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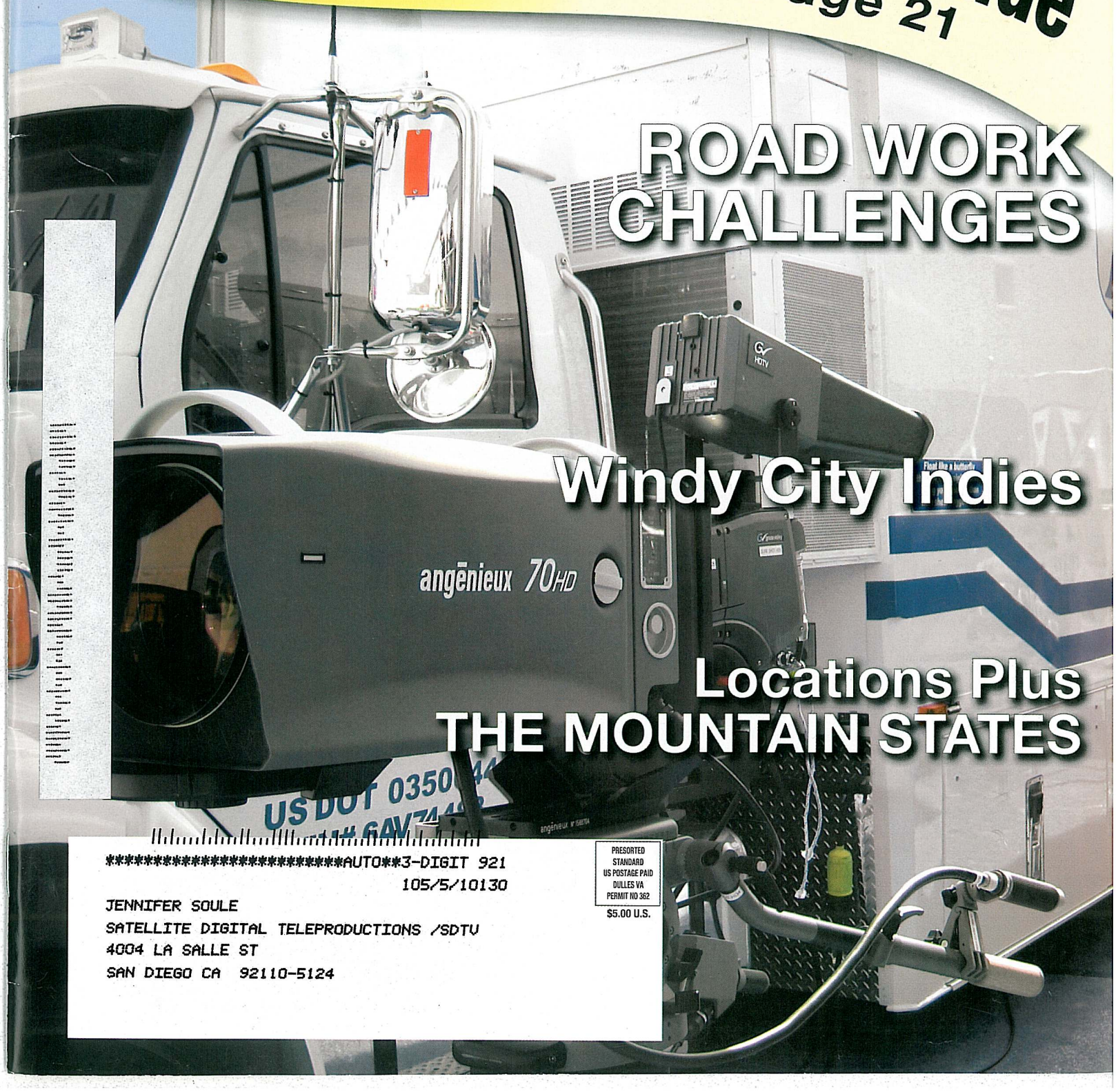
FREE 2007 Resource Guide
LISTINGS – Page 21



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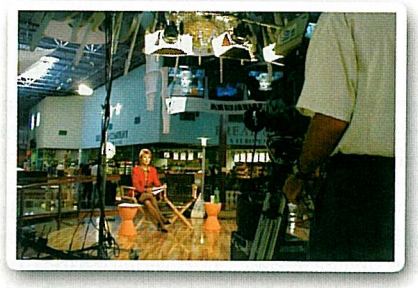

Stokes Production Services

Locked-On jumped through just those kind of hoops recently to cover speeches by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke at the Library of Congress and at Georgetown University. He also supplied uplink and lighting for a satellite media tour by former Treasury Secretary John Snow from the steps of the Treasury Department.

