistakes, and do so prominently.

While *GADGET* is panoramic in scope (reviewing such nonvideo-related items as glow putty, a model rocket catalog,

a programmable calculator, Queegies, or ball bearings to worry with, a home computer enthusiasts' mag, and, WOW, a "servo-controlled, 12 position effect mode selector chorus echo with sound, two-channel output electronic switching to silence on/off operations," not to mention more common items, there are many morsels to delight the videophile's palate as well. In these two issues alone, there are reviews & stuff on the Toshiba super color video camera IK-12 & Toshiba electronic viewfinder EVF-12, Akai America Ltd's service department, Atari Video Pinball, and the Toshiba color television C389, plus a listing of companies offering prerecorded videocassette tapes. Whet you appetite? If you're like me, a catalog browser and glassy-eyed window shopper, you'll want to subscribe.

Well, we all knew it was just a matter of time. With myriad copies of magazines at every newsstand on such timely topics as lady wrestlers, customized vans, and CB radios, it seems incomprehensible that there was nothing substantial available in the area of video. Then, around 6 months ago, a fledgling appeared on the newsstands entitled *VIDEO*, a slick quarterly magazine for "home video enthusiasts" that does more than recap the daily doings on the Soaps. The 2nd and summer issue can be found at your local newsstand. If not, you can write Reese Publishing Company, Inc., 235 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003. (Subs are \$6 per year.)

The table of contents reveals articles on Fairchild's Channel F (a video game), Sony's Trinitron Plus, JVC's Vidstar Color Camera, RCA's Selectavision, QUBE, The Video Environment, Sinclair's Microvision, Advent's VideoBeam 710, and Atari's Video Music, plus an interview with the producer of *Welcome Back, Kotter*, a special software section, a new products section, some tips on using a video camera, and a Q & A section. It's all very professional, from its glossy paper to its big time ads. Interested in purchasing equipment? The data, test results, and ratings are there to aid you in your decision. Looking for suggestions as to how to arrange your equipment so your home doesn't look like a TV studio? *GADGET* may give you some ideas. Looking for equipment, but don't have access to the real thing? The many illustrations in this issue will keep you from having to purchase a pig in a poke. (*Whoops!...Did I say that?*) Though it's not strictly a hobbyists' mag, and you don't quite turn the last page feeling like you know the folks who put it out, it certainly does fill the newsstand gap.

a review of books by: Ira H. Gallen



THE GREAT MOVIE COMEDIANS: from Chaplin to Woody Allen (Crown Publishing) is an enjoyable look into the careers of 22 of our leading cinematic comics over the past 60 years, selected by its author Leonard Maltin. I would have been impressed if it had been called "from John Bunny to Woody Allen," for this interesting look into the world of such talents as Chaplin, Mabel Normand, Fatty Arbuckle, Buster Keaton, Mae West, Abbot & Costello, and Jerry Lewis, among others, is interesting, but somewhere along the line it has been done before. If you didn't have a book that outlined our great comedy stars, I would recommend it. But why are such pioneering talents as John, Flora Finch, Mack Sennet, and Ford Sterling always overlooked? They were the seeds that sprouted the way for our funny men of note.

John McCabes' *CHARLIE CHAPLIN* (Doubleday, \$10) has drawn upon every contemporary source to provide the most detailed portrait of this cinematic artist since Huff's. It is gradually built up by the skillful presentation of facts and anecdotes, and not by the usual expressions of opinions and verdicts. McCabes has shown in his fourth book that he is developing into one of this country's leading writers of film history. For a memorable photo essay, I would also recommend *CHARLES CHAPLIN: MY LIFE IN PICTURES* (Grosset & Dunlap, \$19.95) on sale at leading book stores for half price. To round off your Chaplin shelf, look for *CHARLES CHAPLIN: MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY* (Simon & Schuster), now in paperback, as well as Arno Press' *CHARLIE CHAPLIN* written by Theodore Huff in 1951.

Charlotte Chandler's *HELLO I MUST BE GOING: Groucho & Friends* (Doubleday, \$10.95) is a personal look into the world of the Groucho Marx that Chandler knew when the famed comic performer was in his eighties. Assisting her in her evaluation are other Groucho friends: George Burns, George Jessel, Jack Benny, and Woody Allen, and others.

ATTENTION FILM COLLECTORS: I'll be delighted to outline a series of related books to anyone's particular hobby or fascination. The sky's the limit, try to stump me, be it the films of D.W. GRIFFITH or Woody Allen, Avant Garde, or Russian History. Write: Ira H. Gallen, 220 W. 71st St., New York NY 10023.



It's letters time again. Let's start it off with a few directed at the style and operation of this mag itself:

"Jim - I hope you keep it on the personal side, fan to fan basis. I've seen too many people oriented fanzines and magazines switch to the cold professional oriented magazine style and they lose all of their fun and charm. As long as TVN is concerned with collectors and the hobby of video collecting, the personal friendly touch is what matters." -- Robert Weinberg, Chicago, Illinois

"I recently picked up a copy of your rival 'VIDEO', a product of the Large Potatoes Publishing Co., a subsidiary of the vast intergalactic Dell empire. Slick formats and New York byline do not a good rag make! At least, it can't hold a candle (ohm?) to TVN. Keep on truckin'!" -- Charles R. Lull, Memphis, Tennessee

Fear not guys. This thing started out for fun and, assuming it ever turns into something big, I would not be interested in continuing it unless it kept being fun. In all likelihood my attitude means that two or three other mags will come along and surpass us in sales and big name advertising, but, hey, there's more to life, huh?

"I would like to mention the probability/possibility of this newsletter becoming a collector's item. Hence, perhaps you could include a snap-out order form, rather than have someone, namely me, cut up your precious magazine." -- John Francis, Minneapolis, MN (similar sentiments from Ray Wisher of Lackawanna, N.Y.)

As you see, I've moved a little closer to that this issue. The thing is guys, every little twist means more \$\$ and/or time at the printer, or more time hand stuffing a couple of thousand envelopes. As an avid collector, I sympathize with you completely. The sub blanks are just for those too lazy to write it all out anyway.

"Jim, PLEASE PRINT ONCE A MONTH! You're paper is too good to only come out every other month. If you do, I'll be the first to send you the extra money for the added issues!" -- John Cummings, Mt. Shasta City, CA.

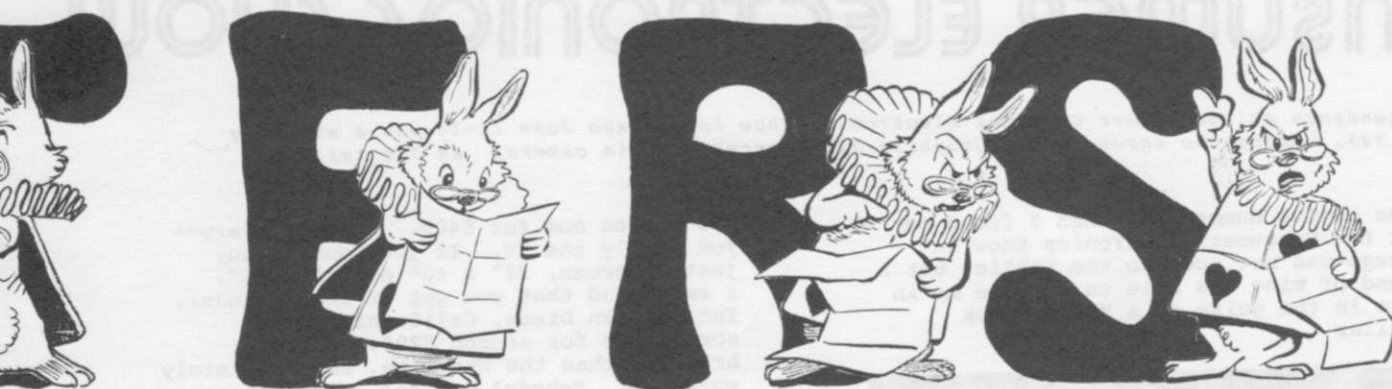
You'd have to scramble to be the first John. Seriously, there is no way that we are going to go monthly in the foreseeable future. Virtually all my spare time is consumed by TVN now, and while I enjoy it, my devotion to the thing is not monomaniacal. Also, the quality would suffer immeasurably. I do share your hope for it "someday".

