

# Electronic Media

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## AT PRESS TIME

### 'St. Elsewhere' to end

LOS ANGELES—The producers of NBC's "St. Elsewhere" are pulling the plug on their own show. "The creative team just wants to go on to something new," said Mel Blumenthal, senior executive vice president of MTM Enterprises, producer of the 6-year-old hospital drama. That creative team will reassemble in New York soon for production of "Tattinger's." The new and unrelated hour-long MTM drama will join the NBC lineup next fall. MTM Television Distribution is selling 138 episodes of "St. Elsewhere" for off-network distribution beginning this fall.

### Two MSOs resume talks

DENVER—United Artists Communications and United Cable Television, both based here, have resumed negotiations on a possible merger of the two companies. Terms are different than those announced in October 1987, according to a  
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## City presses to buy major cable system

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

The city of San Antonio, Texas, is maneuvering to buy the local cable TV system over the objections of the owner, Rogers Cablesystems.

If such a sale occurs, it would make San Antonio the first major U.S. city to get into the cable TV business.

At issue is an unusual option in the city's original franchise agreement with Rogers Cablesystems. Under terms of that agreement, the city could buy the 225,000-subscriber system at a 5 percent discount off its market value after the 10th anniversary of the system, which is later this year, up until its contract with Rogers expires in 1993.

The city must notify Rogers by March if it officially decides to make that move.

Resale of the system to another cable operator—one possible scenario—could net the city a profit of \$25 million on the system, which carries a current approximate value of \$400 million, according to Rogers officials.

San Antonio could also buy the system and retain Rogers or another operator to manage it.

But Lou Fox, city manager of San Antonio, said last week that his first preference would be for Rogers to make the city an equity partner in the cable system.

"I'm not trying to make a killing on it," said the city manager, "but we created a value here."

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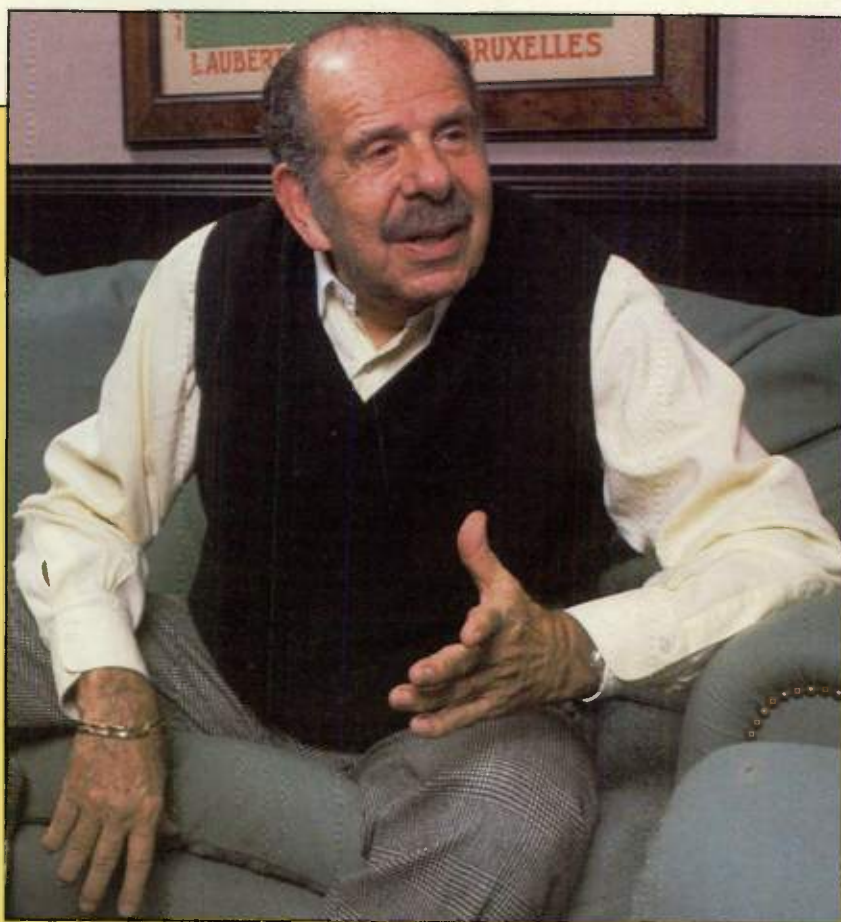


Photo by Tim Petros

## Q&A: Lee Rich Setting a fast pace at MGM/UA

By RICHARD MAHLER  
Los Angeles bureau chief

After spending three decades in the television business, 61-year-old Lee Rich still continues to work his legendary 12-hour days.

The chairman and chief executive officer of MGM/UA Communications Co. cut his teeth in the advertising business in the 1950s, co-founded Lorimar Productions in 1969, and helped develop some of the most successful network shows of the 1970s and '80s.

His latest challenge is to re-

build MGM/UA into a major industry player.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA spoke with Mr. Rich about his work last month. An edited transcript of the conversation follows:

**EM:** *It's been a confusing 20 months at your studio. Summarize for us what you've been doing during that time.*

**Mr. Rich:** When I arrived here there was only one company, and that was United Artists. I became its chairman of the board and chief executive officer in April 1986.

(Continued on Page 27)

## FCC fires 'indecenty' shot at TV

By DOUG HALONEN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—The Federal Communications Commission has fired its first volley against alleged "indecenty" on television, and more blasts may be on the way.

The FCC last week notified a Kansas City, Mo., independent station that its prime-time airing of an R-rated movie may have been a violation of its "indecenty" rules.

The commission said that other broadcasts by TV and radio stations are under investigation.

"No other (enforcement actions) are imminent, but there are 10 somewhat similar TV complaints and about 20 similar radio complaints under active investigation," said John Kamp, director of the FCC's office of public affairs.

The action against the station, Media Central's KZKC-TV, also marks the FCC's first indecenty action since the agency ruled in November that broadcasts of questionable taste should be limited to post-midnight hours.

What the FCC is upset about is KZKC's 8 p.m. broadcast last May 26 of what is believed to have been an uncut version of "Private Lessons," a 1982 film about a wealthy young teenager who is seduced by his governess.

"It's got full frontal nudity in a sexual context," said the FCC's Mr. Kamp.

FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick said, "By this action, the commission is once again demonstrating that it is committed to full enforcement of the law in accordance with guidelines provided by the Supreme Court."

If the FCC determines that KZKC violated its guidelines against indecenty, the station could face punishment ranging from a warning to revocation of its broadcast license.

Yet an FCC source said that it was likely that the commissioners would limit any punishment to a reprimand or a small fine.

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### Meters force make-goods

Lower-than-expected people-meter ratings may cost the major networks \$70 million in additional advertiser make-goods.

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### Broadcast education berated

A survey of industry executives found broadcast students have unrealistic expectations and little "real world" knowledge.

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### '48 Hours' premieres

CBS this week becomes the first commercial network to air three weekly prime-time news magazines.

## NEWS SUMMARY

**The FCC took aim at KZKC-TV** in Kansas City, Mo., for the prime-time airing of an R-rated movie, "Private Lessons." The commission also said other broadcasts by radio and TV stations are under investigation. (Page 1)

**San Antonio, Texas, could become** the first major U.S. city to get into the cable television business. The city is maneuvering to buy the local cable system over the objections of the owner, Rogers Cablesystems. (Page 1)

**Make-goods to advertisers** may cost the networks more than \$70 million because of people-meter ratings shortfalls. Any make-good time not originally anticipated by the networks in their upfront sales will come directly out of profits. (Page 3)

**Alan Bennett resigned** as president of marketing and distribution at LBS Communications to become the new president and chief executive officer of Blair Entertainment. (Page 3)

**Ed Vane announced he's leaving** Westinghouse Broadcasting. The departure apparently is due to the ill health of his wife. Mr. Vane has been head of the syndication division since 1979. (Page 3)

**Four of the largest** cable TV system owners have agreed to back a new production and distribution firm, Think Entertainment. The company is the brainchild of Shelley Duvall, one of the cable industry's most celebrated producers. (Page 3)

**Two Fox Broadcasting Co. affiliates** have dropped the service's Saturday prime-time lineup, and a third station will drop the slate of sitcoms at the end of January. (Page 2)

**NBC and TBS officials** said talks between the two companies concerning a joint venture have been "suspended." (Page 2)

**The FCC last week** reinstated policies aimed at increasing the number of women and minority owners of broadcast stations. The commission also turned down a request to select a single standard for AM stereo broadcasting. (Page 2)

**KTLA-TV in Los Angeles** has renewed its prime-access checkerboard of first-run sitcoms for next season, while KVVU-TV in Las Vegas announced plans to replace its checkerboard with "M\*A\*S\*H" reruns. (Page 4)

**The growing threat to traditional** network-affiliate relations will be an issue once again this week as CBS network and affiliate officials meet to discuss how to reach homes that cannot receive normal broadcast signals. (Page 4)

**A new 24-hour movie and sports** cable network is slated for an April launch in the Los Angeles area. The new cable service, which is still untitled, will be Los Angeles' third regional cable network. (Page 4)

**Dudley Taft wasted no time** installing his own management team at WPHL-TV in Philadelphia, his new station. Mr. Taft replaced WPHL's managers with former executives of WTAF-TV, the Philadelphia station that he sold last April. (Page 4)

**"CBS This Morning"** has slightly improved CBS's ratings performance in the morning time slot since its Nov. 30 debut, but the network is still behind NBC and ABC in the morning race. (Page 18)

**Dr. Ruth, Pat Boone and Garry Trudeau** have all landed new shows on cable TV. Those three were among the celebrities featured at last weekend's Cable Press Tour in Redondo Beach, Calif. (Page 18)

**Independent television station** executives were reminded last week that they need to prepare for the arrival of high-definition TV. (Page 18)

**WRGB-TV in Schenectady, N.Y.**, which aired the country's first live remote news broadcast, is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. (Page 40)

**Broadcast advertising sales** won't be adversely affected by last October's stock market crash, a panel of sales executives said last week. The leaders said they are more concerned with prospects for 1989. (Page 55)

**LIN Broadcasting's** vice president of television, Blake Byrne, has resigned. He said his recovery from a heart attack necessitated the move. (Page 55)

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# TBS talks with NBC have been 'suspended'

By JANET STILSON  
and DIANE MERMIGAS  
ELECTRONIC MEDIA staff

Turner Broadcasting System announced Friday that its talks with NBC about a possible joint venture have been "suspended."

No further talks are anticipated, said Arthur Sando, vice president of corporate communications for TBS.

At NBC, Tom Rogers, vice president of policy planning and business development, said the price of TBS stock that NBC would buy was "the key variable" that negotiators couldn't agree upon.

TBS made its announcement, which followed three months of talks between the two companies, at a board meeting in Atlanta on Friday.

Also at the board meeting, Ted Turner retained his operational con-

trol of the company.

The board, according to Mr. Sando, took no action to alter the senior management of the company, despite reports that its members wanted Mr. Turner to name a new officer to handle the company's day-to-day affairs.

The TBS board also did not schedule a launch date for its proposed new Turner Network Television service. The board members are expected to receive more TNT details within 45 days.

Regarding the TBS-NBC talks, sources said the two sides were unable to agree on a framework that would give the broadcast network a substantial enough equity interest in the Atlanta-based company, in addition to the opportunity to enter into cable TV as a major program supplier.

Any involvement by NBC with

TBS would have been worth at least "several hundred million dollars" to financially strapped TBS, according to a source.

"It is not likely we'll put any more time or energy into the matter," said a source close to the situation.

"Sure, both companies have strategic interests. But the price range we were discussing did not necessarily fit the depth or breadth of involvement."

Both companies have indicated they will pursue their interests in discussions with other entities.

Capital Cities/ABC Chairman Thomas Murphy recently told Mr. Turner he is eager to pursue discussions similar to those between TBS and NBC.

