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For more Buzz, checkout idahoptv.org

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“I have a PBS mind in an MTV world.”

From a letter written by a viewer of IdahoPTV programs in Arizona.
— Since its premier eighteen months ago, IdahoPTV’s award winning LEWIS & CLARK: MOMENTS IN TIME website (http://idahoptv.org/lc/momentsintime/) has been a smashing success. It has garnered more than 1,702,403 page views by 230,298 visitors! The average time spent on MOMENTS IN TIME website averages 5:03.

— Beginning on Monday, January 9, CableOne’s Boise and West Valley cable television systems will beginning offering IdahoPTV’s KIDS, CITIZENS and LEARN program channels on their digital tier on a twenty-four hour, seven day per week basis. At press time, channel details were still forthcoming. In February, I will give a more detailed account of this exciting news.

— Beginning Monday, January 9, IdahoPTV will offer video streamed gavel to gavel coverage of the Samuel Alito’s Senate Supreme Court Hearings provided by the NEWSHOUR WITH JIM LEHRER on idahoptv.org.

**2006 IdahoPTV Picturing Idaho Calendar Still Available**

SPECIAL, 2 CALENDARS FOR $32  
— Available at idahoptv.org or toll free at 877-224-7200

Have you seen Idaho?

Turning a professional lens to our state opens eyes in new ways. When you see Idaho through the eyes of a photographer it’s like seeing it for the first time. This collection of images features Idaho through the months and across the miles. The photographers featured in this collection are profiled in Idaho Public Television’s Picturing Idaho. It is a visual exploration of our magnificent state. As you journey through the coming months with this calendar you’ll find a stunning look at Idaho on each page. Perhaps you’ll want to head out yourself and find these views. Maybe you’ll pick up a camera and try to capture some photographic magic. And just maybe you’ll ask yourself, “Have I really seen Idaho?”

-Jim Peck Writer/Producer Picturing Idaho

**IdahoPTV Recognized**

— IdahoPTV was notified in early January that four of our local productions would be honored by Cine Golden Eagle Film and Video Awards on April 18, in a ceremony in Washington DC. This is the largest number of Cine Awards that IdahoPTV has ever been given. The award winning programs are:

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Renowned for the Golden Eagles it awards for excellence in documentary and other informational film and video production, CINE will celebrate its first half-century in 2007. Founded in 1957 by a consortium representing business, education, and government to depict American life and thought realistically for a global audience, CINE continues to recognize and foster the highest quality of non-theatrical film and video production through its semi-annual competitions. Recipients of CINE Golden Eagles include Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, John Lasseter, David Grubin, Barbara Kopple, Charles Guggenheim, Ken Burns, Albert Maysles, Debra Chasnoff and many others distinguished for their work with the moving image.

— On Friday, January 27, in a ceremony in New York City, IdahoPTV will receive a New York Film Festival Award for LEWIS & CLARK: MOMENTS IN TIME in the Education category. Next month, GM REPORTS will update you on the details!

IdahoPTV Staff Updates And Transitions

— Congratulations to Kim and Jim Peck (IdahoPTV Writer/Reporter/Producer) who welcomed their second child, a 7 pound 8 ounce baby boy into the world on Thursday, January 5!

— Karen Johnson is a new addition to our Communications Department as a part-time Communication Assistant, and has a key role in generating our monthly “Idaho Channels” program guide for our viewers, in writing and researching articles and press releases, and will edit documents and publications.

IdahoPTV Signals Update

— On Dec. 2, 2005 IdahoPTV and other local television stations received notices from Charter Communications, the cable TV provider for Cascade, Council, Donnelly, Emmett, McCall, New Meadows and Weiser, indicating that our local stations do not deliver a “quality signal” to their respective head end facilities. In addition, Charter Communications has stated that our signals will be removed from their systems if they are not corrected. IdahoPTV, working in conjunction with other Boise broadcasters, strongly disagree with this assessment and have provided signal strength and quality evaluations to Charter Communications, under the guidance of an attorney deputized by the Attorney General’s Office to represent the interest of IdahoPTV. We’ll keep you posted on this issue.

— On December 7th, 2005 at approximately 6:15am, the studios of IdahoPTV, located at 1455 N. Orchard Street in Boise and neighboring homes and businesses, experienced a loss of commercial power. This outage lasted until 7:02am, and knocked out the statewide distribution of all IdahoPTV content for the duration of the outage. Engineers worked diligently to restore all program feeds and systems once power was restored.

