



Adventures in Taxi Land

I am basically a small town kid. Big city schemers fascinate me. It was no surprise that when I got to Chicago there would be a scam on taxis.

(I remember well the last time I visited Chicago. I called my brother but misdialed. I hung up the phone but only got one of my two quarters back. My brother just wrote it off as a "Daley" tax. Welcome to Chicago.) Sure enough, this time around if one took a city cab from the airport to my destination, a short 9 miles away, it would cost \$60 to \$80. If, on the other hand, one took a suburban cab, the cost was only about 20 bucks.

On my departure day I was passing time in the hotel lobby when a cab driver approached and asked if I had called for a cab. I said, "No, I would not be leaving for another hour." His face brightened and he said, "I will be back in one hour to pick you up. Don't call anyone." I agreed. As I waited I was thinking that this is going to be an adventure.

He did return on time, found me in the lobby and off we went. We no more than got out of the hotel lot than he started on his sad tale. He just blurted out, "I have too many women in my life. I have a wife and a girlfriend." Having been married to the same person for almost 40 years, I did not have a frame of reference for his problem. I remembered a saying that went, "Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same thing." I said, "Whoa! Isn't that about one over the limit?" He smiled.

I asked, "Does the wife know about the girl friend?" "Yes," he replied. Then I asked, "Does she put up with it?" "Not so much," he replied. Because of that, he wasn't getting much sleep. At this point I noticed that the meter was approaching \$25 and we were only about a third of the way to the airport. I asked how much it was going to cost since it was only \$20 to come in from the airport. He quoted a price of \$32 and shut off the meter with a shrug.

He then went on with the comment, "My girlfriend is pregnant." "Of course she is," I replied. Again he

smiled. He really was looking for a way out of his mess and I just did not have one. All I could think of was for him to dissolve back into the mass that is Chicago and disappear.

Shortly we arrived at the airport and he dropped me off at my airline. As he had predicted, he did ask for \$32. I kicked in a \$5 tip and asked for a receipt. As I moved my bags to the curb he scrambled furiously to write a receipt. He pressed the receipt in my hand, got in the cab and was gone like a shot. Later, as I was putting my receipts in order, I looked at what he had given me. It was a credit card slip but blank on both sides. Apparently he had taken my advice and began to disappear. I hate it when that happens.

Product Safety Enrollment

The grandfather period for Product Safety enrollment in Japan closed on August 31. Jeff Saga has reported that they got 128 applications. This brings our total enrollment in Product Safety up to almost 300 certificate holders with an additional 100 still awaiting more information from applicants.

NARTE Attends August IEEE EMC Symposium

Once again we were a part of the IEEE EMC symposium which was held in Chicago in August. This is our most successful and most anticipated show.



Terri and Russ staffing the NARTE booth

We had steady traffic at our booth giving us a chance to talk with old friends and to meet new people interested in NARTE certification. The workshop on NARTE examination was attended by about 40 people and 26 signed up for the exam. Of the 26 who sat for the examination, 9 passed both parts and 11 additional passed one part.

NARTE Attends IEEE Product Safety Symposium

The IEEE Product Safety Engineering Society held its Second Symposium on Product Safety Engineering in the Chicago suburb of Schaumburg on October 3-4. NARTE participated with a workshop on certification. The workshop included a discussion of the examination question structure, strategies for passing the examination, a trial examination and review of the correct answers. Two applicants sat for the examination at the end of the symposium.

NARTE Welcomes Baby Cazimir

Laura Holmberg (Couple), our long-term operations director, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy in July. She and her husband, Joe, named him Cazimir. He is thriving! With his arrival Laura took time off to be mother. She has since returned part-time to do accounting for NARTE. It is a good deal for us. We still have access to her expertise and she gets a periodic break from mothering.

Converting Laura to part-time led to other staff adjustments. NARTE Staff has transitioned into new positions with Terri Marinucci moving into the Operations Director slot (see page 5), Melissa Bregani as Exam Coordinator, and the addition of Amanda McBride as Administrative Coordinator.



I Was Wrong!

*by John Holmes
NCE (Retired)*

Back in 1987, when NARTE News was still on old-fashioned paper, I wrote an article about the demise of the Fairness Doctrine. When the FCC repealed the rule I felt the move was detrimental, espe-

cially in rural areas where there wasn't an abundance of media sources to discuss controversial issues.

From 1949 to 1987 there was a government rule that was designed to create fair and balanced broadcasting by compelling radio and TV stations to air both sides of issues. It was such a great idea. The trouble was, as I look back now, it had just the opposite effect of what the term "fairness" implies. The stations simply avoided broadcasting anything controversial.

When the FCC dumped the "doctrine," all sorts of talk radio took off, both locally and nationally. Some of those who jumped on the bandwagon were: Rush Limbaugh, G. Gordon Liddy, Sean Hannity and many other lesser known individuals. This provided the public with a variety of alternative thoughts on local and national issues other than those dispensed by the big three networks.

Next came cable TV, CNN's 24-hour news coverage and a major competitor to the "big three" called Fox News. That added other perspectives to the national news scene. This in turn generated more demand for alternative commentators on other networks plus more cable channels.

When I wrote that original article, never in my wildest imagination could I have envisioned receiving 180 channels of programming from a satellite dish. You see, our ranch is in the middle of nowhere, far from any cable TV. Satellite TV opened up even the most remote areas to what everybody else in the country can watch. In fact, I can even watch it in my motorhome while driving!

The impact from cable and satellite TV on the dissemination of ideas was nothing compared to the Internet and the current explosion of "blogs" (individual web journals). This means every Tom, Dick and Harry can log on to pontificate, along with political pundits, about everything from soup to nuts.

Now that we've reached what seems like the pinnacle of information availability, with all manner of ideas spread out on the table, there are groups calling for the revival of the Fairness Doctrine. In fact, two of our FCC commissioners have come out in favor of a modern version of the old "doctrine". Some in Congress are beginning to look at this too. That's scary!

You see there are those that don't want all of those opinions expressed on the airwaves. The bureaucrats have lost "control" of what's broadcast to those of us who they feel may not be able to sort through all of the facts for ourselves. There are those who look