However, reliable sources say no substantial conversations between Cap Cities/ABC and TBS have taken place. #

## FCC renews policies on minorities

By ROBERT HOMAN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—Bowling to the will of Congress, the Federal Communications Commission last week reinstated policies aimed at increasing the number of women and minority owners of broadcast stations.

At the same time, the FCC turned down a request to select a single standard for AM stereo broadcasting.

Language added to a recently enacted federal spending bill by Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ernest "Fritz" Hollings, D-S.C., instructed the commission to reinstate its minority preference policies.

The minority policies had been remanded for commission review by a federal appeals court after challenges were brought in three separate cases.

The preference policies Congress told the FCC to keep permit broadcasters who are in danger of losing their licenses to sell their stations to minorities for up to 75 percent of their fair-market values.

They also provide preferences to females and minorities in comparative license proceedings.

Congress also told the agency to retain a program that gives tax breaks to broadcasters who sell their stations to minorities.

The policies had been suspended while the commission conducted an inquiry into their constitutionality.

The agency last week decided to halt its inquiry.

FCC General Counsel Diane Killory said the agency will prepare orders that will "bring the commission in full compliance with the legislation."

Alan Kaufman, attorney for James Steele, who challenged the commission's female preference policy in comparative hearings, said he would appeal the order.

And Harry Cole, an attorney for Shurberg Broadcasting, which challenged the commission's distress sales policy, said, "There's a very strong possibility that we will appeal."

On the AM stereo broadcasting matter, the FCC said the marketplace already appeared to have selected an industry standard.

Mass Media Bureau Chief Alex Felker said 70 percent of AM stations broadcasting in stereo use the Motorola C-Quam system and that all AM broadcasting receivers are compatible with C-Quam.

Yet the petitioners contended that the absence of an industry standard has limited the growth of AM stereo broadcasting. #

## Three Fox affiliates ax Saturday lineup

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—As anticipated, two Fox Broadcasting Co. affiliates have dropped the service's low-rated Saturday prime-time lineup and a third station will drop the sitcoms at the end of this month.

KMSP-TV in Minneapolis plans to follow the lead of KPTV-TV in Portland, Ore., and WOFL-TV in Orlando, Fla., by replacing the situation comedies with movies after Jan. 30.

That means a loss of coverage for Fox on Saturdays in A.C. Nielsen Co.'s 15th, 26th and 27th largest TV markets, respectively.

A fourth affiliate that had threatened to drop the shows, WDSI-TV in Chattanooga, Tenn., decided to keep the lineup after meeting with Fox representatives during the network's recent affiliates meeting here.

But even with the promise that its new hour-long "Dirty Dozen" action-adventure series will replace half of the night's two-hour schedule starting April 23, Fox was unable to convince the other three stations to stick with the schedule until then.

"Our concerns were running reruns of 'Beans Baxter' and 'Mr. President' during the February sweeps when we have only been getting a 1 rating," said Norris Reichel, vice president and general manager at WOFL.

WOFL was the first station to drop the Saturday prime-time slate.

Production on "Beans Baxter" and "Mr. President" has shut down, and the New York-based station rep firm Seltel was advising its clients last week that the shows would air for the last time on April 16.

A Fox spokesman would not confirm that the two Saturday series have been canceled.

However, the spokesman did say that such a move is "expected."

WOFL's Mr. Reichel says he plans to resume Fox programming on Saturday nights when "Dirty Dozen" bows, but officials at VHF affiliates KMSP and KPTV said they would wait to see how the new show does.

Gordon White, who is the program manager at KPTV, said that by running other programming his station expects to boost the 3 rating it's been getting with Fox on Saturdays to "at least an 8 rating, and we'll have all the (advertising) inventory."

Last week, Fox affiliates also received word that the network will continue running reruns of "The Late Show" in place of the canceled "Wilton North Report" through the February sweeps. #

## CORRECTIONS

The AGB Household Ratings chart on Page 20 of the Jan. 11 issue was incorrectly labeled. The ratings were for the period Dec. 28 through Jan. 3.

\* \* \*

Due to an editing error, an article on Page 24 of the Jan. 11 issue incorrectly stated that Henry Thomason is part of the husband-and-wife team responsible for "Designing Women." His correct name is Harry Thomason.



"Rapunzel," one of the "Faerie Tale Theater" episodes that Shelley Duvall (right) starred in, came from her Platypus Productions. Four MSOs will back Ms. Duvall's new production and distribution company, Think Entertainment.

## Four MSOs backing new cable production company

By JANET STILSON

Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Four of the largest cable TV system owners have pushed a programming investment trend one step further by backing a production and distribution firm.

The new production company, Think Entertainment, is the brainchild of Shelley Duvall, one of the cable industry's most celebrated producers.

Ms. Duvall said Think will derive "unlimited funds" from the consortium, which includes United Artists Communications, United Cable Television, Tele-Communications Inc. and Newhouse Broadcasting.

While those four companies are among the multiple system operators that already have funded such programmers as Turner Broadcasting System, the MSO backing of a production and distribution company is said to be the first of its kind. Ms. Duvall said two other cable companies may join the venture, but she's not "actively

seeking" other equity partners.

Key to the formation of Think is the mandate of producing, financing and distributing TV programming for exclusive cable premieres.

Ms. Duvall, who is chairman and chief executive officer of the venture, said she has more than 30 projects in development that could turn up on a cable network as early as March.

While her cable productions in the past, including Showtime's "Faerie Tale Theatre," have targeted a children's audience, Think Entertainment productions will run the gamut of genres, from sports to comedies.

One source says Ms. Duvall is already huddling with The Discovery Channel, a documentary-oriented service, regarding potential programs.

The formation of Think follows attempts by some MSOs to form a program-buying cooperative, including one venture that sought to acquire the Sunday prime-time National Football League package snagged by ESPN.

"The concept (of Think) is in full

support of our belief that the cable industry's continued growth will depend heavily on its ability to deliver high-quality programming exclusively produced for cable" said John Sie, TCI senior vice president, at a Los Angeles press conference announcing the deal last week.

"Think Entertainment represents the beginning of a new era for United Artists and, in my opinion, the first step on the road for cable television operators," said Stewart Blair, president and chief executive officer of United Artists, in a prepared statement.

The MSOs are partnered in the deal with Armadillo Productions, which Ms. Duvall says she founded a year ago. Armadillo has not produced any programming yet.

Think is not tied to Ms. Duvall's Platypus Productions, which produces "Faerie Tale" and another children's series, "Shelley Duvall's Tall Tales and Legends." Reruns of both those programs have moved off cable for runs in syndication. #

## Big 3 facing high costs in make-goods

By DIANE MERMIGAS

Senior reporter

The networks may have to provide \$70 million or more in additional make-good time to advertisers this season because of people-meter ratings shortfalls.

Any make-good time not originally anticipated by the networks in their upfront sales will come directly out of profits.

"There is no doubt the people-meter situation is going to hurt all of us financially this year. But just how much, no one knows yet," said one high-level network executive, who asked not to be identified.

"Any estimate is a rough guess at best. This season especially, makegoods and their financial impact on the networks is a very complicated matter."

However, high-level executives at all three networks said the negotiating of double-digit price increases, special terms with advertisers and conservative guarantees in the upfront market have helped to offset some of the lower-than-expected people-meter results.

One high-level Capital Cities/ABC executive who asked not to be identified said that ABC's make-good situation so far this season "generally is within an acceptable margin of error. But that's because we sold differently in the upfront."

Added a high-level CBS executive, "The shortfall in prime time so far has not been unmanageable."

Each of the networks is estimated to have set aside about 10 percent of its total inventory for make-goods—about twice the usual amount—to compensate for the people-meter differential in the 1987-88 season.

Industry sources estimate that collectively, the networks' initial make-good inventory for all dayparts this season was worth at least \$350 million. Some estimates were as high as \$400 million.

"That doesn't seem like much when one considers that the total network marketplace is worth about \$8 billion," said one network executive who requested anonymity.

"But in light of heavy audience erosion and increased competition from other media, CBS and ABC especially cannot afford to lose a single dime."

The networks are providing some of the additional make-good time from unused inventory in dayparts that have outperformed their expectations.

"In some instances, we're all close to what we projected and even outperforming our estimates," said one network sales executive. For instance, CBS is making a better showing than it anticipated in daytime and news.

But most of the additional make-goods the networks owe are coming out of scatter market time that would otherwise be sold for premium prices in an election and Olympics year when last-minute availabilities are particularly scarce.

NBC is expected to be hurt the least since it has the most first- and second-quarter scatter inventory available.

In fact, NBC may be able to raise its prices if the scatter market further tightens because CBS and ABC are applying more of their availabilities to unanticipated make-goods, network executives said.

More importantly, NBC says that in some instances its programs

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## Ed Vane resigns at Group W

By RICHARD MAHLER

Los Angeles bureau chief

LOS ANGELES—Ed Vane, the head of Westinghouse Broadcasting's syndication division since 1979, announced last week he is leaving the company "for personal reasons."

Mr. Vane, the president and chief executive officer of Group W Productions, will continue to oversee the syndicator's operations until a successor is named.

Well-placed Group W sources said the surprise departure was not prompted by the company, but linked instead to the ill health of the executive's wife, Claire.

Mr. Vane was unavailable for comment last week.

In a prepared statement, he said, "My years with Group W have been rewarding in every sense. I regret that personal considerations dictate my leaving in the near future."

Burton Staniar, Westinghouse Broadcasting's chairman and chief executive officer, told ELECTRONIC MEDIA that Mr. Vane was not pressured in any way to depart.

"The truth is, it was Ed's decision," he said. "We're sorry to see him go. We've had more success stories under him than anything on the other side."

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ED VANE

Departure linked to wife's ill health

## Alan Bennett leaves LBS

By MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
and RICHARD MAHLER

ELECTRONIC MEDIA staff

NEW YORK—Alan Bennett resigned last week as president of marketing and distribution at LBS Communications to become the new president and chief executive officer of Blair Entertainment.

Shortly after the announcement, Richard Coveny, who had been president of Blair Entertainment, resigned rather than accept an offer to become head of a new service department at Blair Entertainment's parent company, John Blair Communications.

"It's nice that they made the offer, but I'm going to look for something else in the industry," said Mr. Coveny, who founded Blair Entertainment six years ago and who recently celebrated his 25th anniversary with John Blair Communications.

Meanwhile, Guy Mazzeo, Blair Entertainment's executive vice president of business affairs, acquisitions and international sales, also resigned to pursue other interests.

James Rosenfield, chairman and chief executive officer of John Blair Communications, said Mr. Bennett's

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ALAN BENNETT

New Blair Entertainment president

# Affiliates oppose CBS satellite plans

By DIANE MERMIGAS  
Senior reporter

The growing threat to traditional network and affiliate relations will be at issue again this week as CBS station officials consider how to reach homes that cannot receive normal broadcast signals.

In an annual closed-door meeting in Hawaii, members of the CBS affiliate board will attempt to devise a way to serve the 2 percent of Americans who are in the nation's so-called "white spaces," the mountainous or remote areas that aren't reached by network TV signals.

The CBS affiliates say they do not want their network to sign a contract with an outside company to relay the signal to the white-space regions because it would encroach on their exclusive contracted alliance with the network.

NBC recently agreed to allow Netlink to relay its network signal to those unserved areas that have no other way of gaining access to network programming. ABC is said to be considering a similar arrangement.

Affiliates at all three networks say they fear that any reliance on outside satellite companies eventually could result in the networks completely bypassing their affiliated stations.

Phil Jones, CBS affiliate chairman, said members of his board are united in their objection to the network using an outside company to relay its signal.

Also, NBC affiliate officials said that not all NBC station managers are comfortable with the network's Netlink arrangement.

ABC's affiliates, in regional meetings last week, expressed opposition to such a plan for fear that it was a first step in circumventing traditional network-affiliate ties, ABC affiliate officials said.

"The network has been working closely with us, and there won't be a deal until we are satisfied with all the conditions," said one ABC affiliate official.

"Our board is quite uncomfortable with any arrangement that would be made with any such company."