"Washington is the best news market in the country," Hovell declares. "There are very good freelance camera and audio people here. When people ask about my truck, my producer and field operations experience come out of the toolbox along with camera crews and Avid editors. I get a job for the truck, then I supply the client's other needs."

San Diego's **SDTV** had the first multi-camera SNG truck in the US, says President Mark Yancey who followed that milestone with some of the first digital video satellite transmissions. Today, "we have developed the first multi-camera SNG truck that's all HD," he reports.

At press time he had already used the 32-foot HDLA truck for *Good Morning, America*, and was having further meetings with ABC plus CNN and others about its deployment. "It's a cost effective way to do HD SNG and three- or four-camera HD remotes," says Yancey. "Previously, piecing together HD remotes from different vendors was expensive. Our truck puts it all together: Sony cameras running on triax, Tiernan encoders, a small-format Sony SD/HD switcher. Now you can do HD remotes for one-fifth the cost."

A new 40-foot HD Expandolink unit, to match SDTV's SD Expandolink, is currently under construction. It will be "more applicable for a news anchor covering a large story live with a whole team of people and a set," notes Yancey, although it's equally adaptable for sports and entertainment, "a growing part of our business."

SDTV has a history of "being there" on numerous news stories. When CNN called the company at 10 a.m. and needed to be on air by 4 p.m. with a report on the drug tunnel discovered traversing the US/Mexico border, the company was challenged to respond quickly. It tapped the HDLA truck to document the story for *Anderson Cooper 360*. A CNN crew shot tape in the tunnel while SDTV recorded Cooper's live stand ups and his toss, linked to Atlanta, to a correspondent in Baghdad for an upcoming show. An SDTV camera also captured the fenced No Man's Land between the borders with sweeping shots on a rented Jimmy Jib. Greg Woodhouse was SDTV's EIC.

The international satellite media tour commemorating Disneyland's 50th Anniversary found SDTV pulling an all-nighter to cover related events, including stand ups by talent from several places in the park. The stand ups cut back and forth between live coverage and vintage clips of people at the same locations five decades earlier when Disneyland opened with one of the first live TV remotes.

Covering news in New York City poses challenges all its own. Valley Cottage-based **DBS (Direct Broadcast Services)**, which operates microwave vans and DSNG (Digital Satellite News Gathering) trucks and provides multi-camera production services for cable's NY1 News, knows this firsthand.

"New York City is a very unique market," observes President Leo Rosenberg. "You have to be prepared to deal with stories at street level and on the 30th floor of a building. So we support news with portable microwave, laser and fiber optics to get the signal from wherever the story is back to the uplink trucks. Since you can only park on the avenues [laid out north to south] to orient yourself for the signal, microwave has been best for covering the city."

Pressure to get news on the air quickly is constant. "In the most extreme circumstances we'll get a call about a story breaking in the suburbs and the client will say get on the highway and we'll tell you where to go from there," says Rosenberg. "We need to estimate our time of arrival, find a location for the truck, hook up with the news crew and deploy the truck."

The transition to digital microwave technology is under way but happily vendors aren't sad-

continued next page

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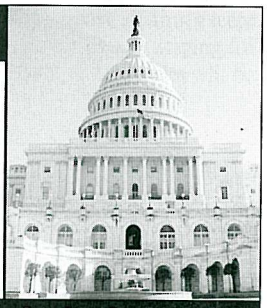

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cial care with cabling so it wouldn't interfere with ongoing business at the attraction.

Observing a strict time window was part of the challenge of covering *Celebrity Fit Club* for VH-1. The weight-loss competition featured a number of LA locations including a residential neighborhood where adhering to a fixed schedule was essential so residents would not be disturbed by the production.