"As you can guess, [From the letterhead.] some of us 'followers of The Mouse' have VCR's (3 Beta and 1 VHS I'm aware of, although it's a topic not generally discussed around here) and more are considering a purchase. Needless to say, reaction on the lawsuit is mixed, as we all would like the company to keep making money on re-issues so perhaps we may (HAH!) get a raise someday. However, it's the pirates who are the ones who will ruin it. One way to avoid ill will might be to 'suggest' to advertisers not to list Disney or MCA films for trade for their safety also (beware the Spanish Inquisition and the FBI). Seeing ads for 'Fantasia' drives Nolan and crowd into a frenzy much like a piranha in a pool of fat people. Trading a list by mail should be much safer." -- Mr. Horace Horsecollar, Burbank, CA

I would agree with Mr. Horsecollar (?) that you should not flaunt the fact that you either have or desire to have copies of films which simply cannot be legally obtained. I saw an ad in Film Collector's World recently where some poor guy was advertising "Star Wars" on video tape for \$50. A couple of issues later, he ran a retraction saying that he didn't realize what he was doing. Gee, I wonder what happened in the meantime? This magazine would not even accept such an ad for publication. If I haven't said it often enough, I'll say it again: The Videophile's Newsletter does not intend to support or encourage piracy and bootlegging of copyrighted films in contravention of the rights of the copyright owners. We do, however, believe that until the courts or the Congress otherwise declares, it is perfectly legal to record programs in the privacy of your own home, and to replay or exchange those tapes, so long as no duplication for profit, sale, or admission charge is involved. Incidentally, the above letter had a scrap of paper in the same envelope with it which read: "Kindly eat the enclosed after reading. I never heard of you. You never heard of me. I've never even heard of Tallahassee or the word 'Sony'." That's OK by me Horace, but next time how about using a different flavor of note paper.

"I think it's time we started to get aggressive about our hobby! We've been too passive, just sitting around waiting for films to become available on tape. Why don't we try to do something about it? In particular I am thinking of recent science fiction, horror, and 'exploitation' pictures of the mid-to-late '60s and early '70s. ... Why don't we write to the people who have the US rights to these films, asking them about the possibility of releasing the films on videocassettes? It's my opinion that this has not been done already, not because of any managerial decision, but rather because it hasn't occurred to any of them what sort of market exists for the product. ... Does any videophile out there know the addresses of these people? How about Hammer Films US representatives? Cambist films? Amicus? How about Italian fantasy cinema producers [and Spanish?] of the '60s? This might just open up the floodgates." -- Steven Pond, 11 Farmcliff Drive, Glastonbury CT 06033

My article "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?", elsewhere in this issue, addresses this very idea, Steven. If anyone out there has the addresses mentioned, please share them with the rest of us, so's we can get going!



And Now, for something completely different -- It's Q and A time again. So many of the questions that come up are possibly due to a needed repair in the particular machine, or some other peculiar circumstance that is not able to be duplicated by me or my contacts so that a solution can be tendered. I'll do what I can on these, but will have to give priority to those of general interest (ie. those that we can hope to answer). No solution was offered to Richard Beadman's problem (See #13) except that he try setting the RF to 4 and recording from 3. As to the incompatibility of the US and European TV systems, there are converters and even converting services available to commercial and industrial users. The price is probably not attractive for the average hobbyist. Look at the advertisers in Educational and Industrial Television, or perhaps Videography. I'll toss the subject to Joe Mazzini or someone with a particular interest in International exchange and see what they come up with.

"How about someone explaining the unlabeled 5-pin jack on the Sony SL-8200?" -- (Several of you curious types) This continues to be a stumper. Marc Wielage "thinks" it may be a dubbing connector. Some say perhaps its for a special camera or piece of editing equipment. Hopefully, someone will have the answer next time. Steve? Rick?

"Is it possible to modify an X-1 deck for X-1 & X-2 speeds?" -- Jim Dorsman, Wilmington, Delaware.

Theoretically possible? Yes. But, I doubt very much that this is practical. I'd say the expense would be far too great. With SL-8200 Betamaxs being closed out now at \$700-800, a purchase of one of these would be better.

"How old do movies have to be before you can tape them and advertise them for sale?" -- M.C., Chicago, IL

"I have been wondering if it would be illegal if I taped motion pictures off of my Home Premier Cinema Channel 100? They show films like 'Slapshot', 'The Enforcer', etc. ... I was thinking of selling them to people and exchange companies. Please let me know." -- D.G., Pleasant Hill, CA

Under the Copyright Act of 1909 as amended, a copyright was good for 28 years and could be renewed one time for another 28 years. So, for those who have been careful to register and renew their copyright, there was a maximum of 56 years. Thus, a film made in 1922 would just now be passing into "the public domain" and be available for duplication and sale by anyone, just as are the works of Shakespeare or Twain. In the case of films whose copyrights were not renewed, some as recent as 1950 are no longer protected by copyright; failure to renew is the exception, rather than the rule. [Gad! Can you believe that 1950 was as long ago to today as 1922 was to 1950?]. Research of the copyright registrations, or purchase of a very expensive book which catalogs them, is necessary to determine if particular films are still protected. Needless to say, feature films made by major studios since 1950 are, without exception so far as I know, still protected by copyright. No, D.G., you cannot legally sell the tapes made from your pay cable system. It is possible that when the law is clarified there may even be a distinction made between off-the-air recording and off-the-cable recording. Rely on the catalogs of dealers who advertise herein to guide you as to which titles are in the public domain. Perhaps the TVN budget can be squeezed for one of the aforementioned registration catalogs in the near future.

"My 8200 has a wierd quirk. Sometimes it won't record in color, even though I'm watching good color from the video output jack. Stopping and restarting will usually clear the trouble up. Suggestions?" -- D.M., Bellevue IL

I dunno Dave, but here it is. If anyone out there can help, I'll print the answer next time.

"How does one connect up an RCA and a SONY for dubbing by the direct line method?" -- Several bewildered dubbers

I hereby assign this to Bob Burns as a matter of urgent priority for step-by-step enlightenment in issue #15. Also you will notice an ad in this issue for "The Dubbing Kit". You may want to pick up on this.

That's it for this time. I have some other questions that are being forwarded to Bob (Al in Great Falls, MT, yours is among them), and which will hopefully be treated next time. Also, for you Q and A freaks, Mr. Burns addresses quite a few in his own column this issue, and I have a couple more under "For Beginners Only".



"Please remind everyone sending tapes in Jiffy mailing bags (the kind with shredded newspaper padding) to wrap up the tapes first in paper (I thought of plastic wrap, but don't know if humidity would get caught in the tapes and cause problems). We have recently received a tape with powdery newspaper shreds inside the cassette because the inside of the mailing bag had split. Never use this type of bag twice - they self-destruct ... Dust is a foe of Betamaxs, isn't it?" -- Phyllis Weinberg, Chicago, Illinois.

It sure is Phyllis! This has happened to me more than once, and from people who ought to know better. Please, when you mail a tape, take the extra few minutes required to wrap the tape securely in paper and tape the wrapping before slipping it into the padded mailer. This also helps keep the cassette from rattling around so much. Better yet use the type mailer that has the air filled plastic bubbles inside it rather than the shredded newspaper. And in case some of you are unaware of it, video tape can be mailed at the special 4th class mailing "Book Rate". Just mark the package "magnetic tape".

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

Attendance at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago June 11-14 was a whopping 55,343. Among the throng was videophile Jim Janacek and his camera. As Jim tells it:

I was pretty bummed out when I found out that the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago was not open to the public, but a friend of mine was able to smuggle me in there in the guise of a Radio Shack retailer.



WOW! Two mammoth floors of the McCormick Place filled to capacity with manufacturers trying to get distributors for their equipment. Plus (!) more stuff at two other locations, but all the video was at McCormick Place. There was such a tremendous volume of equipment and things to see, that I had to come back a second day.