One leading broadcast executive, who asked not to be identified, said the issue of servicing white-space regions is closely tied to other sensitive matters, such as how the networks will embrace high-definition TV without treading on their traditional ties with affiliates.

"In the back of their minds, all three networks are contemplating how they will someday transmit their programs for high-definition broadcast via satellite. If they can do that, why would they need affiliates?" the executive said.

The perceived threat to the network-affili-

ate relationship, some affiliate officials explain, has been enhanced by the networks' recent moves to reduce cash compensation payments to stations as an incentive to clear network programming.

At the same time, there has been an increase in affiliate pre-emption of the networks' regularly scheduled programming.

Each of the networks spends between \$120 million and \$180 million annually on cash compensation to affiliates and about \$200 million each on all affiliate-related business.

HDTV, and stations' concerns about its implications on the network-affiliate relationship, have been on the agendas of the closed affiliate board meetings of all three networks this winter. It will be discussed in detail by CBS and affiliate executives this week.

Network executives generally argue that agreements with companies such as Netlink (Continued on Page 57)

## Taft installs new staff in Philly

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

Dudley Taft, the new owner of independent WPHL-TV in Philadelphia, has replaced the station's managers with former executives of WTAF-TV, the Philadelphia station that he sold last April.

Six senior executives of WPHL were fired Dec. 29, the day Mr. Taft acquired the station from Providence Journal Co., of Providence, R.I., according to Randy Smith, the new executive vice president and general manager of WPHL.

Mr. Smith's new management team began working at WPHL on Dec. 30, he said.

Mr. Smith, who is now a part owner of WPHL, left WTAF last July when he resigned as general manager to go into business with Mr. Taft.

For his new management team at WPHL, Mr. Smith recruited members of his former staff at WTAF, all of whom had left the station at different times last year after it was purchased by TVX Broadcast Group of Virginia Beach, Va.

The new WPHL staff includes Bruce Wietlisbach, vice president of finance; Steve Mosko, vice president and sales manager; Jan Dickler, general sales manager; Karen Corbin, programming and marketing manager; and David Smith, chief engineer.

The executives fired by WPHL's new owners are Gene McCurdy, president and general manager; Zvi Shoubin, station manager; Gordon French, sales director; Robert DiMattina, finance director; Robin Blake, creative director; and Walt Bundy, chief engineer.

WTAF and WPHL are two of Philadelphia's three independent TV stations.

The city's independent outlets are all UHF stations.

Mr. Taft, who had been the principal stockholder in Cincinnati-based Taft Broadcasting, left that company last fall after it was taken over by new owners and renamed Great American Broadcasting Co.

He has retained the rights to use the Taft Broadcasting name and is building a group of TV stations. Besides WPHL, he bought WGHP-TV in Greensboro, N.C., last October.

Meanwhile, according to press reports, TVX has received a one-month extension to repay \$200 million loaned by Salomon Brothers for TVX's purchase of WTAF and four other Taft stations.

The reports, based on a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, said the payment was due Dec. 31, but Salomon has given the company a new deadline of Feb. 1. #



"Out of This World," starring Donna Pescow, is one of the sitcoms that KTLA is picking up from the NBC stations for its own checkerboard.

## Checkerboard lives in L.A., but is killed in Las Vegas

By RICHARD MAHLER  
and MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
ELECTRONIC MEDIA staff

LOS ANGELES—Tribune-owned independent KTLA-TV here is defying an industry trend by renewing its prime-access checkerboard of first-run sitcoms for the 1988-89 season.

But KVVU-TV, an independent in Las Vegas, Nevada, last week announced that it had replaced its 7 p.m. sitcom checkerboard with "M\*A\*S\*H" reruns.

At KTLA, Steve Bell, senior vice president and general manager, said, "We've always believed that the checkerboard programming concept has merit if there were five strong shows to schedule."

The checkerboard strategy, in which a different show is aired in the same time slot each weekday, backfired last fall on the seven NBC owned-and-operated stations, as well as CBS-owned WCAU-TV in Philadelphia. The stations' slate of five sitcoms got off to a good start, then slipped in the ratings.

WCAU has already dumped its checkerboard, and the NBC outlets will replace their slate with LBS Communications' new "Family Feud" this fall.

At KVVU, General Manager Rusty Durante said that none of the five sitcoms on the station's slate were performing as well as their lead-in or lead-out programs.

The station's Monday-through-Friday lineup included "Marblehead Manor," "She's the Sheriff," "The Dom Deluise Show," "Out of This World" and "We Got It Made."

Mr. Durante said his decision was also influenced by the lack of new first-run sitcoms that could be used as possible replacements. That had also been a factor in the decision by the NBC stations.

KVVU was one of the first TV stations to try the checkerboard experiment. Three years ago the station ran its first checkerboard in early fringe, then two years ago it added a second checkerboard at 7 p.m.

But last year KVVU dropped the early fringe checkerboard and has been running just the one at 7 p.m.

In commenting upon KTLA's decision to stick with the checkerboard, Mr. Durante said he thought the station would have a tough time.

"If the NBC owned-and-operated stations had stuck with the checkerboard, producers would have been more inclined to produce more first-

(Continued on Page 58)

## L.A. to get 3rd regional cable outlet

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

The Los Angeles area is about to receive its third regional cable TV network.

A new 24-hour movie and sports channel—still untitled but slated for an April launch—will join all-sports Prime Ticket and the Z Channel movie service in the race for viewers in the Los Angeles area.

The new service is backed by American Cablesystems Corp., a large multiple cable system operator, and Spectacor, whose executive vice president, Joseph Cohen, is an old pro at starting successful cable networks.

Mr. Cohen is credited with starting up New York's Madison Square Garden Network, and he also cofounded the USA Network.

The new service already is buoyed by exclusive contracts to televise 35 Los Angeles Dodgers and 35 California Angels home baseball games.

Previously, Dodger games were televised on Dodgervision, a Los Angeles-area service owned by the Dodgers and Fox Broadcasting. But it came to an end last fall.

Merritt Willey, the Dodgers' vice president of marketing, said Fox Broadcasting, which gained control of Dodgervision when it purchased Metromedia's TV stations, was more interested in starting a fourth network than putting energy into the regional service.

Despite the baseball telecasts, John Mansell, a senior analyst at Paul Kagan Associates, has his doubts as to whether the new service will succeed.

"I think they'll have rough sledding, in terms of getting affiliates," he says.

Terry Soley, vice president of development for American Cablesystems of California, counts channel capacity as one of the new network's top challenges.

Beverly, Mass.-based American Cablesystems, which is scheduled to merge with Continental Cablevision in February, has about 150,000 subscribers in the Los Angeles region. It also will market the service to all area systems, which serve more than 2 million basic subscribers.

Mr. Soley said plans call for a mix of 25 percent sports and 75 percent movies during prime time. No agreements with movie distributors have emerged yet.

The network will be a premium service, but the owners have yet to decide whether to add commercials.

Spectacor's other ventures include ownership of the Philadelphia Flyers, WIP-AM in Philadelphia and Hughes Television Network.

The Philadelphia-based company also launched Prism, a Philadelphia-area regional network. #

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Perfect for kids, teens and young adults... it's the series that'll make your weekends fly!

**MY  
SECRET  
IDENTITY**

Produced by Sunrise Films Ltd. in association with Scholastic Productions Inc. and the CTV Television Network Ltd.

Distributed by

**MCA TV**

**SEE IT. THERE'S NOTHING  
ELSE LIKE IT!**

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# News, talk AM stations score in ratings

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

Mass-appeal news and talk AM stations continue to be top-rated in some of the nation's biggest radio markets.

In fall ratings reports released last week by Arbitron Ratings Co. and Birch Research Corp., the stations that continue to challenge the notion that AM radio is dying include KGO-AM in San Francisco, KDKA-AM in Pittsburgh and KMOX-AM

in St. Louis.

The following are ratings highlights for seven major markets. Results for New York, Los Angeles and Chicago were released earlier (ELECTRONIC MEDIA, Jan. 11).

The figures, provided by both Arbitron and Birch, represent average audience shares for listeners 12 and older tuning in from 6 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Sunday.

## San Francisco

NBC's adult contemporary KNBR-AM, which is for sale, slid to

a 3.1 Arbitron share from a 5.2 in the summer report.

Arbitron said the market's top station was Capital Cities/ABC's mass-appeal KGO-AM, which had a share decrease to 8.0 in the fall book from 8.7 last summer.

Among the gainers, Inner City Broadcasting's jazz station, KBLX-FM, improved its Arbitron share to 2.8 from 2.0 in the summer report.

Brown Broadcasting's adult contemporary KKSF-FM, which dropped its KLOK call letters last

March, rebounded to a 2.7 Arbitron share in the latest report, up from 1.6 last summer.

Birch said KNBR declined to a 3.4 share from 4.3 in the summer book, while KGO improved in the Birch book to an 8.7 fall share, up from 7.4.

## Philadelphia

Malrite Communications Group's WEGX-FM, which had a 1.7 share in fall 1986 when it carried the call letters WTRK-FM, had a 4.8 Arbitron share in the fall 1987 report.

Metropolitan Broadcasting's Contemporary Hit Radio WMMR-FM continued to lead the market, despite special notations from Arbitron as punishment for ratings bias due to its use of a direct-mail campaign. WMMR had an 8.1 fall share, the same share it had in the summer report.

Philadelphia's country station—Beasley Broadcasting's WXTU-FM—skidded to a 3.5 fall Arbitron share from a 4.6 last summer.

On the Birch scoreboard, WEGX had a 5.8 fall share, up from 4.8 last summer. Birch also named WMMR No. 1 in Philadelphia with a 10.2 share, a decrease from 13.7.

## Detroit

Cap Cities/ABC's mass-appeal WJR-AM continued as Detroit's top-rated station in Arbitron's fall report, despite falling to a 10.8 share from 13.7 last summer.

Booth American Co.'s WJLB-FM, which airs contemporary hits, jazz and oldies, ranked second in Detroit with an 8.6 Arbitron share, an improvement from 7.8.

Also improving in the Motor City was WJOI-FM, Federal Broadcasting's easy-listening outlet. WJOI had a 6.2 fall Arbitron share, up from 5.4 in last summer's book.

WJLB was top-rated in the Birch report with an 11.7 fall share, down from 12.2. Birch said WJR was the second-highest-rated station in Detroit with a 10.5 share, down slightly from 10.7.

## Boston

CBS's WODS-FM, which adopted its new name and a new oldies format last October, improved its Arbitron share to 2.9 in the fall report from 1.5 last summer.

The station formerly programmed CBS's "quality rock" format under the call letters WMRQ.

WXKS-FM, Pyramid Broadcasting's CHR station, declined in the fall Arbitron report to 7.0 from 8.1 last summer.

RKO General's WROR-FM also declined. Arbitron gave the adult contemporary station a 3.2 fall share, down from 4.2 in the summer book, though Birch gave WROR a 3.6 fall share, a slight improvement from 3.4 in the summer book.

Arbitron said Infinity Broadcasting's album rock WBCN-FM was Boston's top-rated station with a 7.4 share, up from 7.3.

WODS fared well in the Birch report too, where its share improved to 2.3 in the fall survey from 0.9 in the summer report.

WXKS received a 10.4 share in the fall Birch book, up from 9.9 in the summer survey.

## Washington

NBC's WKYS-FM, the urban contemporary station that suffered a severe loss of listeners in last summer's Arbitron survey, rebounded somewhat in the fall report.

WKYS, which is for sale, improved its Arbitron share to 6.5 in the latest book, up from 5.1 last summer.

Another urban contemporary station in Washington, United Broadcasting's WDJY-FM, skidded in the fall Arbitron report to 3.6 from 5.7 in last summer's survey.

The biggest gainer in the fall Arbitron book was country-programmed WMZQ-FM, which had a 7.1 fall share, up from 5.2 last summer.

Greater Media's easy-listening WGAY-FM was top-rated by Arbitron with a 7.4 share, up from 6.4. But Birch gave WGAY a 3.7 share, a decline from the 4.6 share the station received in Birch's summer report.