Although **CSP Mobile Production**'s audio production truck has seen the Pay Per View concert business wane over the last few years, the Saco, Maine-based multi-track recording vehicle is still in demand for broadcast, Webcast and DVD production.

SDTV

Most recently it traveled to Baltimore for longtime client The Billy Graham Crusades where it handled archival recording of all concert work during the event. "We do the Crusades four or five times a year at various venues from San Diego to New York, from a Louisiana prison to Winnipeg," reports President Nat Thompson.

In designing the truck CSP was challenged to outfit it with equipment that would attract and benefit clients. The Billy Graham Crusades "sought us out when we exhibited the truck at NAB," Thompson recalls. "We had installed a Yamaha PM-1D audio console which the Crusades use for their front of house audio. So they felt our truck would be a good complement." The Yamaha board has also been a good choice for other reasons. "The beauty of it being a digital board and totally recallable means you can set up multiple acts and recall every scene so there are no long set-up periods when you bounce from one stage to another," Thompson explains.

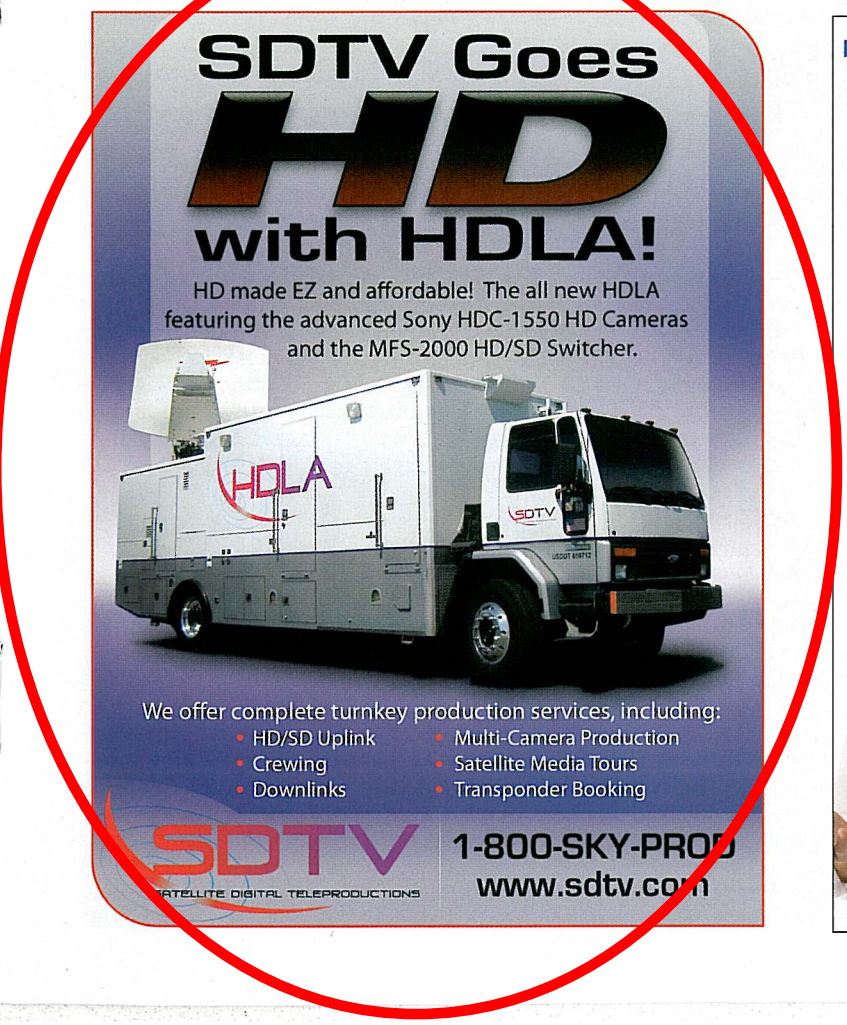
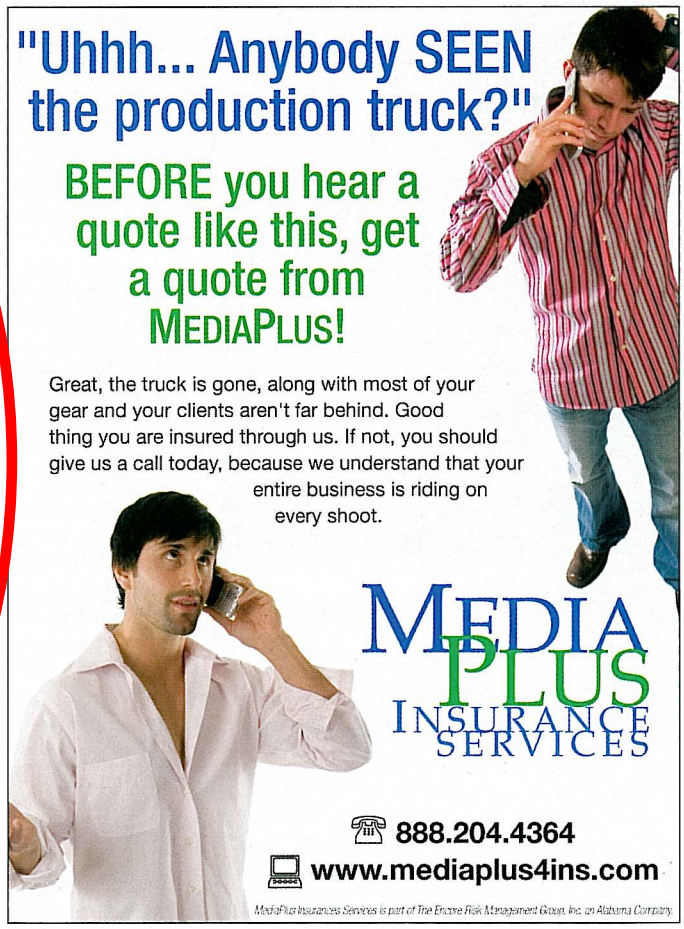
The truck is scheduled to provide all the audio for Michael Murphy Productions at the celebrated Newport Jazz Festival this month.