More and more people are jumping on the projection TV bandwagon. Most know what they're doing, but some systems were downright embarrassing. Panasonic, Sony, and Quasar have all introduced one piece systems that have color guns reflecting off a mirror onto WASHABLE SCREENS! All look as bright and sharp as Advent's--the only difference between them being that Sony's has only TWO guns! Apparently, red and blue have been combined to cut down cost, but the picture quality doesn't suffer. A 50" Sony will be available for about \$2800, and the Panasonic 60" goes for \$3800. GE got its 1003 sq. inch console rear-projected TV voted into the design and engineering section somehow. Don't plan on moving this baby around the living room, once it's there--it's pretty bulky. It wasn't turned on, so I didn't get to see it in action. Too bad. Advent is dropping the 750 from their lineup and adding a new, low-profile (9" lower) set, the 760. The 760, Panasonic, Sony, and Quasar all use in-line color guns to eliminate hue distortion caused by changing viewing angles. Eventually, all the Advents will be like this. The big disappointment in big-screen TV was some set called the Agar Superscreen. Their set looks like *IT CONQUERED THE WORLD* on casters. The image is rear-projected from below onto a mirror, then reflected to a GLASS SCREEN. All you get is a big Hot Spot. Sharp picture, but the hot spot follows you around the room. Stay away from rear-projected TV's, for now at least.

A large number of "newly formed" companies are selling TV's with a lens on the front and washable screens. Terra 5 Corporation

has a nice one for \$400. Bright, sharp--you supply the TV. If you want to buy just a screen, 32" x 40" or 40" x 52", I recommend that you get it from Schudel, Inc. in San Diego, California. The screens go for around \$200, are much brighter than the Ektalite, and completely washable. Schudel was the only company with brightness and light distribution graphs and comparison charts. Very impressive.

Sanyo will be packing an L-500 and an L-750 tape in every B-cord sold for the next 3 months. Their L-750 tape will be available in August.

Sony's SL-3000 portable Betamax should be available around Christmas. The deck will record in X2 only, but will play in either X1 or X2. Optional timer/tuner, too. Philco has a 4 hour VHS deck. I hope it's better than those sleazy Philco-Ford color TV's at Holiday Inns. Once again, VHS is in the lead with special features. RCA will have program-mable decks available in August (plan on November?) For \$1200 you can preprogram up to 4 TV shows on different channels during a 7-day period. The JVC HR-3600 has still-frame, remote play and record, and three playback speeds: slo-mo, regular, and double-speed (for watching 1 hour of *CHARLIE'S ANGELS* in 1/2 hour). Plans are to market this unit by early Fall.

Hitachi has a VHS deck and portable color camera. The camera runs for about \$1800 and is very nice--electronic viewfinder, auto-exposure w/ manual override, zoom lens, super optics, and (for picky people) a color temperature dial. The Quasar color camera is OK, if you have glasses but don't wear them. JVC does it again! This time with the lowest color camera on the market, available "real soon" they said. This little gem has manual exposure, optical viewfinder, C-mounts for different lenses, and a gorgeous picture for \$850! For \$1250, you can get the same camera with electronic viewfinder, auto-zoom, and auto-exposure with manual override. For \$995, Magnavox has a camera identical (hmmmm...) to the JVC \$1250 model, except that the electronic viewfinder is optional. Rather than let the camera sell itself, Magnavox chose to have a magician at their display to do tricks. He made me disappear.



I reappeared at the Ampex exhibit. To make it short, Ampex has a Beta-format tape that looks better than Sony's. No crap! Their L-500 is \$16.95 and has virtually NO DROPOUTS! Colors are fantastic! And they stayed that way, too! The display tape had over 300 hours on it. Yes, Jim, the reds look beautiful, not blotchy. The Ampex exhibitor tried to get me to buy 10,000 in advance, ready for shipping in 30 days. I mumbled something about Radio Shack not being interested at this time.

And, now, for those of you addicted to VHS drugs: TDK has the only 2 and 4 hour tape to be seen and recommended by Matsushita Electric Industrial Corp. for use with their machines. I saw the tape in action, and I recommend it, too. Virtually no dropouts, very consistent hues. Sells at \$19.95 and 27.95 for the 2 and 4 hour tape, respectively. The VHS tape is presently in a 6-month test marketing stage. Fuji has a VHS Beridox tape that looks as good as TDK, but a few more dropouts. It should be available by the end of July. BASF has VHS and Beta tape, but it had been removed from exhibition for some reason--could mean problems. I noticed that none of the new tape from any manufacturer had anything recorded on it at half-speed. Nor was I allowed to record anything. So the picture quality may not be as good as full speed. I understand JVC privately showed their new 3 hour VHS tape to some key distributors. This could extend 4 hour machines to 6 hours.



Thanks to Comprehensive Video Supply for the copy of *THE HOME VIDEO HANDBOOK*--\$8.95 and hot off the presses. Something no true videophile should be without. By the way, I wore my TVN T-SHIRT and was treated with respect and dignity, not to mention getting an \$8.95 book for free.

Nothing really new in the way of TV's, except Toshiba's 21" programmable model. It can be preprogrammed for 16 different channels in 24 hours. For \$949.95, it turns the set on and off and changes channels for lazy, rich people. Sinclair has a 2" diagonal B & W TV that weighs 26 1/2 ounces. It has a very good picture and adapts to USA or UK transmissions (there is a difference) at the push of a button. \$395 and it actually fits in your pocket. They also make video monitors (B & W) for around \$300. Pioneer and Wintec have each introduced TV audio tuners.

That's about all I can cram into this space. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a second job to go to, so's I can afford to buy all this stuff.

Our man, Steve Comet, was also at the CES. Herewith, his comments:

This year's Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago was not only the largest show to date, but also featured video products by more manufacturers than ever before. Obviously, video has become big business, and with video hardware being high ticket items, the race to join the bandwagon is getting fierce.

There were no less than six new color cameras, including new units by Sony, Magnavox, JVC, and Panasonic. The magic number seemed to be \$1200. As a matter of fact, Sony was the only company who was estimating a slightly higher price and, frankly, with no electronic viewfinder option, I was surprised that they would do so. My choice--the Panasonic camera. For your \$1200, you not only get an electronic viewfinder, but a very nice Canon zoom lens. If you opt for a fixed lens and optical finder, you need part with only \$800. Sony showed its camera coupled with the new portable Betamax. A very compact unit, it was triggered by the camera--and I can tell you that the camera/VCR package is mouth watering. The cost, according to the Sony representative, was approximately \$1500 for the camera and \$1500 for the VCR. No literature or firm prices were available.

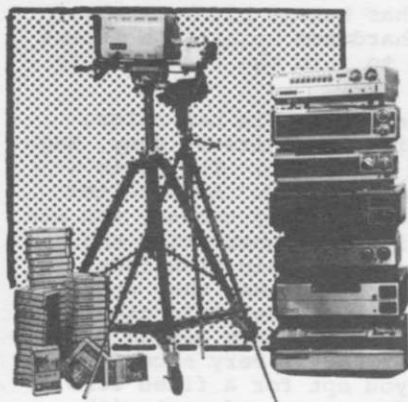
While cameras were the number one video attraction of the show, large screen projectors certainly took the number two position easily. Sony debuted no less than two self-contained units. Both had fine resolution and were of a most unusual two-tube design. One had a 50-inch screen and the other offered a 72-inch screen.



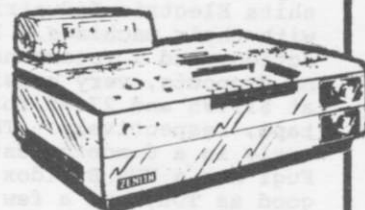
Advent, of course, displayed all of its superb projectors, all two-piece, three-tube systems. The VideoBeam's quality was unchallenged. But once again, my vote goes to Panasonic. Their entry was a beautiful three-tube, self-contained unit featuring a 60-inch diagonal screen with remote control and a very bright picture. Billed as model CT-6000, the suggested list will be between \$3000 and \$3800.

The most unusual video-related item at the show was displayed by Sony. Not much larger than an average audio receiver, the complex looking apparatus, loaded with LED indicators and switches, produced absolutely breathtaking stereo fidelity. Bass response was excellent, and the highs clean. But now, I said "video related," didn't I. Guess what the audio source was for this display? You guessed it--an SL-8200 VCR and an L-500 cassette. Interesting concept, but at \$4000, hardly practical.

