

## Community Programming

Community message-making succeeds when it is supported by the community and when all of us participate in the flow of information: the statistics, the news, the special events, the documentaries, the sports, the entertainment, the talk shows, the arts, the issues, the answers, the advocates, the opposition, etc. Within our community are the resources for all aspects of our survival and each and every person is a trustee of some information. We are the information: the businessmen, the politicians, the doctors, the lawyers, the police, the firemen, the students, the teachers, the workers, the artists, the musicians, the performers, the bankers, the grocers, plumbers, electricians and builders, the housewives, the summer residents, the children, the old people, the street people, the media people, etc.

All of us have roles we've elected to play and all of us are just people who live in this town. We have needs to express ourselves in and out of our roles. We need to advertise, promote, advocate, oppose, sing, dance, show, tell, converse, accuse, defend, gossip, proclaim, challenge, inform, question, answer, etc. There's nothing new about all that.

Cable, however, is a tool to vitalize the processes of our town's communications--a needed vitality for a time of complex and varying social values and problems. Our local TV can reflect that vitality.

## KINGSTON CABLEVISION, INC.

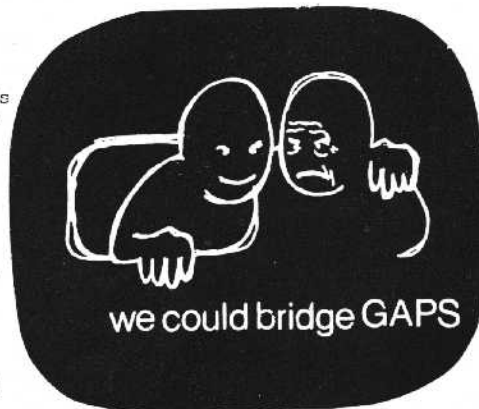
Kingston Cablevision is owned by NBC. Under present FCC guidelines broadcasters who own cable are to divest those interests by spring, 1972. This ruling is being challenged. The total system is made up of the Northern Dutchess County area, Ulster, Rosendale, Kingston, and Woodstock. According to Mike Fisher, the company's Program Director, there are presently about 12,000 subscribers, approximately 1,000 in Woodstock during the winter off-season. The antenna for the major part of the system is located in Port Ewen on 9W with the company's small studio and offices, under the direction of Tom O'Keefe, the on-site executive. The subscription is \$5.95 per month with varying installation fees depending on home location. Woodstock is serviced by a separate antenna on Mead Mountain not presently linked to the Port Ewen headend. Woodstock, therefore, doesn't receive the community programming produced by Kingston Cablevision. Presently there are no services beside cable reception of FM radio and VHF airwave TV channels from New York City, Hartford, and Albany. The company is anticipating a 20-channel two-way capacity cable in the Kingston area within the next two years. As to more complete services for Woodstock, the company anticipates a micro-wave or cable link to connect the two systems once the 20-channel capacity is established. A community channel for Woodstock is being considered: a studio headend conveniently located in Woodstock is not.

Presently Kingston Cablevision's community programs are seen on Channel 2 about 14 hours a week, to increase to 21 hours by March. To date, there's no advertising nor charges or payments to persons or groups who are

subjects of programs. The three-person program staff has both  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and 1" video facilities and a remote capacity for out-of-studio coverage of events. The subjects of programs are sports, cultural groups, political action, etc.

## Woodstock Community Video

WCV started around the 1971 Town elections. Many witnessed the ashcan monitors on the streets and in the Grand Union showing and asking Townspeople about the candidates. With a New York State Council on the Arts grant to the New York City based People's Video Theatre, Inc., Woodstock was chosen as a locale for the development of community video. Half-inch video equipment and tape, a small operating budget, and two video people (Ken Marsh and Elaine Milosh) joined forces with a local artist (Bob Dacey) and have been operating out of a donated storefront, thanks to Ron and Valma Merians at Joyous Lake Restaurant.



WCV has been providing closed circuit TV programs out of the storefront studio on weekends. Regular reports from the Town Clerk, Family, the police, etc. have been shown. WCV has created the Scoopscope, a video bulletin board for community use; Negapositube, programs on community issues; and Channel Arts, for the talent of Woodstock.

WCV is a public enterprise capable of providing the town with community message-making facilities via closed-circuit equipment on the streets and in meeting places and with

cable the expertise and programming for a Woodstock Community Channel. WCV can provide low-cost advertising for local businesses. WCV can be a way for sponsors to support low-cost production of programs for schools, churches, social groups, etc. WCV can be the recipient of partial

cable subscription fees turned back to the community for its own channel operations. WCV can market valuable Woodstock information to other community cable channels throughout the country and abroad. WCV can be an economically self-sustaining enterprise bringing 21st Century media potentials to Woodstock.

Technical aid has already been given by John LaValle of Sight and Sound and Morty Schiff. Additional equipment has been donated by Robert Kaplan and the Videofreex. The Woodstock Artists Association is sponsoring WCV meetings starting Thursday, February 3rd and for eleven Thursday evenings thereafter. Programs will feature tapes on the arts, history, and topical issues of Woodstock and Live Forum tapings with audience participation. The first meeting will deal with community video and cable. WCV proposes, in order to expedite the creation of a Woodstock community channel and studio that:

1) The Town Government: a) reassess the franchise it has granted to Kingston Cablevision in order to find some leverage to bring to bear a guarantee of complete cable service for Woodstock; 2) proclaim WCV as an official representative of the Town concerning video and cable communications with authority to receive subscription fee returns from Kingston Cablevision; and 3) allocate permanent space as the headend-studio and WCV headquarters for the Woodstock community channel in Town Hall.

2) The churches, schools, and other groups begin to create programming for the community, working with WCV in the formulation of message making for their special concerns and audiences helping to locate sponsor support.

3) You the people subscribe to the cable and come to WCV events. As subscribers let Kingston Cablevision know you want a community channel for Woodstock with its studio (headend) in Woodstock at Town Hall, and that you desire to see a minimum of fifty cents per subscriber a month be returned to WCV to support the channel.

WCV and Community Channel are a natural for us.