

NPA's Van-tasia

By Brian Falla
DAILY NEWS STAFF

NORWOOD –From the outside, Norwood Public Access Television's new Mobile Broadcast Van looks like your average family truckster with a few antennas sticking out of it. But glimpse inside and it looks like a NASA space shuttle with buttons and monitors and various switches everywhere.

The vehicle is essentially a full production center, complete with a generator and computer system from which NPA will be able to televise live events anywhere in town where they can hook into cable providers' system. The van will also make lugging around a bevy of video cameras, wires and microphones a thing of the past as well as open the door to future upgrades that could include wireless cameras as well as instant replay machines.

NPA President Scott Murphy said yesterday the van was identified three years ago as something the Board of Directors wanted to get.

Murphy credited NPA board member Marsha Nutting with the idea, saying she had experience with a similar van years ago.

Murphy believes the van will enable NPA to produce better local coverage in many ways.

"I look at local public access as similar to a newspaper in that people want to see pictures of their kids and grandchildren and they want the local stuff covered," said Murphy. "This van will allow us to do more at the Little League fields, at the soccer fields and things like that."

Murphy said the van cost "a significant amount of money" and that NPA has been budgeting for the purchase for three years.

NPA Studio Director Jack Tolman said the van will also make life easier on the crews because the van has a wireless microphone system and the only wire needed at this point is to hook up the cameras.

"On of the things we're looking at down the road is to have wireless cameras, so we could go anywhere – the back of the end zones at football games or whatever," said Tolman.

NPA station coordinator Rob Renda said instead of taking close to an hour and a half to set up to tape a Norwood High football game, it will now take 20 or 30 minutes. The same will hold true from all shoots like parades, summer concerts, Norwood Days and athletic games.

Tolman said the van has other benefits, too, since the van is equipped with the same computer system that is in the NPA studios at the high school.

"The beauty of this is that we have 80 students at the high school who have learned on this system and would be able to walk in here and produce a show," said NPA Studio Director Jack Tolman.

NHS junior television student Nicole Folan was impressed with the van and said she could probably figure out how to work everything.

"This is awesome," Folan said.

NPA hopes residents will soon be saying the same thing.

Daily News staff writer Brian Falla can be reached at 781-433-8339 or at bfalla@cnc.com