CSP's audio truck and one of its video production trucks have covered the MTV series, *Nokia Unwired: Live at the Hard Rock in Orlando*, for four years providing audio and video for 20 shows each summer. CSP provides crew and facilities, tech [illegible] oversees the entire production for Fearless Entertainment.

The series is shot live-to-tape. Each camera is ISO'd with a line cut and there's a quad split with time code. "Entertainment is a bit unique in that everything needs to be ISO'd," Thompson says. "Often you're stacking decks upon decks instead of using EVS's. When they post the show they have to have every camera recorded whether there's a line cut or not so they can build the show from scratch if they have to." The multi-track audio is then mixed in post and married to the video to create the final product for air.

The Florida Lottery keeps Orlando's **Television Mobile Resources**' (TMR) 40-foot straight truck on the road across the state. Live Friday and Saturday drawings usually emanate from one location ranging from the Super Bowl in Jacksonville and Cocoa Walk in Miami to Universal Studios' Latino festival and Appalachicola's seafood festival.

"It's only one minute of TV going out live but lots of rehearsals and high security are involved," notes Vice President Tim Rounds. Preparations for the three-camera shoot include two to three hours of rehearsals prior to the drawing, having an alternate site available in case of rain, and providing "back up for everything" like power and satellite uplink.

The truck's 24-track digital audio recording capabilities make it in demand for concert work too. It covered a contemporary Jewish music concert by Beth Schaefer and her seven-piece band at a theater in Sanford, Florida recording separate digital audio and digital video so the client could mix a CD and post a DVD later. TMR's on-board generator "kept us from pulling power away from the small venue which can be a major issue," says Rounds.

While the company's gig at the US National Roller Skating Championships in Lincoln, Nebraska for USA Roller Sports sounds like a sporting event, Rounds reports that TMR will be "shooting it as entertainment with a creative dance style. It's very similar to figure skating except on wheels. We'll go in and find our positions, building up our staging for the cameras, and work out shots on practice sessions." The show will be televised later this year. ■