In November, IdahoPTV and neighbors lost commercial power for more than five hours.

IdahoPTV Reaches Out

On Tuesday, January 2, I gave an overview of the programs and services of IdahoPTV to the Les Bois Kiwanis Club, Boise, Idaho.
Upcoming Presentations And Events During The Idaho Legislature

— Buy Idaho Event, State Capitol, Thursday, January 12
— Idaho Cable TV Association Legislative Dinner, January 17, 6pm
— Idaho State Broadcasters Association Legislative Dinner, January 24, 6pm
— IdahoPTV FY’06 Budget Request Presentation: Monday, January 30, 9:45am-10:30am, Joint Finance and Appropriation Committee Chambers, Third Floor, Idaho State Capitol
— Digital Government Day, February 8, 9am-4pm, Idaho State Capitol

Upcoming Meetings Of Idaho Public Television’s Friends Boards

— Friends of Idaho Public Television: KISU, Wednesday, January 11, 5:30 p.m.

IdahoPTV Broadcasts Combined State of the State and Budget Address

— Airs Monday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m. MT/PT

Idaho Public Television presents live statewide coverage of Governor Dirk Kempthorne’s annual STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS. This year, Governor Kempthorne will again combine his STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS and his budget message for Fiscal Year 2007 into a single speech that will be delivered to a joint session of the Idaho Legislature in the House Chambers.

Jim Peck hosts the broadcast and is joined by commentators for analysis.

Following the Governor’s speech, a statewide TV interconnect will allow guests from around the state to offer commentary and discussion. Peck is joined by:

In Moscow:
Jim Fisher, editorial writer, Lewiston Tribune
Judy Brown, Idaho Center on Budget and Tax Policy

In Pocatello:
Marty Trillhaase, editorial writer, Idaho Falls Post Register

In Boise:
Brian Whitlock, Chief of Staff, Governor Dirk Kempthorne
Kevin Richert, editorial writer, Idaho Statesman

This special broadcast of IDAHO REPORTS, produced by IdahoPTV, is Idaho’s only regular television coverage of the Idaho Legislature. The program is funded by the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation. Individual IDAHO REPORTS programs are archived on the IdahoPTV Web site at idahoptv.org/idreports/ and may be Web streamed for later viewing. An audio-only MP3 version is available through an IDAHO REPORTS podcast, also found on the IDAHO REPORTS Web site.
DIALOGUE Previewed Idaho Legislature

— Aired Thursday, January 5 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeated Sunday, January 8 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

Three Statehouse reporters joined host Marcia Franklin on this episode of DIALOGUE to preview the issues confronting the second session of the 58th Idaho Legislature, which convened on Monday, January 9.

Franklin talked with Betsy Russell, Idaho edition of the Spokesman-Review, Coeur d’Alene; Corey Taule, Post Register, Idaho Falls; and Greg Hahn, The Idaho Statesman, Boise.

During the live call-in show on Thursday at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT, Franklin and her guests took calls from viewers on a toll-free line

They considered what legislation Governor Dirk Kempthorne might promote during his last legislative session as governor. The trio of guests also looked at other issues on the lawmakers’ docket, such as property-tax relief, school funding and Medicaid reform.

DIALOGUE, produced by IdahoPTV, is Idaho’s only weekly statewide public affairs program. The program is funded by the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation. Individual DIALOGUE programs are archived on the IdahoPTV Web site at idahoptv.org/dialogue and may be Web streamed for later viewing. An audio-only MP3 version is available through a DIALOGUE podcast, also found on the DIALOGUE Web site. The audio of DIALOGUE also can be heard in Southwest Idaho on Boise State Radio NPR News 91, Sundays at 8:00 a.m. MT.

IdahoPTV’s IDAHO REPORTS Begins Legislative Coverage January 13

— Airs Fridays, beginning January 13 at 8:00 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeats Sundays, beginning January 15 at 11:30/10:30 a.m. MT/PT

Idaho Public Television opens the door of the Idaho Legislature for everyone statewide, providing weekly television reports, Web site information and the opportunity to listen to live legislative action on the Internet.

Live video/audio streaming on the IdahoPTV Web site (idahoptv.org) from the floor of the House of Representatives and Senate allows people anywhere in the state to listen to the proceedings. There also is live audio streaming during budget presentations to the House, Senate and Joint Finances and Appropriations Committee.

