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Business Spotlight

Tuesday, October 12, 1999

He solves Electronic Mysteries

By Noni Bookbinder Bell
Special to the BCT

Roger L. Boyell, Forensic Analyst

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Moorestown resident Roger L. Boyell shows off some of his equipment at his office.
BCT staff photo: Larry Savich

MOORESTOWN - In 1974, when President Richard Nixon handed over tape recordings of his White House conversations, forensic experts determined there were gaps in the tapes.

Their findings proved Nixon had instigated a cover-up and obstructed justice from the outset of the Watergate scandal.

Twenty-five years later, the same type of expertise is applied by Moorestown forensic analyst and consultant Roger L. Boyell, who investigates and solves electrical and electronic mysteries, and provides expert testimony in legal forums throughout the Northeast.

In a recent case, Boyell was consulted to testify on his analysis of a tape recording made at a public meeting.

"In another state, there was a public body which made a zoning regulation which an individual is protesting. It's costing the individual a lot of money. He wanted to build a plant, and now he can't, and so the case is going to a higher court," he said. "There is a question of exactly who said what in a public meeting.

"There is a gap in a very critical part of the tape of that meeting, and my job is to find out how the gap got there. The question is: Why and how did it happen, and was it intentional?

"It's a very elaborate case, now going to state court, involving civil rights and zoning boards."

In another recent case, Boyell's expertise was tapped when a huge industrial vertical door came crashing down without warning on a forklift operator driving through the doorway. Since nothing appeared to be wrong with the door's mechanicals of the door, Boyell will determine if the electronic sensor system failed or had a faulty design.

"My job is to find out what happened, what caused the door to crash down abruptly at the wrong time, and why it happened," he said. "My clients are lawyers and insurance

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companies, and my work is the analysis of matters involving electronic and communications systems."

Boyell provides site inspections, field measurements, laboratory analyses, test reports, and technical findings, he explained, with thorough documentation of results and opinions, for civil, criminal, and patent cases. By assembling crucial demonstrative evidence in the form of photographs, tape playbacks, and equipment presentations, he helps piece together electronic puzzles.

An electrical engineer who worked in the defense industry, Boyell founded his forensic business armed with an impressive list of credentials.

Besides holding a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Florida, Gainesville, Boyell also holds a master's degree in Applied Science from Adelphi University, Long Island, N.Y., and an MBA earned at Monmouth University in Long Branch.

A senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Boyell is also a fellow at the American College of Forensic Examiners and a diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Engineering and Technology.

"The best experts in the legal forum are those who work for all sides and remain truly objective," said Boyell, who since 1952 has authored hundreds of formal technical reports. Many, he noted, are classified due to government security regulations or corporate proprietary restrictions.

"The expert must be objective or he will not be believed by the court," he said.

The 25-year Moorestown resident recalled how his business started almost by accident 20 years ago as the result of a traffic radar case.

"Somebody claimed that the radar was wrong, and he asked me to look into it," said Boyell. "From my background in radar in and radio, I found that the radar was indeed wrong, and he was acquitted."

Boyell recently took his business full time, relying on 30 years' experience in the defense and aerospace industry. He worked for firms including Bendix Radio Division, Baltimore; Sperry Gyroscope Co., Great Neck, N.Y.; Pennsylvania Research Associates, Philadelphia; RCA Corp. Aerospace & Defense Group, and Computer Sciences Corporation, Integrated Systems Division the latter two in Moorestown.

In the field, he studied the capabilities and limitations of advanced systems for detection, tracking, communication, control, radar, sonar, and electronic countermeasures. But it was his high school electronics hobby that set him on the road toward engineering.

"I would build electronic devices; automobile alarms and other gadgets," he said. "In high school, I made an applause meter, so they could rate the performers in the school play. Now, you see them all around, but that was 50 years ago."

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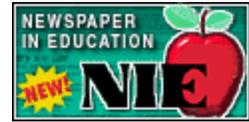
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