In the Birch report, WKYS was Washington's top-rated station with a 9.7 fall share, up from 9.5.

## Pittsburgh

Great American Broadcasting's  
(Continued on Page 44)

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No one sells Spot Television better than Petry salespeople. Our specially designed and intensive training program shapes and molds sales professionals who set the standard for the industry. Their desire to be at the top of the field... to finish first... makes them Spot TV's best sellers. After all, selling Spot Television is our only business.

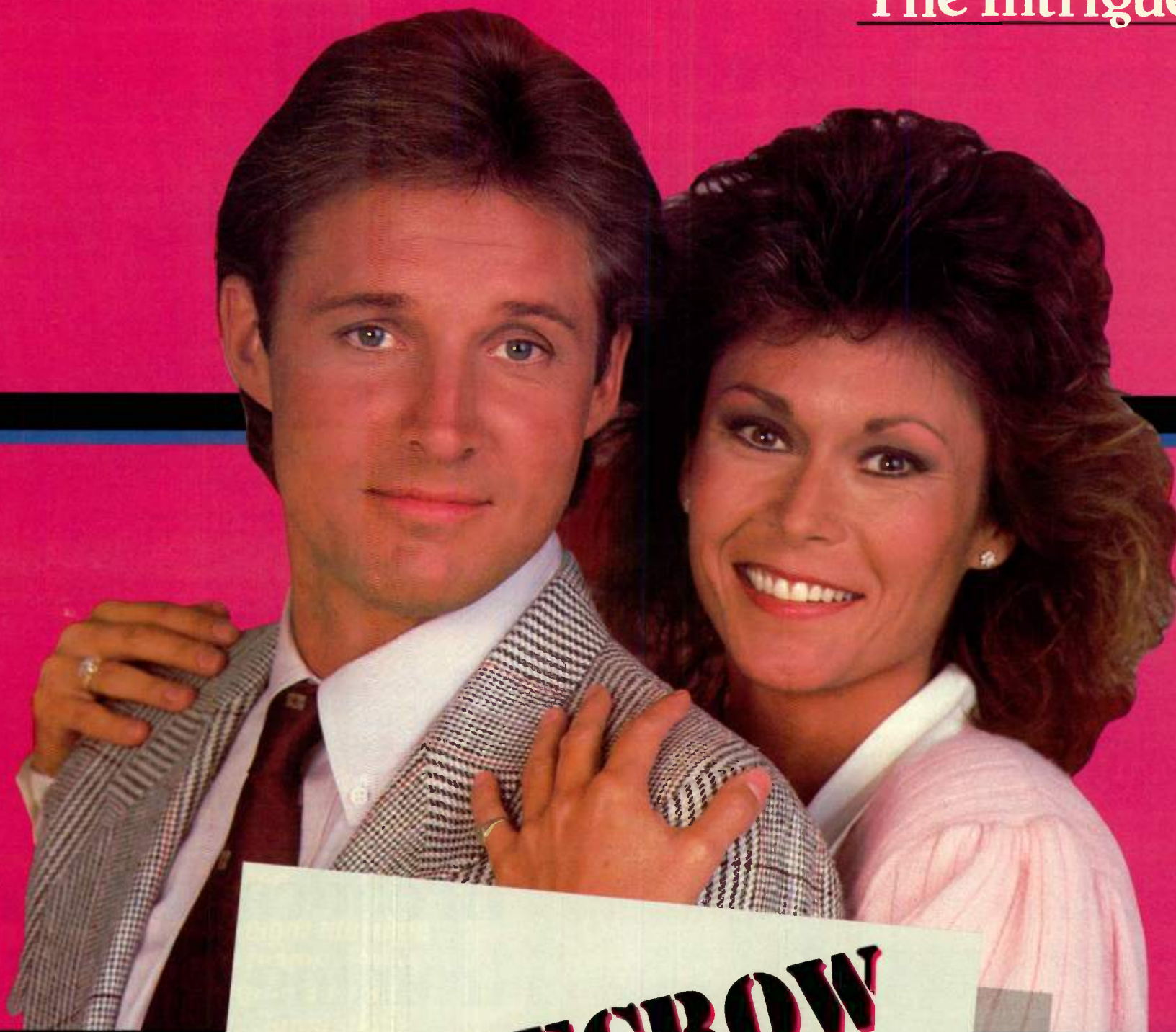
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# N NETWORK



Who's The Boss?  
Juarez  
The Real  
Ghostbusters



Designing Women  
Trial & Error  
Houston Knights  
The Young &  
The Restless



227  
The Facts Of Life  
My Two Dads  
Days Of Our Lives



Married...With  
Children  
Werewolf  
Women In Prison



Married...With Children



Who's The Boss?



Designing Women



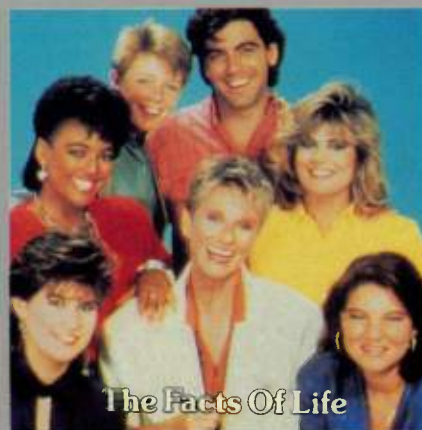
My Two Dads



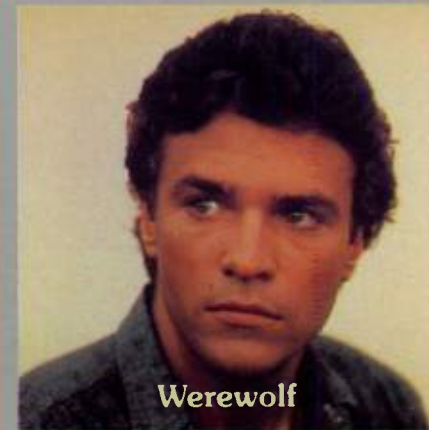
227



Houston Knights



The Facts Of Life



Werewolf



# OFF-NETWORK **C**OMEDY



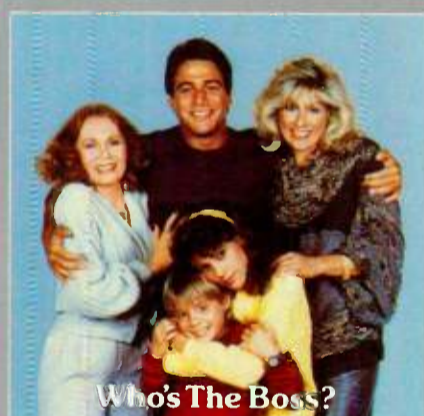
Barney Miller



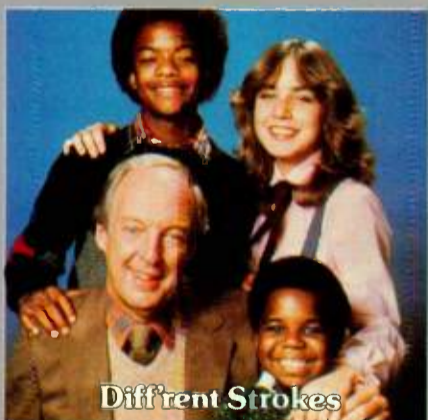
Sanford & Son



The Jeffersons



Who's The Boss?



Diff'rent Strokes



Silver Spoons



Good Times



Punky Brewster

- Archie Bunker's Place
- Barney Miller
- Benson
- Carson's Comedy Classics
- Carter Country
- Diff'rent Strokes
- The Facts Of Life
- Fish
- Good Times
- The Jeffersons
- Maude
- One Day At A Time
- Punky Brewster
- Sanford & Son
- Silver Spoons
- Soap
- Square Pegs
- The Three Stooges
- Who's The Boss?



# OFF-NETWORK **D**RAMA

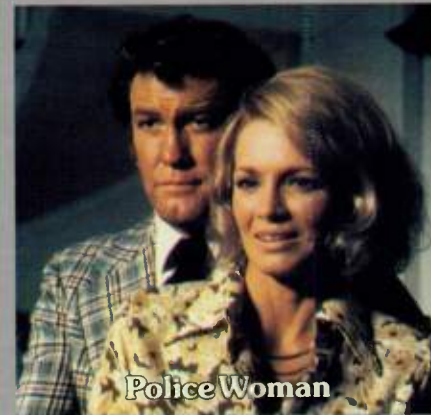
Charlie's Angels  
 Fantasy Island  
 Hart To Hart  
 Police Story  
 Police Woman  
 S.W.A.T.  
 Starsky & Hutch  
 T.J. Hooker



S.W.A.T.



Hart To Hart



Police Woman



Charlie's Angels



T.J. Hooker



Starsky & Hutch



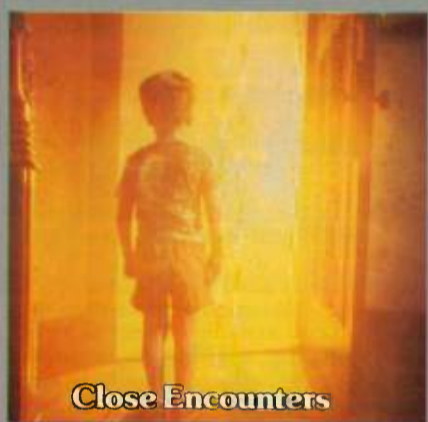
POLICE STORY

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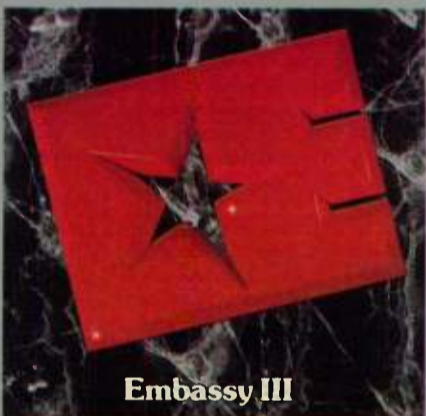


Fantasy Island

# M & A MOVIES ANIMATION



Close Encounters

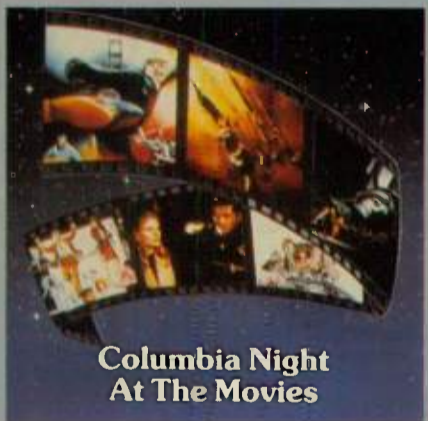


Embassy III



The Real Ghostbusters

- Columbia Night At The Movies
- Columbia Gems
- Columbia Gems II
- Entertainer Of The Year
- Embassy II
- Embassy III
- TV 20
- Volume IV
- Volume V
- Volume VI
- The Real Ghostbusters



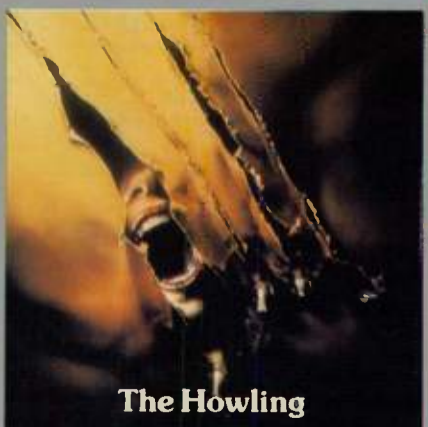
Columbia Night At The Movies



Karate Kid



Stir Crazy



The Howling



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# Wheel of Fortune No. 1 in 188 ma

No. 1 again this season.

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## WHEEL OF FORTUNE

A firm go for the  
1990-1991 and 1991-1992 seasons.