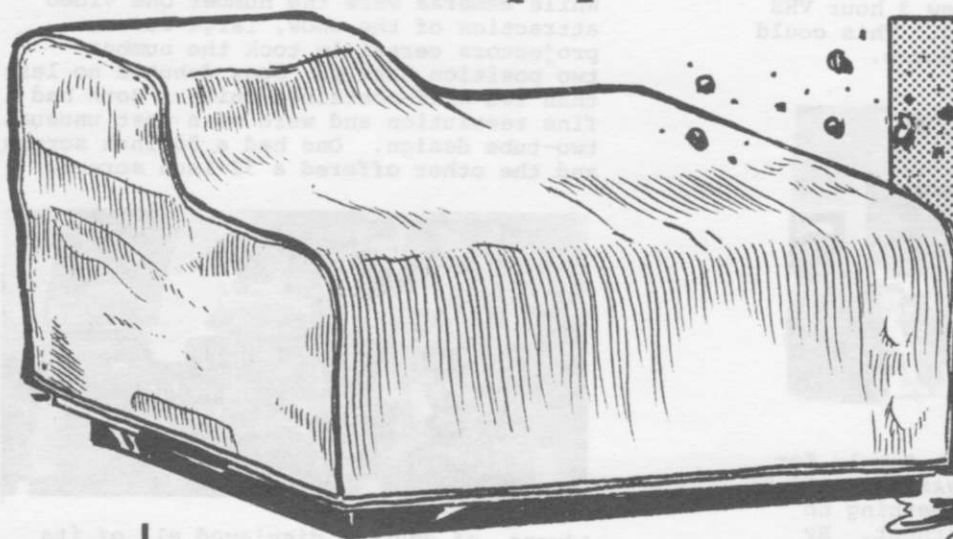
Protect your expensive video investment.



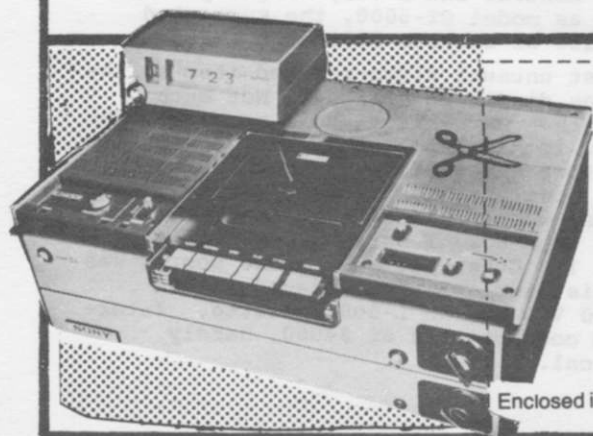
Protect it from harmful dust, dirt or accidental water spillage (which is not usually covered in warranty) with a custom made cover.



Durable plastic TV Video Recorder covers for RCA Select-A-Vision, Betamax, Magnavox, Zenith and other popular models.



only
\$9.95 each postage paid Specify make & model



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MINI-ADS



Wanted on VHS format: HBO On Location series, especially Bette Midler. Have some movies, will trade. Jim Norman 801 Main St. Adel, Iowa 50003. Phone: 515-993-4254.

WANTED: "The Godfather" (Part One) on Betamax cassettes (X-2). Write or call Barb Leff, 2020 F Street, NW #702 Washington, DC 20006. Work: (202) 783-0800. Home: (202) 659-1775

WANTED: BETAMAX 7200 OWNERS IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA TO TRADE TAPES WITH. PLEASE WRITE: MARK KAUSLER, 22274 FARGO ST., LOS ANGELES, CA. 90039

LOOKING FOR Copy of "VENUS IN FURS". Will buy, trade, etc. Contact: Larry King, Regatta Inn Inc., 425 Highway 146 Seabrook, Texas 77586

STILL LOOKING FOR TV SERIES ON BETAMAX X-1 or X-2: Man From U.N.C.L.E., Amos Burke, Avengers, Dr. Who, Champions, Invaders, Danger Man. Have many spy, sci-fi adventure TV shows to trade. Send TV GUIDES. LARRY CHARET, 1219A Devon Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60660

WANTED: THE FOLLOWING FILMS WITH SALLY FIELD ON BETAMAX (X-2) "Smokey and the Bandit," "Heroes," and especially "Stay Hungry." Also want TV Mini-Series "Once an Eagle" with Sam Elliot. James L. Sutton, 1900 E. Ocean #402, Long Beach, California 90802

Share and Save. Send \$2.00 for 12 issues of Video Request Newsletter to Box 3201 North Las Vegas, NV 89030. Video Request would like to thank Jim and staff for the fine job and service they have done for all of us. Video Request, Box 3201 N.L.V., NV 89030

FOR SALE: New JVC Vidstar 2 hour Video Cassette Recorder in factory sealed carton. With built-in timer and three hour recording capability when new tape is available. Top quality VHS format: \$800 Includes shipping via UPS. Manufacturers warranty. Michael Linder, 235 Butterfield Dr., Plainfield, NJ 07060 Day: 212-679-2396 Night: 201-753-4621

NEW JERSEY VHS: Looking for VHS-format VCR owner in Northeastern Bergen County for mutual tape copying. Stan Sieger, 848-C Berkley St., New Milford NJ 07646

Wanted on VHS: Horror movies, science fiction, and old house murder mysteries from 1930's - 1950's. I have a want list and will trade for new tape. I prefer to trade on a regular basis. Also, interested in hearing from anybody in Southeastern Pennsylvania or Philadelphia who will tape movies for me from channels 17 and 48. All inquiries will be answered. Jim Pollock, P.O. Box 337, Gretna, VA 24557

HELP! The editor of this very magazine is still looking for some very obscure items. Who has them? Main want is:

"DEVIL GIRL FROM MARS" -- starring the redoubtable Ms. Hazel Court Does it exist? Would be interested in Beta, VHS, U-Matic or 16mm

Also still looking for: Space Thing (X) and Bushwhackers (X), both from late '60s, The Vampire's Night Orgy. Contact: J. Lowe c/o TVN

Wanted Beta X1 or X2: Early "Saturday Night Live"; any July Holiday movies, Cary Grant comedies, etc. Have many movies to trade. Jim Dorsman, 113 Autumn Horseshoe, Newark Delaware 19702

My thanks to those of you who wrote concerning helping me with preserving magic on video tape, re my last adv. in TVN #12. Again, I ask, that those of you that have Beta-format tapes on magic, please contact me, as I'm sure I get shows that you don't and vice versa, so I know ya'll are getting shows I'm missing - be they first run or reruns- like the Bill Bixby series THE MAGICIAN. Also looking for TVN issues #1-6, so if you can help, please contact me at: The Stephen A. Sparks Magic Collection/Video Library, P.O. Box 12586, Las Vegas, Nevada 89112

Would like to trade tapes for RCA SELECTA-VISION (VHS). Would like to get copies of Godfather, James Bond, Star Wars, Close Encounters, Rocky, Rock Concerts *Leon Russell, First Quality Adult Films, Etc. Have to trade: Midnight Cowboy, The Way We Were, Spinks-Ali Fight, Saturday Night Live Shows, Adult Films: Jennifer Wells, Ladies of Bourbon St., Others. Write or call: Jerry Downs 789 Cedar Ln, Crownsville, MD 21032 Phone: (301) 923-6682

WANTED ON VHS: DICK VAN DYKE, TARZAN (TV), MAYBERRY R.F.D., LEAVE IT TO BEAVER, FIREBALL XL-5, ROY ROGERS, GENE AUTREY, AMOS 'N ANDY, ABBOTT AND COSTELLO. CONTACT: CHARLES E. BUSH, RT. 16 ROGERS LANE, KNOXVILLE, TN 37920 (615) 577-9845

FOR TRADE IN 16mm: "LOST CONTINENT" with Cesar Romero in VERY GOOD to NEAR MINT CONDITION. Will trade for Beta Format Video tapes (Blank or pre-recorded). WRITE to: John Cummings, P.O. Box 1025, Mt. Shasta City, CA 96067 (WORTH AT LEAST \$150.00)

WANTED: Other Betamax (X-2) collectors to trade tapes. I have Betamax dubbing facilities and over 200 new and old films and TV shows. I am interested in uncut 1930's and 1940's musicals; animated material, especially Betty Boop cartoons; the recent Ellery Queen TV show episodes; and the Coneheads from Saturday Night Live. Bob Weinberg, 10606 S. Central Park, Chicago, IL 60655

Wanted in the Beta X-1 format: Tapes featuring the Carpenters (except the 2 latest specials). I'm especially interested in "Make Your Own Kind of Music" (8 shows first shown in the Summer of 1971) and the special shown in November, 1976. I would also like any appearances on talk shows. Write: Karen Schlotzhauer, P.O. 5024, Torrance CA 90510

SONY AV-3600 REEL-TO-REEL (THAT'S RIGHT!) VIDEO TAPE RECORDER LIKE NEW AND FIFTY (50) REELS OF V-32 ONE-HOUR TAPE IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. WILL TAKE \$850 OR OFFER I CAN'T REFUSE. PROF. LEONARD BOBROW, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING DEPT., UNIV. OF MASS., AMHERST, MA 01003 (413) 253-7290 ANYTIME.