IDAHO REPORTS host Jim Peck will give a weekly 30-minute television report each Friday during the session. Peck and director/videographer Ricardo Ochoa, throughout the session, delve into the issues and look at how legislative activity affects the lives of Idahoans. They update viewers on proposals, hearings, and action and interview Idaho leaders. Analysis is provided weekly by Betsy Russell of the Spokesman-Review, Spokane and Greg Hahn of The Idaho Statesman, Boise.

Coverage extends to the Internet with the program’s Web site (idahoptv.org/idareports), which includes podcasts, editorials, notes from the staff and archived on-air video commentary from Idaho residents.

This IdahoPTV production continues the tradition of providing the state’s longest-running television legislative coverage.
Writer Thomas Cahill Appeared on DIALOGUE

—Aired Thursday, December 29 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
—Repeated Sunday, January 1 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

On this episode of DIALOGUE, host Marcia Franklin spoke with writer Thomas Cahill.

The author of eight books, Thomas Cahill is the former director of religious publishing at Doubleday and has taught at several universities.

He is most well-known for his series, The Hinges of History, which chronicles important transitional moments in western civilization.

Cahill, who understands Greek, Latin, French, Italian and Hebrew, is currently working on the fifth book in that series, which already includes:

* How the Irish Saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland’s Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe
* The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels
* Desire of the Everlasting Hills: The World Before and After Jesus
* Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter

Franklin and Cahill talked about the series, as well as the “gift givers” — the people who shaped Western civilization — who Cahill discovered while working on his books.

This program is the last in a series of interviews conducted at the Sun Valley Writers’ Conference held last September in the Wood River Valley.

Firoozeh Dumas, Author of Funny in Farsi, Appeared on DIALOGUE

— Aired Thursday, December 22 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeated Sunday, December 25 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

On this episode of DIALOGUE, author and humorist Firoozeh Dumas talked about her writing and how humor can shed light on the immigrant experience.

DIALOGUE host Marcia Franklin spoke with Dumas, who came to the United States at age 7 with her parents from Iran. The interview was pre-recorded and there was no live call-in segment.

Dumas, who found many depictions of Muslim women in the United States were too serious, put down her own humorous reflections of her immigrant experience in America. The resulting book, Funny in Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America, became a best-seller.

David Macaulay, How Things Work Author, Talked About Architecture on DIALOGUE

— Aired Thursday, December 15 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeated Sunday, December 18 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

Children’s book author and illustrator David Macaulay appeared on DIALOGUE to talk about his thoughts on modern architecture.
DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Visited King Tut Exhibit; Discussed Archaeology with BYU-Idaho Professor

— Aired December 13 at 2:00/1:00 p.m. MT/PT

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS discovered archaeology with BYU-Idaho professor David D. Peck of Rexburg, who discussed how archaeology is a way of finding out about the past by looking at things left behind.

Host Joan Cartan-Hansen presented a video tour of artifacts from the Egyptian tomb of King Tutankhamun, which was on exhibit this year in Los Angeles.

Scientists have been studying the things found in the tomb since its discovery in the 1920s to learn how ancient Egyptians once lived.

Cartan-Hansen and Peck took calls from students statewide on a toll-free line. Questions were also sent by e-mail at dialogue4kids@idahoptv.org, via the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Web site and in advance by FAX.

Additional information and links regarding archaeology and King Tutankhamun can be found at the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS Web site (idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/). The broadcast program, in addition to being audio- and video-streamed live on the Web, also will remain available in the DIALOGUE FOR KIDS archive and podcast on the Web site.

DIALOGUE FOR KIDS, produced by Idaho Public Television, airs the third Tuesday of the month throughout the school year and focuses on a variety of science-related topics. The December show airs one week earlier because of school vacation schedules for the holidays.

Veteran Newsman and Author Robert MacNeil Interviewed on DIALOGUE

— Aired Thursday, December 8 at 8:30/7:30 p.m. MT/PT
— Repeated Sunday, December 11 at 5:30/4:30 p.m. MT/PT

Canadian-born journalist and novelist Robert MacNeil discussed on DIALOGUE how September 11, 2001, affected him and how the news profession is changing.

DIALOGUE host Marcia Franklin talked with MacNeil, whose novels include Burden of Desire and The Voyage.

MacNeil, who became a U.S. citizen in 1997, worked for Reuters news service, NBC and the BBC before cofounding the MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour on PBS where he spent two decades as co-anchor. Since leaving the NewsHour, he has written novels, a play and completed a documentary and book, Do You Speak American?
Fortune Magazine: Digital TV: Leaving Viewers In Limbo

Flipping the switch on digital television will be a flop for plenty of consumers.