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**KINGWORLD**

Source: Nov '87 Nielsen

TM

# me. rkets.



# Rich: 'My aim in life is to get films made'

(Continued from Page 27)

My deficits are deficits that I can afford, because generally they are very well-covered and I don't go beyond that.

**EM:** How do you feel about the state of network license fees?

**Mr. Rich:** I think that the networks have gotten together on this, because it seems that when you get license fees from them they are always within one or two dollars of each other.

I wouldn't accuse them of collusion, but it's certainly coincidental.

I'm not in business to furnish network programming at a loss. I'm a public company and they make more money than we do. I'm not furnishing programs so that I go broke, never have and never will.

**EM:** Some executives at other studios maintain that, too often, barter shows are developed for first-run on the basis of a good deal or deal memo, even though there's no indication that audiences want it. Do you agree with that?

**Mr. Rich:** No. I don't develop anything until we've talked to all of our sales force and done an important analysis of what's needed and looked at the time periods and so forth.

Then we sit down with our creative force and try to determine how we can fill those spots or at least come into the market and not be a 'me too.'

Sometimes we try to update an old standard with some new elements. We're looking at 'Highway Patrol,' for example.

**EM:** Are you interested in buying stations?

**Mr. Rich:** Somewhere down the road we'll be going into new and different areas of the business, and TV station ownership is something we're going to look at.

We're going to be a communications company. I think in the very near future we'll be looking at things to acquire.

**EM:** Might that include other production or distribution companies?

**Mr. Rich:** It very easily could, yes.

**EM:** Is barter an area you want to get into?

**Mr. Rich:** No, I don't think so. Maybe we'll do our own barter some day, but we'd have to get other people's business as well as our own.

I don't think this is the time to do it, but we may decide to set up our own barter company in the future. You never say never in this business.

**EM:** Your first-run sitcom, 'We've Got It Made,' is fairly low-rated but is attracting strong male demographics. In network programming, a show with good demographics can be kept on the schedule because of advertiser demand. Do you think we've reached that point in first-run syndication?

**Mr. Rich:** Yes, I think so, very definitively.

The buyers look at demographics equally with first-run, and I hope that will be the case with this show.

**EM:** How much of your own taste is reflected in the programming you decide to go ahead with?

**Mr. Rich:** I think everything goes by my own tastes, and the same way with movies. It's gotta be something I want to do and I want to see.

**EM:** What about off-network syndication and the so-called 'death' of hour-long shows?

**Mr. Rich:** I think it's going to come back. I think everything comes back.

We're in a down cycle. There's a tremendous amount of product out there sitting on shelves. 'Cosby' took a lot of money out of the market.

When all of that settles down, you'll see those shows coming back. I really wouldn't stop making an hour show tomorrow.

**EM:** What happens in the meantime?

**Mr. Rich:** I'm not worried about the down market. There are too many other hurdles to get a show on the air, to get it renewed and all of those things.

I don't think about the back-end five years away because I may never get there.

I try to keep my eye on making those shows as inexpensively and as successfully as possible. I've never had trouble getting them on the air—the biggest problem is keeping them on the air.

I'll make all the one-hour shows (the networks) want me to make if they'll pay for them. I'm not going to get killed making them, though.

I have never, in all my years in the business, thought about the future syndication of a network show five or 10 years down the line, because I just don't know what the business is going to be like then.

I do know one thing, however. Film is gold. I want as much film as I can, because I'll sell the film and get all my money back eventually, even if it's from Alaska and Iceland. I'll make as much of that as I possibly can.

**EM:** What about home video? Is home video gold?

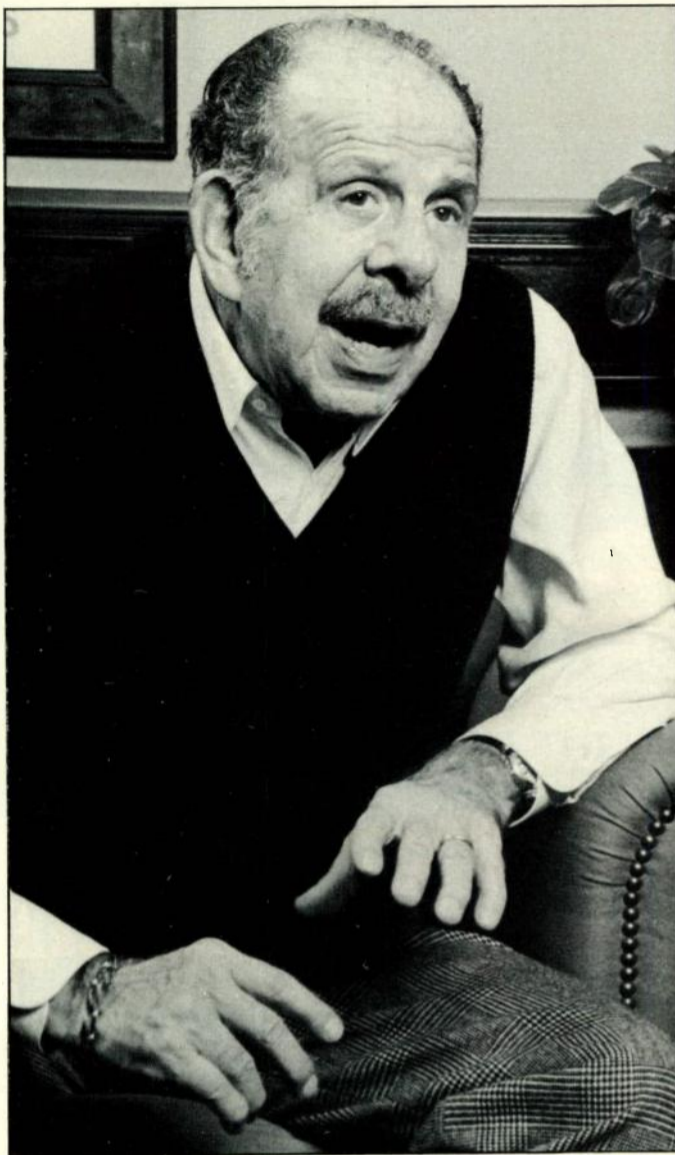


Photo by Tim Petros

**Mr. Rich:** Yes. We're about the third- or fourth-largest home video company in the world.

Sales of movies of the week overseas on home video just astound me. We put the network movie based on 'The Dirty Dozen' on cassette and we made over \$1 million.

It's still a theatrical market, but you can always package and merchandise movies on home video.

It's basically an 'A' movie list business, but it's also a merchandising and marketing business. We did 'The Best of MGM' and gave it free to video retailers to sell for \$9.95. We'll sell 300,000 of them.

You've got to be very smart at selling movies to TV stations today, because they're up to their asses in movies right now. But home video is something else altogether.

**EM:** How does home video compare to the syndication business right now?

**Mr. Rich:** It's tough out there, and we're going through tough times (in syndication) domestically.

Business is not good, the managers want profits and they are loaded with product that has been sold over a period of years.

There isn't a tremendous amount of money in the market, and there isn't much turnover of existing product out there.

**EM:** What percentage of your revenue is from home video?

**Mr. Rich:** About 25 percent to 30 percent. We still have to give a certain number of titles to CBS/Fox Home Video. Normally 50 percent would be about right.

**EM:** That represents a tremendous change in the business, doesn't it?

**Mr. Rich:** Years ago, we looked at sales of movies to networks as one of the key ancillary markets. Today we don't even put a single dollar down (on our projections).

They make a movie of the week for \$2.5 million to \$3 million and the thing gets a 30 or 32 share. NBC paid \$7 million recently for a second run of a Spielberg movie and only got a 22 share. What do they need theatrical movies for?

The figure for sale to networks has been replaced by the figure for sale to videocassette.

**EM:** Is that a comparable figure?

**Mr. Rich:** It varies. Sometimes it's higher, sometimes it's lower.

**EM:** Tell us what your management structure is at MGM/UA. How closely do you work with Kirk Kerkorian,

your principal shareholder?

**Mr. Rich:** I see him maybe once or twice a week.

**EM:** What kinds of things do you discuss?

**Mr. Rich:** I run the business. I just tell him what's going on.

**EM:** And what about the heads of the divisions?

**Mr. Rich:** I meet with them on a weekly basis or sometimes even more. I'm a hands-on manager. My style is to be aware of everything that I possible can.

I like to get more rather than less, I'm very strange that way. I'm in here by 8:30 a.m. and I leave by about 7 p.m.

**EM:** You must like what you do.

**Mr. Rich:** Yes, I love what I do.

**EM:** You meet with Wall Street analysts. What are you telling them after Black Monday?

**Mr. Rich:** I tell them the truth, that fiscal 1987 is going to be a loss for us, that 1988 is going to be a much better year.

Our fiscal year ends Aug. 31. I will never predict earnings for a quarter and I never have done that.

Here's a company that took 17 movies, at an average of \$10 million a movie, plus prints and ads and our overhead during 19 months and nothing came in. We were a brand-new company. We spent \$300 million in acquiring MGM at the same time.

Our first picture came out in June, then the James Bond picture in July. But I still don't have the foreign Bond money yet, and it's going to be the biggest Bond picture yet. It's just opening in Japan and Australia.

**EM:** You're not interested in predicting when the company will go into the black?

**Mr. Rich:** I know it will go into the black, and I know that 1988 will be a much better year.

**EM:** What are areas of future expansion for the company?

**Mr. Rich:** We're setting up a merchandising operation, capitalizing on our MGM 'Leo the Lion' logo, which is the second most well-known logo after Coca-Cola.

We have the Pink Panther, Rocky, James Bond and others. So we're in the midst of hiring somebody and setting up a very aggressive merchandising campaign.

**EM:** You spent a lot of time at Lorimar, and it now seems to really be a company that's suffering. How does that make you feel?

**Mr. Rich:** I'm disappointed. When I left the stock was \$31 a share and the company was debt free; then the stock dropped. I am the second-largest stockholder still.

**EM:** How many decisions in this industry are based on sheer gut instincts?

**Mr. Rich:** A great number are based on instincts. It is by the gut. You just say to yourself, 'Let's do it.'

I felt that 'Dallas' was going to be a hit. I just felt that if you took a daytime soap, which I had done, and did it in night time, jazzed it up and added better-looking women and better-looking sets, that the public would buy that.

**EM:** As long as we're on the subject, tell us what you think has happened to the prime-time serial?

**Mr. Rich:** There were just too many of them on the air. It's like everything else; the audience is very sophisticated and the good ones will stay, the bad ones will go away.

It goes back again to quality, and I think the public is more aware of quality than ever before.

You just can't underestimate the American public, they're bright and they're smart and they're sharp.

**EM:** Tell us how you're saving money overseas in the production of 'The Dirty Dozen' for Fox. I understand you have a 13-episode order shooting in Yugoslavia?

**Mr. Rich:** Yes. We will come into this company absolutely clean. The show will be paid for.

By what we get out of Yugoslavia, we are giving them (broadcast rights) to Yugoslavia.

For what we get out of Italy, we are giving (Italy) rights to the show there.

**EM:** Are you saying that the cost savings you realize on the production overseas will allow you to break even on the license fee?

**Mr. Rich:** That's right.

**EM:** And everything else is gravy?

**Mr. Rich:** Yes, it's a great deal. You're going to see a lot more co-productions, because we are going to have to find ways to make shows less expensive.

We have all of our foreign people out looking for co-production deals. We are very interested in them.