Watch for the adventures of

CHARLIE CHANNELS

Coming to these pages soon!



Hey! This is great. Here is my \$10, send me a subscription to this darn thing. Start me off with issue # _____, or whatever is the most current one.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

(See page 50 for rates outside the United States, Canada and Mexico)

VIDEOPHILES' 2014 South Magnolia Tallahassee, Fla Newsletter 32301



The Videophile's Newsletter
"Cash-In Products Division"
2014 S. Magnolia Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

I enclose \$ _____. Please
send me the following, for
which I feel confident that
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Tee-Shirt(s) : color _____	Size: S M L XL at \$6 = \$ _____
Cassette Card Pads at two pads for \$2 _____	= _____
The Videophile's Annual: 1978 (#1-6 reprint) at \$6 _____	= _____
Back Issues 9 11 12 13 at a measly \$2 each _____	= _____
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PRODUCTS BLANK

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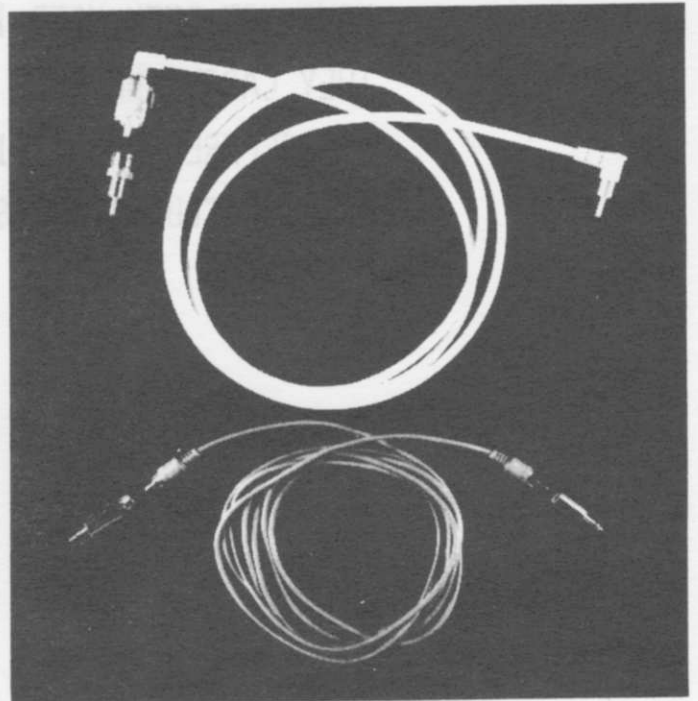
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World Television

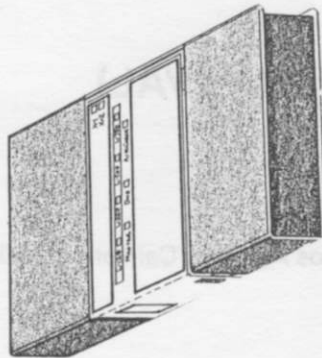
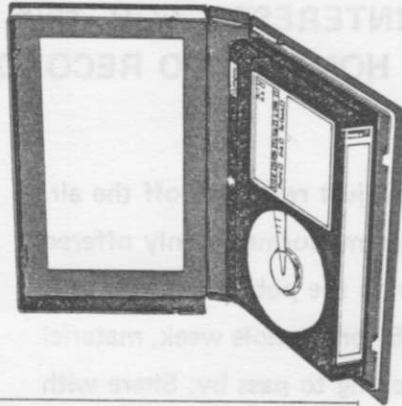
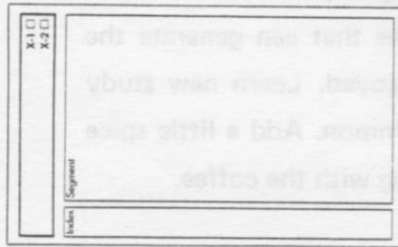
1204 West Twenty-seventh Street

•

Los Angeles, California 90007

Finally, the first practical way to store your videotapes.

The BETABOX System.



We all know that home video is the greatest thing to happen since chocolate layer cake. Well, now you can have your cake and eat it, too, with our new BETABOX videotape storage system.

If you're tired of the same old tacky boxes that come with the Betamax cassettes you buy, just look at these--the first sturdy plastic cases designed especially for permanent, attractive storage of all Beta-format cassettes. They're the only boxes available anywhere that completely enclose the cassette, avoiding the dust and "slipping-out" problems of the old cardboard-style containers. And our new BETABOXES pop open instantly for easy cassette removal, with room to spare inside for notes, index cards, or what have you.

Also available are Insert Cards for easy identification of all your BETABOX-stored tapes, as well as non-smearing Adhesive Labels for the tapes themselves. These new labels have 20% more available writing space than any other type currently available.

And for keeping track of what's on your cassettes, you can start a complete video indexing system with our Cassette Index Cards, available punched for a standard two-ring binder or unpunched for insertion in any Beta cassette storage box.

Add it all up, and you've got one unbeatable library system--the first designed especially for the serious video collector. If you've spent this much time and energy in recording your tapes, you owe it to yourself to check out our new line of videotape accessories.

A sample of all 4 products, one of each, is only \$2.00 (postpaid). We think you'll find that they're the greatest thing to come on the video scene since... well, almost since video itself.

TVN/West P.O. Box 480315 Los Angeles, CA 90048

OUR SEMI-REASONABLE PRICES

BETABOX Library Cases	Quantity	Price
	1-12	\$1.25 ea.
	13-50	1.10 ea.
	51-100	1.00 ea.
	101 & up	.90 ea.
BETABOX Insert Cards		
	1-12	.20 ea.
	13-50	.15 ea.
	51-100	.10 ea.
	101 & up	.05 ea.
Index Cards (punched or unpunched)		
	1-50	.10 ea.
	51 & up	.05 ea.
2-Ring Notebooks for Cards	1	3.00 ea.
Adhesive Betamax Labels		
	1-12	.40 ea.
	13-50	.30 ea.
	51-100	.25 ea.
	101 & up	.20 ea.

SAMPLE of one of each of the above: \$2.00 (postpaid)

POSTAGE, HANDLING & FINE PRINT DEPT.: The BETABOXES will be sent via UPS Freight Collect, which generally runs to less than \$10.00 per 25 lb. carton of 100 plastic boxes, or \$2.50 per 6 lb. carton of 25 boxes. Everything else is postage-paid, which gives my bookkeeper fits, but he's a loonie anyway.

Make all checks and/or money orders payable to TVN/West. Allow at least 4 weeks for shipping. All orders confirmed by first class mail upon receipt of order. California residents please add the usual 6% for Jerry Brown's airplane fuel, and be glad it isn't 7%...yet.

COMING SOON: VHS and U-Matic library cases and labels, to be available by August 1st (with any luck). Also, ask about our custom-design service, for personalized video indexing products imprinted with your name, company logo, or other specialized information.