By Marc Gunther, FORTUNE Senior Writer
January 4, 2006

NEW YORK (FORTUNE) - Your old TV set may well go dark in 2009, and believe it or not, that’s a good thing.

That’s because, at the end of last year Congress approved legislation that set a date for the switch from analog to digital television -- February 17, 2009.

But managing this transition -- which will render about 70 million TV sets obsolete -- will be not be easy. Nothing is, when the federal government gets involved. Indeed, Congress will soon have to revisit this issue, to clean up this mess it has created.

This fixed switch date allows consumers, electronics manufacturers, broadcasters, cable and satellite operators to plan for the transition. All have a lot at stake.

But for consumers with one of those 70 million sets -- many of whom are likely to be poor, elderly or uneducated, being forcibly switched from one technology to another will be a nightmare.

To be sure, the transition will facilitate a lot of progress for both the tech industry and the public sector.

Once TV stations switch to digital transmission, they will return to the government a big chunk of the radio spectrum they currently use to transmit their analog channels.

Some of that spectrum will go to first responders -- police, fire and public safety officials -- so they can better communicate with one another. Breakdowns in emergency communication slowed the response to the September 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina. New spectrum should help.

The rest of the spectrum will be auctioned off to the highest bidders -- probably tech companies. The sale of this valuable, scarce real estate is expected to bring in about $10 billion, maybe more. That will help reduce the federal budget deficit.

Better yet, when the spectrum is sold off, the companies that buy it will use it to develop new technology and services. Cheap, ubiquitous wireless broadband access is one possibility. Mobile TV or music services are others.

Scheduled for 2008, the auction will be the biggest spectrum sale since a 1994-95 spectrum auction. That sale helped boost the mobile phone industry, boosting the number of cell phone subscribers in the U.S. from 24 million to 200 million. It also helped drive down the cost of wireless minutes from an average of 47 cents a minute to 9 cents a minute, according to analysis from financial services firm Stifel Nicolaus.

“With the new auction, we will finally become a broadband nation,” says Blair Levin, a Washington analyst with Stifel Nicolaus. “Google, Yahoo!, Microsoft, Intel, Dell -- these companies will all benefit. The more broadband pipes you have, the more applications will come along, the more often you will upgrade your device.”

Indeed, Microsoft (Research), Intel (Research), Dell (Research) and Cisco (Research) all joined a Washington lobbying effort called the High Tech DTV Coalition to push for digital television. Congress has been debating the issue for a decade, ever since the 1996 telecom bill gave digital spectrum to broadcasters, with the expectation that they would eventually give their analog spectrum back.

The difficulty, of course, is that the analog broadcast system will then be shut down -- which will leave most of today’s TV sets unable to receive a signal over the air.
Roughly 20 million of those soon-to-be-obsolete sets are in homes where people don’t subscribe to cable or satellite. The other 50 million or so are in pay TV homes, and used as second, third or fourth sets. Sets hooked up to cable or satellite services should work fine no matter what.

To avoid a consumer revolt, Congress has set aside about $1.5 billion to smooth the transition. Owners of outmoded TV sets will be eligible for two vouchers, worth $40 each, to help buy converter boxes that will enable today's analog TV sets to receive digital signals.

Yes, the very same federal government that is cutting back on college loans and food stamps will soon be issuing TV vouchers.

Consumer groups say this is only fair because the government is essentially reducing the value of people’s property.

“If you are forcing consumers to adopt new technology -- whether or not they are ready -- you ought to provide full compensation for everyone,” says Jeannine Kenney of Consumers Union.

Consumers Union says the transition, as currently planned, is “totally unworkable and unfair to consumers.” It sure sounds that way.

**Free TV signals scrambled**

People are supposed to apply for the vouchers during a three-month window in 2008, and use them within three months. But there probably won’t be enough vouchers to go around, and no one really knows how much converter boxes will cost. Disadvantaged people are most likely to be left behind in the scramble.

The nightmare scenario is that people who depend on free, over-the-air TV for news and entertainment will lose their access, or have to pay more for it, so that the rest of us can get faster service on our Blackberries and ESPN on our cell phones.

Congress will return to DTV soon to deal with these issues and others, notably some major wrangles between broadcasters and cable operators. This is a big deal. Let’s hope Washington can get it right.