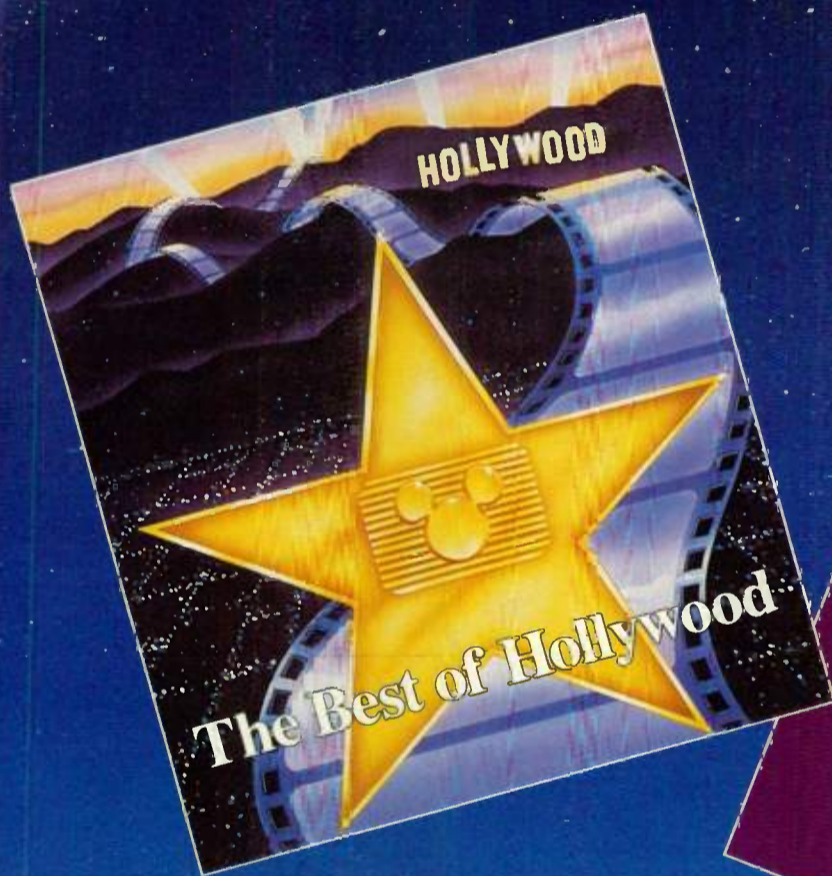
My basic aim in life is to get films made.

Film, film, film.

I can't say it often enough, because every piece of film is gold.

It's going to be shown somewhere, some time, and you're going to get money for it. #

# Disney Night Time



The Disney Channel brings unique television programming especially for adults on DISNEY NIGHT TIME. Beginning every night at 9PM (ET/PT), adults can enjoy a collection of unique, high quality programs and movies.

## The Best of Hollywood.

Every Monday night at 9PM, DISNEY NIGHT TIME presents THE BEST OF HOLLYWOOD hosted by Gene Kelly. It features classic movie film festivals

such as musicals, epics, as well as special salutes to Henry Fonda, Spencer Tracy, and several of the cinema's most famous leading ladies.

## Sunday Night Showcase.

Every Sunday evenings at 9PM, DISNEY NIGHT TIME presents SUNDAY NIGHT SHOWCASE, a collection of unique specials, documentaries, mysteries and high quality series such as "A Prairie Home Companion" with Garrison Keillor.



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**The George Foster Peabody Award.**

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**Two United Press International Awards including Best Sports Reporting.**

**The National Association of Sportswriters and Sportscasters Award.**

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World Radio History

# THE TWILIGHT

# ZONE

New once-a-week episodes available for Fall '88.  
94 half-hours available Fall '89.

A CBS Broadcast International Production  
in association with London Films and Atlantis Films  
Distributed by



MGM/UA TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.

World Radio History



"The Freihofer Breadtime Stories Show," with host Bill Carpenter (r.), was one of the locally produced shows on WRGB-TV, Schenectady, N.Y., in the 1950s.

# Pioneering TV station looks back on 60 years

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—It was long before the Golden Age of Television when WRGB-TV in Schenectady, N.Y., hit the airwaves with the country's first live remote news broadcast.

It was, in fact, August 1928—eight months after the station carried the nation's first experimental television broadcast—when an audience of four households witnessed New York Gov. Al Smith's acceptance of the Democratic presidential nomination in nearby Albany.

WRGB followed that milestone the next month with "The Queen's Messenger," a playlet that was the first live dramatic TV presentation in the United States. But then, almost anything that came across the three-inch screens in use at that time was a piece of broadcast history.

Today, WRGB, a CBS affiliate, is celebrating its 60th anniversary and a past that is unlike any other TV station in the country.

Schenectady became the scene for much of the industry's early legacy because General Electric maintained its research and development center in the area, with Dr. E.F.W. Alexanderson directing the initial experiments in TV broadcasting.

When WRGB became one of the first TV stations to be licensed by the Federal Communications Commission in 1939, it was still on the cutting edge of what was a spontaneous—and often unpredictable—business. (The station was originally licensed as W2XB, then it became WRGB when it got its first commercial license in 1942.)

Charles King, the station's retired vice president of operations, vividly remembers those early, chaotic days of live TV production. "Sets fell down, and there would be all kinds of horrendous noise," he recalls. "We even forgot a program one time. We got to Friday night and there was a musical program we planned that we realized we forgot to do."

During one news broadcast, a lead-in for a story about pigs inadvertently became the introduction for a piece of footage showing a local politician.

In those days, program preparation meant constructing sets and spending days in rehearsal before airing the shows live. At first, the station was on the air three nights a week for 1½ hours, and the shows were as short as 15 minutes, Mr. King says.

It was a time for local stars to shine, like the young performers who appeared regularly on WRGB's weekly "Teenage Barn" variety show, featuring 10 or 11 acts in 30 minutes.

(Continued on Page 54)

## CALENDAR

### January

Jan. 18-20, **National technical seminar** sponsored by the Florida chapter of the Society of Cable Television Engineers, Hyatt Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Information: Richard Kirm, 813-924-8541.

Jan. 19, **How to Find Investors for Your Entertainment Project** seminar sponsored by the Chicago chapter of the Recording Academy, Loop College, Chicago. Information: Jay Ross, 312-372-1575.

Jan. 19-April 23, **Winter video workshops and seminars**, The Center for New Television, Chicago. Information: Madonna Gauding, 312-427-5446.

Jan. 20-March 1, **New York World Television Festival** presented by the Museum of Broadcasting, Museum of Broadcasting, New York. Information: Letty Aronson, 212-752-4690, ext. 33.

Jan. 20, **Annual Women in Cable Awards Event** sponsored by the Chicago chapter of Women in Cable, Clubland, Chicago. Information: John Hartinger, 312-577-1818.

Jan. 21, **An Introduction to Community Access Television** orientation session sponsored by the Chicago Access Corp., Chicago Access Corp. Center, Chicago. Information: Jose Andrade, 312-738-1400.

Jan. 22, **Ninth annual ACE Awards—non-televized presentation**, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Susan Detwiler, 202-775-3611.

Jan. 23-26, **Team Radio '88: The New Ballgame**, the Radio Advertising Bureau managing sales conference featuring Kelsey Tyson, co-author of "One Minute Manager," and Herb Cohen, author of "You Can Negotiate Anything," as guest speakers, Hyatt Regency, Atlanta. Information: Wayne Cornils, 212-254-4800.

Jan. 24-25, **California Broadcasters Association Fair Share managers' conference**, Palm Springs Plaza Hotel, Palm Springs, Calif. Information: Vic Biondi, 916-444-2237.

Jan. 24, **Ninth annual ACE Awards—televized presentation**, Wiltern Theater, Los Angeles. Information: Susan Detwiler, 202-775-3611.

Jan. 25-29, **MIDEM International Record, Music Publishing and Video Music Market**, Palais de Festival, Cannes, France. Information: Barney Bernhard, 212-967-7600.

Jan. 26, **Campaign '88 and the Media**, national conference sponsored by the Gannett Center for Media Studies, Columbia University, New York. Information: Shirley Gazsi, 212-280-8392.

Jan. 26, **The Cable-Hollywood War: Is There Any End to It?**, a forum luncheon featuring guest speaker

James T. Mooney, NCTA president, sponsored by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Sheraton-Universal Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Murray Weissman, 818-763-2975.

Jan. 26, **Women at the Top**, discussion sponsored by Chicago Women in Film, State of Illinois Auditorium, Chicago. Information: Janet Russo, 312-951-5500.

Jan. 27, **An Introduction to Community Access Television** orientation session sponsored by the Chicago Access Corp., Chicago Access Corp. Center, Chicago. Information: Jose Andrade, 312-738-1400.

Jan. 27, **Hispanic Media: Influence and Opportunity**, a conference sponsored by The Media Institute, Chicago Hilton and Towers, Chicago. Information: Cindy Bisset, 202-298-7512.

Jan. 29-30, **Technology in Transition**, the 22nd annual television conference of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, Opryland Hotel, Nashville. Information: John Varrasi, 914-761-1100.

Jan. 30-Feb. 3, **National Religious Broadcasters 45th Annual Convention and Exposition**, Sheraton Washington and Omni Shoreham Hotels, Washington. Information: Faye Woodward, 201-428-5400.

### February

Feb. 1, **Minnesota Broadcasters Association sales seminar**, Sheraton Park Place Hotel, Minneapolis, Minn. Information: Laura Niemi, 612-926-8123.

Feb. 2-3, **Arizona Cable Television Association's 1988 annual meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Phoenix. Information: Susan Bitter Smith, 602-257-9338.

Feb. 4, **International Radio & Television Society Newsmaker luncheon**, Waldorf-Astoria hotel, New York. Information: Marilyn Ellis, 212-867-6650.

Feb. 6, **A Day in the Life of TV-Chicago**, sponsored by the Chicago Access Corp., Chicago Access Corp. Center, Chicago. Information: Sonia Arvanitis, 312-738-1400.

Feb. 8-10, **Cable Television Public Affairs Association Forum '88**, third annual membership meeting, Ritz-Carlton-Buckhead Hotel, Atlanta. Information: Megan Hookey, 202-775-3629.

Feb. 8-13, **International Film, Television and Video Market of Monte Carlo**, an international programming market, Loews Hotel, Monte Carlo. Information: Andre Asseo, 45-62-31-00.

Feb. 8-March 14, **Women in American Journalism: Today and in the Future**, series of public lectures and panels sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, University of California, Berkeley, Calif. Information: Suzanne Donovan, 415-642-4890.

Feb. 9, **Monthly meeting** of the Southern California Cable Association, Pacifica Hotel, Culver City, Calif. Information: Aisha Wofford, 213-684-7024.

Feb. 11, **Technical seminar** sponsored by the Central California Society of Cable Television Engineers, Picadilly Inn, Fresno, Calif. Information: Andrew Valles, 209-453-7791.

Feb. 11-13, **Country—America's Music**, the 19th annual Country Radio Seminar, Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. Information: Frank Mull, 615-327-4488.

Feb. 12, **Southern California Broadcasters Association Third Annual SUNNY Creative Radio Awards**, hosted by Phyllis Diller, Registry Hotel, Los Angeles. Information: Gordon Mason, 213-466-4481.

Feb. 13, **An Introduction to Community Access Television** orientation session sponsored by the Chicago Access Corp., Chicago Access Corp. Center, Chicago. Information: Jose Andrade, 312-738-1400.