Okay. I'm a discriminating collector. Enclosed is \$_____ for the following BETABOX products:

- ☐ BETABOX Library Cases
- ☐ BETABOX Insert Cards
- ☐ Index Cards (punched)
- ☐ Index Cards (un-punched)
- ☐ Index Card Binders
- ☐ Adhesive Labels

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE/ZIP: _____

SEND ALL ORDERS TO:
TVN/West
P.O. Box 480315
Los Angeles, CA 90048

I'd like a sample first, before I throw all of my money away. Enclosed is \$2.00 for one of each of the 4 BETABOX products.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE/ZIP: _____

JOE MAZZINI'S

U-MATIC & BETA NOTES

After nine years, Joe has decided to leave the teaching profession and enter the home video tape business world. Things are pretty sad out here in California, now that Proposition 13 has passed. Threats have been made on both sides, and it looks as if the arts will be the first to be cut from state aid. This indirectly affects us videophiles because the library system here can't continue to expand their video departments. San Francisco Public Library has quite a remarkable 3/4" catalog which they lend (with machines, if I am not mistaken). Other libraries were planning to stock Betamax tapes for checkout like books. I don't know any California schools that are planning to buy video equipment this year since 13 passed. Still, a sales tax like New York's (8%) doesn't sound that bad, and taxes on property were getting astronomical here.

By the time you get this issue of TVN, I will be working setting up the home video division of:

STUDIO TAPE EXCHANGE
6424 SANTA MONICA BLVD.
HOLLYWOOD, CA 90038
213-466-8101

We'll be offering everything from adult to classic stuff. I plan particularly to emphasize the rock and avant garde aspects of video. Our prices will be very reasonable (\$25-\$40 per film), and we, of course, have the rights to the films we will be selling. Be sure to drop me a line at the above address and I'll send you out a copy of our \$2 catalog. It's important that you mention TVN in your note, because only TVN subscribers/readers get the catalog free. To all others, we have to charge to clear printing costs. It should be ready sometime in late August. We'll also be renting films from our catalog, and if I find out that any of you guys are copying our stuff I'll track you to the ends of the earth to prosecute. [Surely you jest, Joe? Joe? Surely...? ...? --Editor] Isn't it strange how a person switches sides of a fence? I now feel as indignant as Universal about people copying copyrighted stuff. The only difference here is that you are copying stuff off the air because you can't get it anywhere else. Well, now there is no excuse. You can buy it from STUDIO TAPE EXCHANGE. I'm sure most of you would rather pay a little more to get a perfect copy rather than go through the hassle of trying to get it (sans commercials) off the air or copying it from someone else losing generation after generation of quality.

A friend of mine:

HARRY HERKERT
VIDEO/AUDIO RECORDING SYSTEMS, INC.
901 H. ST., SUITE 110,
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

916-442-5873 makes a great deal of his living by selling video equipment to educational institutions. Harry's a good man and I'd like to see you consider him if you are planning to purchase professional 3/4" equipment and cameras. I bought a GE Pre-EIAJ Sony 1/2" black and white video tape recorder from him for \$25. He has a lot of stuff come through on trade and you can make a killing. Give him a call. His latest price bulletin has a GE TE-1000A1 color camera for \$1400. He has a used Sony VO-2800 3/4" machine for \$2500 and the old stand by Setchell Carlson 23" B&W Monitor/Receiver for only \$100. This is a hell of a monitor and a good price. He has some Scotch 60-minute, 1/2" reel to reel video tape for \$12 each and other goodies. Someone in a past TVN asked why we never mention bad dealers or people to stay away from. The "bad" dealers are so few and far between that they usually go out of business between issues of TVN. If you don't live in California, I honestly think you should do your business here via phone using your BankAmericard or by mail. The prices are the best anywhere. How lucky we Californians are to have two top dealers in Sacramento (Harry Herkert of AVRS and Ben Saia of the VIDEO SERVICE CENTER) and AUDIO VIDEO CRAFT on Melrose in Hollywood!

Well, onward to a section of places to write to for all sorts of information:

JENSEN TOOLS AND ALLOYS
1230 S. PRIEST DRIVE

TEMPE, AZ 85281 has the neatest free tool catalog available that

I've seen. They have everything from complete tool kits running at \$345 down to \$9 soldering irons.

Remember MARV NEWLAND? He's the guy who made the infamous BAMBI MEETS GODZILLA! Well he's a fellow subscriber to TVN and is in hopes of completing another classic. Right now he is doing some stuff for SESAME STREET. In case you haven't seen BAMBI MEETS GODZILLA, it can best be described as a short excursion into the meeting of force and peacefulness. The film runs less than three minutes and, unfortunately, Bambi doesn't come out too well. [Hopefully we at STUDIO TAPE EXCHANGE will be handling Bambi Meets Godzilla in every format.] Anyway, Marv sent me Issue #10 of MINDROT, the animated film quarterly. It's something else! This particular issue had a great deal about Walter Lantz. It costs \$3 for four issues and I don't know if back issues are available. Write:

DAVID MRUZ
MINDROT
3112 HOLMES AVE, S.
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408

One of the best shows ever on TV was OUTER LIMITS. The second volume in a four volume set has just been published. The first two volumes are jam-packed with photos and information about each episode (up to #24). If you want the first two volumes, send \$6 and if you want the upcoming two volumes, send another \$6 to:

SCORPIO 13
11100 GOVERNOR AVE.
CLEVELAND, OH 44111

Each magazine comes with an artist-signed silkscreen of science fiction persuasion. This series is a must because it gives so much more detail than FANTASTIC TELEVISION does about the show.

If you watch NOVA (the science series on PBS) as avidly as I do, you'll want to get on their mailing list:

NOVA
WGBH BOSTON
125 WESTERN AVE.
BOSTON, MA 02134

They have what they call a "Teachers' Guide," but I know you'll agree with me when you read it that it is much more. A dollar contribution for mailing costs might be a good idea. Be warned that you are not allowed to tape any NOVA episode, but since it is shown repeated at least once a week in most markets this shouldn't be a handicap.

EDUCATIONAL & INDUSTRIAL TELEVISION

P.O. Box 565

RIDGEFIELD, CT 06877 sure is a neat magazine to read. The May 1978 issue is worth writing for. It is \$2 per single copy, or \$15 per year for monthly copies. An old friend of TVN, Robert J. Kerr, head of Magnetic Products Division of Dupont (those people who put out that wonderful KC-90 3/4" cassette for a reasonable \$37-\$50, depending upon where you buy one) wrote an excellent article on "How Proper Maintenance Can Prevent VCR's From Eating Cassettes at \$20 per meal." This article is required reading if you are planning to use the KC-90 tape, because the tension specifications MUST be up to par. It'll also help you to identify certain problems you might be having with your U-Matic machine. If you deal with the OHIO boys, you know about QUBE, that fantastic new cable system that is in use in Columbus. Warner Cable is the owner, and the user is given many choices of free and pay programming. [See TVN Issue #12 and Ray Glasser's update in this ish for more info...Ed.] Dr. Jordan wrote a nice summary of the system on p. 50 of E&IT (May '78). There was a nice display of one-piece video projectors and a surprisingly detailed article about the models available on p. 62. Humor appeared in an article by Dr. Utz about attending a video show and then planning a studio. The only frustrating thing about this issue was mention of MARSHALL ELECTRONIC COMPANY, with no address given. This company has come out with a connector kit for connecting Betamax and VHS machines to 3/4" machines using the essential 75 ohm wire. Some of the adapters connect by screwing into one another without having to use patch cords. I circled the reader service card number given (#259) and I'll let you know about this company in the next issue. It's important that we find a supplier of connectors because too many of us are using standard microphone-phono wire which is not 75 ohm. The more machines you run in series, the more important the 75 ohm wire is. I recommend it even for a one-machine dub.

If you are just now getting into home video or know someone who is, I'd sure recommend the:
VIDEO BUYERS GUIDE FOR THE HOME VIDEO ENTHUSIAST

DELL/WINTER 1978
REESE PUBLICATIONS COMPANY
235 PARK AVE, S.
NEW YORK, NY 10003

It runs \$2.25 on the newsstand and is edited by the same woman who did the video section in MILLIMETER MAGAZINE. It doesn't go into much detail technically, but it does give the list prices and shows most of the products available today on the market.

I also wanted to tell you about a new publication I just received in the mail the other day.

THE NOSTALGIA MONTHLY
6255 SUNSET BLVD., SUITE 1019

HOLLYWOOD, CA 90028 just printed its fifth issue and it really looks good. First class yearly subscription is \$15. Third class runs you \$10. I'm sure they will send you a sample issue. There was a nice ad for TVN in it, and it looks as if they may start to have some video stuff if there is interest shown in this field by nostalgia collectors. The fifth issue dealt with such diverse topics as Virginia Mayo, Space Patrol, and a group of regular features. I see that they devoted ten pages to "Western Corral" which should interest people like Ed and the rest of you "B" lovers. This issue also had an article on Duncan Renaldo and Bill Elliott.

How about some equipment notes and some technical stuff?

I had a chance to play with the new 8600 Sony Beta machine the other day and I must say that I was impressed! They are beautiful. The only problem is that they do not have a one-hour mode. The built-in timer is a beauty and the performance seems better, both video- and audio-wise, to me on a standard Sony TV. Ben Saia has already sold a bunch of them at \$850. By the way, Ben has some Sony 7200A (these had input and output jacks, but were only one-hour machines) Betamax for sale. I mention this because some of you may want to have a one-hour Beta around. [See the VIDEO SERVICE CENTER ad in this issue for more details about price, his address, etc.]

There are two rumors going around about the Sony Betamax Changer. One rumor (and this is the oldest one) has it that the changer has not hit the market because it will not repeat its function ten times in a row without screwing up. The other rumor (and this is probably the correct one) is that the changer might be considered a safety hazard by consumer groups because of the quickness of its action. Apparently Sony is afraid someone's kid will put his fingers in it while it is working. Who knows? If you know anything more, please drop me a line.

If you read Art Vuolo's article in the last TVN, you learned of my misfortune: someone broke into my house and took my Zenith Beta. I replaced it with a Sony 8200 and I can now report that after several months of usage there is no technical difference between machines. I did like the shorter height of the Zenith better because I have a shelf with limited dimensions and it was easier with the Zenith to remove and attach dubbing cords. The new 8600 Sony has its input and output jacks lower on the back frame which makes it difficult to get in there to work on them. I sure recommend renter's insurance, which I signed up for two days after the theft. Mine is through Equitable and it runs about \$90 for \$10,000 worth of coverage. Of course, mark all your equipment with your driver's license and social security number.

John Smothers wrote in to comment about the jumpiness that occurs at the end of his Sony Beta tapes. He sees this problem during the last three or four minutes. Our resident serviceman tells me that it has to be the machine. I've noticed this problem occasionally on my machine, too. I would hope that a simple tension check would solve your problem, John, and besides, your machine is still under warranty. I'd like to know, though, why John has this problem for the last 15 minutes on one Sony tape in particular? It seems the tape's fault. I know that in 3/4" work, we always blame the tape first. The Scotch L500 tapes I've used have been great at the end, but there is more grain in their picture. The 3M company sure makes good audio tape, but their 3/4" and Beta stuff leave a lot to be desired. Anyone have any ideas to help John out?

I've heard that people are having problems using JVC tape in RCA machines. Apparently there is a gumming of the heads and transport system caused by too deep a penetration of the heads on the RCA into the JVC tape. I've not been able to confirm this rumor with a serviceman yet, but I think we should all find one tape we like and stay with it no matter what. In John's case, it might be best if he tried Scotch. I use nothing but Sony for my Beta machine and Memorex for the 3/4" because it is cheap (around \$19 from STUDIO TAPE EXCHANGE) for an hour.

Captain David Morris came up with a fantastic solution (we all hope) to our overmodulation of the video signal from a 3/4" deck into a Beta machine. This problem manifests itself by emitting a 60 Hz buzz from the speaker whenever too much white is on the screen. He suggests that we run the video signal from one machine through a preamp's aux input and control the level that way. Apparently color passes well through a good preamp. I'm going to try this with an old Dynaco preamp and I'll report the results in the next TVN. David has a Van Alstine Mod 1 preamp that works very well for both video and audio and will sell it for around \$300. Write to him if you are interested:

DAVID MORRIS
326 CARLYLE EAST

BELLEVILLE, IL 62221 I hope someone tries other amps and preamps to see if we can solve this annoying problem.

Don Osgard wants to know what the term "U-Matic" means. My, how they forget us pioneers! U-matic is the format name given to 3/4" video tape contained in a rather large (5"x7"x1") plastic cassette. The maximum record/play time is 90 minutes with the special DuPont tape or 60 minutes for everyone else's. It is an expensive format, but cannot be beaten for top quality. Don also asks what "number of lines of resolution" means. The new Sony industrial Beta stuff is coming pretty close to the 3/4" machine's lines of resolution. There are 525 lines making up the U.S (NTSC) video system. Just as audio recorders preserve a certain portion of the frequency spectrum, so do video tape recorders. Some record the material better than others. Tape speed is an important factor. The tape moves by the heads (which are spinning at 1600 RPM) at a pretty fast clip on 3/4" machines (3 3/4" ips). The Beta/VHS systems cut the speed anywhere from 1/2 to 1/4 of that. More lines can be retained by the better machines, and this gives the machines a better resolution rating. My VO-1800 (Sony U-Matic) is rated at around 260 lines color. The Betamax and VHS are about 240-260. The newer 3/4" machines, naturally, are better than the older ones. It's easier to store black and white, so the ratings are much higher for monochrome resolution. Considering that we have developed from a system using 50 lines of resolution, we're doing okay; however, in some countries of Europe, they have over 600 lines, which gives more resolution, but since the voltage runs on 50 Hz instead of our 60 Hz, you get a flicker from the fields. Have I confused you, Don? All the machines out on the market have very good resolution. I even suspect (though I hate to admit it) that the VHS format has better resolution over all than the Beta. These figures mean nothing if your input signal isn't good. The antenna is the most important part of your system. If your cable acts up, call and gripe. I've seen cable movie broadcasts from Mill Valley, California, that were as good as network TV, and I've seen cable that was so poor that you would swear rabbit ears would give a better picture.

I've really been hitting a wall as far as finding out much about the PAL/NTSC compatibility problem goes. As you know, we use the NTSC system. Our friends in Australia, England, etc., use the PAL. The Russians and French use the SECAM. John Seit, a fellow 3/4" user from Australia, just had a little talk with the Sony service people in his country and came up with the suggestion of changing the 60 Hz belts on my motor to 50 Hz belts. I gave this idea a great deal of thought and then realized that that wasn't the problem. The tape is universally moving past the heads at a certain speed whether or not the information is NTSC or PAL. This is evident because I can play back his tapes and hear beautiful sound. It's the picture that is the problem. He suggests that the SUBCARRIER FREQUENCY be changed from the NTSC 688 to the PAL 685. If anyone out there has tried this or knows how else to play PAL tapes, please let us know. His Sony has a switch on the front that allows him to go back and forth from PAL to NTSC.

Have any of you had problems making dubs from 3/4" to Beta to find that none of the video information was recorded by the Beta? This happened to me last weekend and I found out that the signal on my 3/4" tape was so poor that it came through like head-clogging. This reemphasizes the importance of having a good signal to begin with. Surely you have lost color in a dub and wondered why. The usual reason is that the color information on the master tape was so weak to begin with that it just couldn't make it through the dub. I have also noticed that if your connecting cables are in any way shorting out you will lose color. This manifested itself when I was making a dub. I switched cables and the problem went away.

A final few words:

Again, drop me a line if you want a catalog of our new video programs for sale. We'll be handling 3/4" (at a nominally higher price than the Beta programs) as well as the 1/2" formats. I'm afraid my trading days are over, now that I have entered the video field at a professional level. I sure appreciate the assistance many of you have given me in the past in acquiring things, but I feel it would be a conflict of interest if I were to continue to trade while selling programs at the same time.

Next issue I'll have an exhaustive VHS vs. Beta test report for you. A friend of mine, two doors down at my apartment house in L.A., just bought a VHS. From what I've seen so far, it is a fine little machine. The compactness impresses me, as does its fast speed video quality.

Please stay in touch.

As always,


Joe Mazzini, Home Video Division
STUDIO TAPE EXCHANGE
6424 Santa Monica Blvd.,
Hollywood, CA 90038



Famous Brand* Beta Format NEW L-500 Blank Video Tape

* Name on request

Introductory Price: **\$11.95** ➔ each

PLUS 25¢ SHIPPING ➔ each

IN MINIMUM LOTS OF TEN PIECES

OR **\$122 TOTAL** FOR TEN PIECES

U Matic KCA-60

'MR. CASSETTE VIDEO' BRAND

\$18.75 ea. plus 50¢ shp.