Feb. 16-17, **Broadcast Credit Association credit seminar**, San Diego Marriott, San Diego. Information: Mary Ghiselli, 312-296-0200.#



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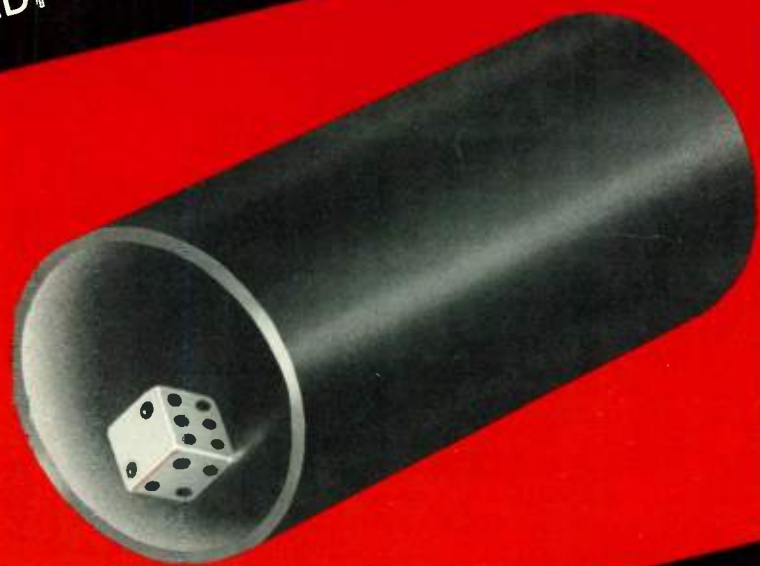
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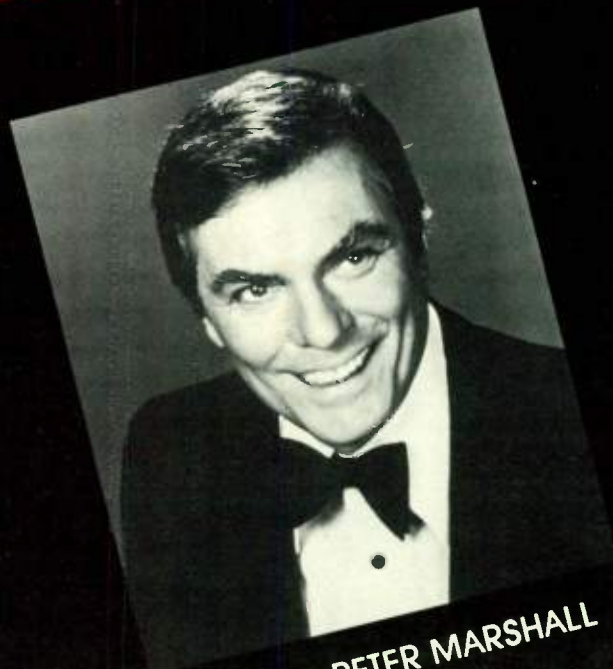


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# UPI undergoing more cutbacks

By **ROBERT HOMAN**  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—United Press International is instituting another round of cutbacks, but it denied a union official's claim that UPI plans to wipe out its broadcast services.

The union official, Dan Carmichael, secretary-treasurer for the Wire Service Guild, said that during recent contract negotiations company officials referred to the broadcast division as "the cancerous arm."

"The implication was that they need to lop it off to save the body," Mr. Carmichael said.

But UPI spokesman Christopher Smith said, "Mr. Carmichael makes it up as he goes along."

The spokesman said, "UPI continues to view the broadcasting marketplace as having significant growth potential."

The latest round of financial cutbacks will affect UPI's news coverage in 14 states.

But, in a statement last week, Al Rossiter Jr., UPI executive editor, said the cutbacks will not lessen "the competitive edge held by our top-notch broadcast" service.

UPI's broadcast operations consist of a wire service, the UPI radio network and a Spanish language

radio network.

Mr. Smith said the cutbacks in news coverage will be instituted in late January along with a new pricing structure allowing customers to purchase individual news services, rather than a single package of services.

The states slated for reductions in coverage are Arkansas, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming.

UPI will maintain bureaus in the 14 states, but only the "most important news and news of interest to other states" will be covered, Mr. Rossiter said.

The union's Mr. Carmichael said 104 of 850 union employees have been laid off from UPI since Nov. 1, and that the company is contemplating laying off as many as 300 altogether.

But Mr. Smith, the UPI spokesman, said only 33 full-time employees have been laid off since Nov. 1.

He called the prospect of 300 layoffs at the wire service "highly exaggerated."

Mr. Smith also called rumors that UPI owner Mario Vasquez Rana is trying to sell the wire service "total baloney." #

# Sony Corp. to enter VHS recorder market

By **RICHARD TEDESCO**  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Sony Corp. intends to market its first VHS videocassette recorders this year, with plans to introduce the units to the United States in late fall.

The decision represents a significant new direction in the market for Sony, which originally popularized use of the Betamax VCR system in 1975.

Since that time, the market in prerecorded videocassettes for sale and rental has shifted to the VHS format—a shift that has prompted Sony's new tack.

"We want to be a really complete video manufacturer," said Shin Takagi, president of Sony's consumer video products division in the United States. "The big area we cannot cover is the vast area of prerecorded cassettes."

The units will initially be manufactured by an outside vendor, then later built by Sony itself.

The VHS units, which will be introduced in Europe this spring, do not represent the prelude to Sony's departure from production of VCR equipment in the Beta format, according to Mr. Takagi.

He said his company would recommend continued use of the Beta hardware for time-shifting and home camcorder use. He also indicated that Sony had no plans to introduce VHS camcorders or super-VHS equipment at this time.

"Demand is there from the Beta owners," he said. "We're not going to replace anything with the VHS format."

Observers interpreted the company's move into VHS as an acknowledgment of that technology's ascendancy in the VCR market.

Sony places cumulative worldwide production of VCRs at 170 million units, with penetration in the United States and Europe approaching the present 50 percent level in Japan.

Sony sees the existing market, even among current VCR owners, as a rapidly expanding one.

Mr. Takagi offered no estimate of how many units Sony would attempt to introduce into the U.S. market by year's end. #

## BRIEFLY NOTED

### Broadcast TV

**ABC Entertainment President Brandon Stoddard** says the network is planning some extensive schedule changes after the February sweeps. "It could be as many as eight shows going on after the Olympics in trials," the programmer said at the consumer press tour in Los Angeles.

ABC has committed to seven one-hour episodes of the previously announced series "Supercarrier," a new action program from **Fries Entertainment**. The program will depict life on a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier. A 90-minute pilot has been completed and is scheduled to air this spring. ABC has also given a six-episode commitment to "The Wonder Years," a new half-hour series produced by Neal Marlens and his wife, Carol Black, in association with New World Television.

**PBS President Bruce Christensen** says that public TV viewership has increased by about 4.5 percent from a year ago. Speaking at the consumer press tour in Los Angeles, he also said that funding from public TV memberships in 1987 rose to \$230 million, up from \$200 million in 1986.

### Cable TV

San Antonio, Texas-based **Harte-Hanks Communications** has reached agreements to sell its two Florida cable TV systems to two other cable operators. Its Miami system, serving about 25,000 subscribers, will be sold to Rifkin & Associates, a Denver-based cable company, and Providence, R.I.-based Narragansett Capital. Liberty, N.Y.-based Cablevision Industries Corp. will buy Harte-Hanks' cable system in Okeechobee, Fla., which serves 6,000 subscribers.

A group of 15 congressmen has sent a letter to House telecommunications subcommittee Chairman Edward Markey, D-Mass., urging that **hearings on cable TV** be held as soon as possible. The lawmakers said they were concerned about market concentration, channel repositioning, increased rates and programing decisions.

Two executives at **The Fashion Channel**, President Wayne Smith and Raymond Klauer, vice chairman and chief operating officer, stepped down last week to "pursue other interests." Charles Gee, chairman and chief executive officer, took on the additional title of president. The news followed word that the channel has lost \$9.6 million since going on the air in October.

Barden Cablevision of Detroit has introduced

"**Video Shopping Mall**," which features six adjacent basic cable channels each offering programming related to home shopping. The lineup is a collaborative effort between Barden and TelShop, a service of Financial News Network.

Clearwater, Fla.-based **Home Shopping Network** posted net income totaling \$3.1 million, or 4 cents per share, in the first quarter ended Nov. 30, down from \$9.5 million, or 11 cents per share, for the same period a year earlier. First-quarter net sales totaled \$186 million, up from \$103.5 million from the same period last year.

### Radio

Los Angeles-based **Westwood One** reported its earnings in fiscal 1987 increased 22 percent. For the year ended Nov. 30, 1987, earnings totaled \$8.9 million, or 73 cents per share, on revenue of \$87.2 million, compared with earnings of \$7.3 million, or 62 cents per share, on revenue of \$59.3 million a year earlier.

**Dick Bartley**, who has hosted the weekly "Solid Gold Saturday Night" radio program for several years on the United Stations Radio Networks, last week signed a long-term contract with Los Angeles-based Westwood One. A new oldies program, "Dick Bartley's Rock 'n' Roll Oldies Show," will begin airing weekly on Westwood's networks Feb. 6. United Stations plans to air "Solid Gold Saturday Night" with substitute hosts until a permanent host is named.

WKSZ-FM in Philadelphia received a page-5B notation in the fall ratings report from **Arbitron Ratings Co.**, New York, for conducting a direct-mail promotion in which the entry blank resembled an Arbitron listening diary. Arbitron uses the notations on page 5B of its reports to scold radio stations that have engaged in "special station activities" that could have resulted in a ratings bias. Philadelphia's WMMR-FM also got a notation in the market's ratings book, and also had its ratings figures printed separately from the city's other radio stations. WMMR used a direct-mail promotion that bore an even stronger resemblance to Arbitron's diaries than WKSZ's promotion, Arbitron said.

Mountain Communications has sold easy listening **KLZE-FM, Los Altos, Calif.**, to San Jose Broadcasting Corp. for \$5.27 million.

**RCM Radio** has signed an agreement with Los Angeles' KMNy-AM to syndicate the station's

all-business format nationally. The new syndicate, Money Radio Network, will begin operation later this quarter and will originate from KMNy's facilities in Los Angeles and Pomona, Calif.

**Sage Broadcasting Corp.**, Stamford, Conn.-based owner of 17 small- and medium-market radio stations, has agreed to sell four of its stations for \$5 million to Colorado Springs, Colo.-based Americus Communications, which has no other broadcast properties. Pending FCC approval, Americus will buy WJL-AM and WBIZ-FM in Eau Claire, Wis., and WXYQ-AM and WSPT-FM in Stevens Point, Wis.

### Sports

NBC has sold 65 percent to 70 percent of its ad inventory for the **1988 Summer Olympics** in Seoul, South Korea, which is where the network expected to be at this point, according to Mike Eskridge, vice president for the Olympics. NBC had additional good news last week, with the Soviet Union declaring its intention to participate.

In the second round of **National Football League playoff action**, NBC drew a 17.8 rating and a 41 share in overnight results for the Cleveland Browns-Indianapolis Colts game on Jan. 9, while CBS's Minnesota Vikings-San Francisco 49ers telecast later that day had a 24.6 rating and a 45 share. On Jan. 10, the Washington Redskins-Chicago Bears game on CBS had a 29.3/56, while the Denver Broncos-Houston Oilers game on NBC had a 24/43 in overnight A.C. Nielsen numbers.

### Other

**Columbia Pictures Entertainment** became a public company Jan. 15. The unit was formed in last month's merger of the Coca-Cola Co.'s entertainment business sector, which included Columbia Pictures and Coke's 37 percent-owned TriStar Pictures unit. Atlanta-based Coke distributed 30 million shares of Columbia to its own stockholders as a one-time dividend, in accordance with an agreement to reduce its ownership of Columbia to 49 percent from 80 percent.

**King World Productions** reported that earnings increased 107 percent during the first quarter ended Nov. 30, 1987. Earnings totaled \$22.8 million, or 78 cents per share, on revenue of \$97.4 million, compared with earnings of \$11 million, or 36 cents per share, on revenue of \$81.3 million during the same period a year earlier. #

**FROM TINKER**  
(Grant Tinker, President, GTG Entertainment)

**TO FRIEDMAN**  
(Steve Friedman, President, GTG East)

**TO WJDK-TV**  
Detroit

**TO WTZT-TV**  
Tampa-St. Petersburg

**TO KATU-TV**  
Portland

**TO WTVF-TV**  
Nashville

**TO WVTM-TV**  
Birmingham

**TO WOTV-TV**  
Grand Rapids

**TO WAVY-TV**  
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News

**TO WBRE-TV**  
Wilkes Barre

**TO KHON-TV**  
Honolulu

**TO WLUK-TV**  
Green Bay

**TO KSPR-TV**  
Springfield, MO

**TO KLAS-TV**  
Las Vegas

**TO KEYT-TV**  
Santa Barbara





# Networks face heavy make-goods

(Continued from Page 3)

are generously overdelivering audiences that were conservatively estimated.