NO MINIMUM ORDER NECESSARY

T-60 and T-120 TDK Brand "VHS" cassettes now available. Write or Call for quote

BANK CHECK, MONEY ORDER, OR CERTIFIED CHECK
FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY! (Company or personal
checks must clear bank before we will deliver.)

SEND ALL ORDERS TO:

S. & A
Video Tape Distributors
Attn: George Saddler
24-64 Crescent St. Suite #2
Astoria, NY 11102
212-545-3094

WAREHOUSE AND SHIPPING POINT:

S. & A.
Video Tape Distributors
Attn: Sy Altman
28-14 Steinway St.
Astoria, NY 11103
212-545-8888

AD RATES & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Two types of ads are available: (1) Those printed from Camera Ready Copy, and (2) MINI-ADS.

"Camera Ready" means that I take whatever you send in and give it directly to the printer, without retyping, cleaning up, or anything. It is critical that these be prepared in dark black or red ink and, if they are typed, that the typewriter have a nice dark ribbon. If it doesn't, the reproduction will be very poor, I will be unhappy with the appearance of the magazine, and you will be none too thrilled about the appearance of your ad. It is also essential that you leave at least a $\frac{1}{2}$ " margin on all four sides of the page (a little more would be even better). The rates for camera ready copy ads are as follows:

Full Page ... \$40 Half Page ... \$22 Quarter Page ... \$12

These can contain artwork (make sure the lines are nice and dark) or black and white photographs. However, I must exact another \$2 for the photo, unless it is already screened and ready for printing without further preparation at this end. Camera ready ads may be submitted in any of the following sizes, which will then be reduced (when necessary) to fit the size of the pages in the magazine:



Full page: $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$, 11×14 , $13 \times 16\frac{1}{2}$, or 14×18 inches.
Half page: $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$, 11×7 , 13×8 , or 14×9 inches.
Quarter page: $8 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$, $4 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7$, or 7×9 inches.

Notice that some of these require no reduction. Also remember to allow $\frac{1}{2}$ " margins!

MINI-ADS: These are available for the baldly cheap rate of 25 words for \$1. From 26-50 words is \$2, 51-75 for \$3, etc. Full name & address (within reason) = 6 words. Phone # = 1.

NO ads for copyrighted material FOR SALE will be accepted unless you have the rights to them.

Limit of 2 full pages per advertiser. Inquire re: color back cover and special placement rates.

Deadline Ads and contributions for Issue #15 must reach me by August 19 !! Paid circulation of that issue may well be in the area of 2500 or more.

sub rates!

It had to happen. Here are the new subscription rates: Six issues for \$10 in the US, Canada and Mexico (US Funds). AIR MAIL to Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, Caribbean Islands, Bahamas and Bermuda is \$17. All other countries \$20, also by AIR. If a little (14) appears in the upper right hand corner of your mailing label: **RENEW NOW!!** A subscription order blank may be found on the same page as the MINI-ADS.

CLOSE OUT SALE

\$219.00

UPS INCLUDED

AM-FM-TWO SPEED TURNTABLE WITH MAGNETIC CARTRIDGE... SONY IS THE FINEST... COMPLETE STEREO COMPONENT SYSTEM FOR STEREO MUSIC... FACTORY NEW! FACTORY NEW!!! FACTORY NEW! COMES WITH COMPLETE WARRANTY FROM SONY! FACTORY NEW "SONY" CLOSEOUT... INCLUDES SHIPMENT... INCLUDES 100 RECORDS WHEN YOU BUY BEFORE JULY 1st, 1978!



100 NEW RECORDS INCLUDED!
100 RECORDS INCLUDED WHEN YOU BUY BEFORE JULY 1st, 1978
SONY DYNAMIC SPEAKERS... MODERN STYLING... "THE EXclusive series"... FACTORY CLOSE-OUT
LIMITED QUANTITY!
LIMITED QUANTITY!
LIMITED QUANTITY!

SONY®

NEW FACTORY WARRANTY!!!

JERRY SEIFERT

TITANIC

P.O. BOX 6357
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45206

TITANIC

TITANIC

ALL SALES FINAL!
NO RETURNS

★ TVN: "Cash-In" Products Division ★

The Videophile's Annual: 1978, the reprint of material from issues #1-6, unofficially announced last issue, is now ready for mailing. Copies to those who order-

ed at the prepublication price are already in the mail. The project grew somewhat in the making, so here is what you get if you order. A snappy portfolio, containing most of the material originally published in #s 1-6 reprinted in 6 individual facsimile copies of those issues. Total page count exceeds the 70-80 foreseen when we first announced this item. This is a limited edition of 500 portfolios, being offered at the bargain price of only \$6. Lot's of fascinating stuff in these early issues. If it doesn't sell out right away, we may detail the contents for you next time. Suffice it to say that it covers everything from how to edit out commercials (#4) to the somber excerpt from the editors first deposition with Universal and Sony attorneys (#6), lots of video chit chat, tips and bewilderment as well.

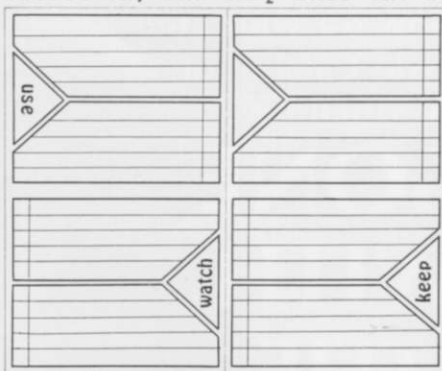
As for the tee-shirts, they come in your choice of color and men's sizes S to XL, for the familiar price of \$6, which includes postage. These are custom screened shirts that are available only from The Videophile's Newsletter. They come in beige or light blue, the letters are open, shaded in black, and the cute little porker is in "piggie pink", as you would naturally demand. A few left.

In a more practical vein, we present The Videophile's video cassette index cards. If you're like me, you never seem to have a 3x5 card or appropriate slip of paper at hand to write down titles on, and slip into the box.

The collector's cassette cards (shown here in both front and back views, reduced) measure 6' x 3 and 3/4", and are custom designed to fit into Beta format cassette boxes. They are deliberately designed without column headings, so that you can adapt them to your own purposes, whether for temporarily or permanently indicating the contents of each cassette. When inserted in the box, the words "Watch", "Keep", "Use" or another of your choice will be visible through the notch in the box. Best of all, these stiff cards come to you in pads of 50. Just peel one off when you need it, ... the rest of the pad remains obediently available right next to your machine. The price? A true giveaway at a buck a pad, with a 2 pad minimum order. Want some testimonials? Read:

"Thanks for the pads. Fantastic design job!" -- J.G., of Miss.

"Got my tape index cards a couple weeks ago. Every tape has a card in it now. They're just great." -- M.R., of Nebraska



BACK ISSUES...

Only issues 9, 11, 12 and 13 are still available. They are in short supply. Issue #9, in particular, is scarce, and this may well be the last time that it will be offered. Price for each is: \$2.00



Issue 9: First issue in semi-professional format. Contains first installment of "Rambling Outtakes", review of Time-Life Betamax offerings, first annual roundup of prerecorded tape sources, etc. [Compleatists take note: This is a full size reprint of the original #9]

Issue 11: First 40 page issue. Packed with info re: comparison of consumer 1/2" recorders, projection TV sets, excerpts from lawsuit depositions, Art Vuolo's first "Michigan Update", results of readers' poll, reviews of TV gift-type books, first Voice of Canada, lots more.

Issue 12: First slick cover issue. Includes reports on "QUBE" two-way cable system, Video in Australia, Rambling Marc at the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show, How to make the most of two recorders, Dealer's Doings, a bunch of letters, ... and the usual typos, etc.

Issue 13: How to defeat the muting circuit in the Betamax SL-8200 (or Zenith), Bob Burn's first column for "VHS" folks, Rambling Marc battles Universal attorneys, and reports on pay cable systems, lotsa questions and answers, great America 2Night cover. Biggest ish to date.

Of course, each of these issues also contains the many pages of information primarily directed at users of the 3/4" format prepared by good ole Joe Mazzinni, as well as many advertisements.

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