The networks generally are experiencing their largest people-meter headaches in different day-parts—ABC in the Saturday morning children's block and in prime time; CBS in prime time; and NBC in daytime.

ABC officials last week declined comment on speculation that its Saturday morning children's schedule is performing so poorly that there are plans afoot to replace it with news and information programming.

However, executives at all three networks caution that there are profound discrepancies throughout their schedules in demographics and household ratings recorded by A.C. Nielsen Co.'s new people-meter service.

For instance, prime-time people-meter results during the recent November sweeps showed NBC attracting 8 percent fewer homes than reported by Nielsen's own written diaries; 16 percent fewer female viewers age 18 to 49; and 16 percent fewer male viewers age 18 to 49.

Nielsen's people meters reported CBS with 9 percent fewer households, 19 percent fewer female viewers age 18 to 49 and 17 percent fewer male viewers age 18 to 49 in prime time during the November sweeps than the Nielsen diaries re-

ported.

For the same month and daypart, people meters reported ABC with 4 percent fewer households, 9 percent fewer female viewers age 18 to 49 and 8 percent fewer male viewers age 18 to 49 than Nielsen's diaries.

Some network executives say the people-meter disparities will be exacerbated by the additional audience decline that traditionally occurs when more reruns start appearing in the second and third quarters.

"The situation is going to turn the bleakest this summer when the networks negotiate upfront sales for the 1988-89 season," said one industry veteran. "Based on a full year of people meters, they aren't going to get more than single-digit increases for a post-election year when revenues traditionally lag. We might not even be dealing with guarantees."

Added a high-level ad agency executive: "If the network's audience erosion and people-meter performance turns out to be worse than any of us anticipated, I think there will be a greater number of advertisers seeking to spend more of their money elsewhere."

For that reason, officials of all three networks are intensifying their efforts to persuade Nielsen to further improve and validate the people-meter service.

CBS fired off the first salvo just before Christmas. In a letter from CBS/Broadcast Group President Gene Jankowski, the network has requested that Nielsen reinstate an independent audience measuring source to validate the people-meter findings in dispute.

Officials of CBS and Nielsen are scheduled to meet in New York next week to further thrash out the issue. The other two networks are taking similar steps to inform Nielsen of their continuing concerns.

NBC officials say they have asked Nielsen for more information about the people-meter sample so they can assess how much of this season's ratings shortfall is attributable to the new measuring service rather than to natural audience dropoff.

CBS is prepared to challenge the people-meter data in its future negotiations with advertisers.

"All the indications we have show that the data being generated by AGB is more in line with what we'd expect and with such other measurements as the written diaries," said David Poltrack, vice president of marketing and research for the CBS Television Network.

"I don't know if we can get advertisers to go along with it. But, at this point, we plan to include the AGB data we subscribe to in our selling strategy."#

## Studies show kids watching less TV

(Continued from Page 8)

in cable homes watched cable TV the previous day.

Furthermore, the INTV study found that the tastes of child viewers appear to be changing, and that children of different ages may have to be targeted more specifically than distributors and stations have previously thought.

"Children 2-11 are not a homogenous group," the study said. "Age/gender differences are reflected in programing tastes."

"Some older children (particularly in the 9-11 age group) express an interest in more adult or 'real life' programing," the study said.

In another wide-ranging program study also introduced by INTV, only 11 percent of distributors think more TV stations will get into children's programing during the next decade.

More important, 76 percent of the respondents think the Federal Communications Commission will "initiate rules governing sponsor-controlled formats," such as children's programs associated with interactive toys.

As a result of its study, Lorimar, which syndicates several children's shows, such as "ThunderCats," "Silverhawks" and "Comic Strip," developed a show that it's now selling that employs elements its research says children want in new programing.

Lorimar concluded that the elements that will attract children include "kids racing for prizes, teamwork between kids, kids competing in games of skill and kids answering questions."

As a result, Lorimar has developed a new "live-action" game show for children, "Fun House," to premiere next September.#

## Independents warned to prepare for HDTV

(Continued from Page 18)

transmit the expanded information necessary for HDTV.

At the Jan. 9 INTV session, four entities discussed their HDTV transmission systems: NBC, NHK of Japan, the New York Institute of Technology and the Los Angeles-based Del Rey Group.

NBC and the Del Rey Group are both developing single-channel systems that do not require additional UHF spectrum space, but the NHK and NYIT proposals are dual-channel systems that require additional spectrum.

Richard Iredale, founder of the Del Rey Group, appealed to the broadcasters for funding, explaining that his service would use a single NTSC broadcast channel while offering compatibility with existing NTSC receivers and studio equipment.

That would mean less investment in new equipment for station owners, he said.

Mr. Iredale said that it will cost his company "less than \$10 million" to develop his HD-NTSC service.

Steve Bonica, vice president of engineering for NBC Operations & Technical Services, detailed the progress of NBC's single-channel system, which he said could be implemented in 1990.

But William Glenn, the director of NYIT, which has been developing a dual-channel system for seven years, urged broadcasters not to settle for a single-channel system.

"In order to really get quality, you need additional spectrum," Mr. Glenn said.

It will cost NYIT about \$6 million to finish developing the system over the next three years, he explained.

While the four parties disagreed on which type of system broadcasters should adopt, they all agreed that embracing some type of HDTV technology will be imperative to keep local broadcasters competitive in the future.#

## CBS satellite plans concern affiliates

(Continued from Page 4)

are a way of avoiding federal legislation that would ensure that network signals reach white-space regions.

NBC officials also argue that there are strict conditions written into their agreement with Netlink that prohibit the company from transmitting the network's signal to anywhere but the country's scattered white-space regions.

Netlink originally gets access to NBC's signal from the network's Denver station, KCNC-TV.

"There is some public policy benefit here. There is no reason for us to block access to people who want it and can't get our signal any other way," said one NBC official.

However, CBS affiliate board executives say a larger issue is at stake.

"Most broadcasters don't understand the significance of this whole thing," said CBS's Mr. Jones.

"It's about standing up to Congress and telling them to quit threatening us with compulsory licensing and encroaching on a network distribution system that services 98 percent of the country very well."

"NBC sold its soul and won't admit it. Theirs is a naive interpretation."

"The same thing happened with cable TV in the 1960s. We let the wolf in the door then and he's

treading on our house today."

"We refuse to be coerced into a decision that has some serious long-term ramifications for all local television," Mr. Jones said.

Mr. Jones said the affiliate board, separately and in its meetings with network officials this week, will examine the cost feasibility and possible antitrust ramifications of an alternative proposal.

The proposal would be for the network to provide its signal to the white-space regions through an organization established and operated by CBS affiliates.

Network sources estimate it could cost about \$1 million annually to provide such direct satellite service to the unserved areas. The cost would comprise mostly satellite transmission time and administrative costs.

"It would assure that we would continue to control our signal and our destiny," Mr. Jones said.

The three networks and their affiliate bodies currently have lawsuits filed against another satellite distribution company, SBN, charging that it unlawfully lifts the ABC, CBS and NBC signals off the air and disseminates them to direct broadcast satellite customers.

SBN redistributes the signals from network owned or affiliated stations in Chicago, New York and Atlanta.#

## Vane leaves Westinghouse

(Continued from Page 3)

The Westinghouse Broadcasting chief called Mr. Vane "a class act" and praised him for guiding the firm "through a period of significant growth."

A company spokesman said Mr. Vane will represent Group W Productions at next month's NATPE convention in Houston if a successor is not hired by then.

During his tenure, Mr. Vane has overseen the involvement of Group W Productions in "Hour Magazine," "PM Magazine," "BraveStarr" and "He-Man and the Masters of the Universe," among other first-run shows.

The past year has been a difficult one for the company.

Last spring three of Group W's proposed new series—"Salem's Children," "Together Again" and "Fun for the Money"—failed to get off the ground. A fourth, "The Wil Shriner Show," has been plagued by low ratings.

Mr. Shriner's talk show has started to show signs of life recently, however, and earned a national Nielsen Television Index rating of 3 (percentage of television homes) for the week ended Jan. 3.

The company has not yet renewed it for 1988-89.#

### FROM TINKER

(Grant Tinker, President, GTG Entertainment)

### TO FRIEDMAN

(Steve Friedman, President, GTG East)

### TO

### KDFW-TV

Dallas

### WXIA-TV

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### KCRA-TV

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### KPNX-TV

Phoenix

### KMBC-TV

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### WDSU-TV

New Orleans

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Salt Lake City

### WAVE-TV

Louisville

### WNEM-TV

Flint-Saginaw-Bay City

### WSTM-TV

Syracuse

### WOWT-TV

Omaha

### WPTZ-TV

Burlington-Plattsburgh

### WSFA-TV

Montgomery



# FROM TINKER TO FRIEDMAN

(Grant Tinker, President, GTG Entertainment)

# TO KPRC-TV

(Steve Friedman, President, GTG East)

# TO WTVJ-TV

Houston

# TO KIRO-TV

Miami-Fort Lauderdale

# TO KCST-TV

Seattle

# TO WLWT-TV

San Diego

# TO WITI-TV

Cincinnati

# TO WYFF-TV

Milwaukee

# TO WLNE-TV

Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville

# TO WCHS-TV

Providence-New Bedford

# TO KAKE-TV

Wichita-Hutchinson Plus

# TO WHBF-TV

Quad Cities

# TO WBRZ-TV

Baton Rouge

# TO KEVN-TV

Rapid City

# TO KAIT-TV

Jonesboro

## Alan Bennett resigns at LBS

(Continued from Page 3)

mission was to step up development of first-run syndication programs and to explore international co-production projects.

To date, Blair Entertainment, with the exception of "Divorce Court," has had little luck with such first-run efforts as "Break the Bank" and "Strike It Rich," two shows that lasted only one season.

But Mr. Rosenfield hopes to turn the company's fortunes around by building a new management team.

"Alan Bennett represents the kind of talent that we think we need with his strong marketing and development background," he said.

Mr. Bennett, who started last week at Blair shortly after announcing his departure from LBS, said the first task is to decide which shows Blair will sell at the NATPE convention next month.

"But the real emphasis will be on future projects for 1989," he added.

Meanwhile, over at LBS, Mr. Bennett, who had been with the company for a little more than a year, will not be replaced. Instead, the three marketing and distribution executives who had reported to him will now report directly to Henry Siegel, chairman of LBS Communications.

They are Tony Intelisano, executive vice president of marketing and research; Jon Nottingham, executive vice president of distribution; and Andrew Holtzman, senior vice president of creative services.

Mr. Siegel told ELECTRONIC MEDIA

that Mr. Bennett's departure would have no impact on the marketing plan already in motion for the launch of "Family Feud" in syndication next fall.

While at LBS, Mr. Bennett had been instrumental in landing the domestic syndication rights for "Family Feud" from producer Mark Goodson Productions.

At Mark Goodson Productions, Gary Chester, executive vice president, said that Mr. Bennett's departure would not affect the company's deal with LBS either.

Unlike other contracts Mark Goodson Productions had signed in the past with other syndicators, which contained a "key man clause" voiding the deal if certain "key" executives left, the contract with LBS contained no such clause, according to Mr. Chester.

While Mr. Siegel said the news of Mr. Bennett's departure came as a surprise to him, the parting was described by other LBS officials as amicable.

Mr. Siegel said that Mr. Bennett told him he didn't want to be the No. 2 or No. 3 man at the company, and that the opportunity at Blair was too great to resist.

"I thought he wanted to be with me forever, but he obviously wanted to do his own thing," he said.

Before joining LBS, Mr. Bennett had been a principal from 1982 to 1986 in two program development and distribution companies, the Television Program Source and the Bennett Group. #

## Checkerboard dies in Vegas

(Continued from Page 4)

run sitcoms," said Mr. Durante. "I'm tired of beating my head."

KTLA, for its checkerboard, will take over one of the NBC stations' sitcoms, "Out of This World." It will add two brand-new sitcoms, "The New Munsters" and "Secret Identity." All three of those shows are distributed by MCA TV Enterprises.

Also, KTLA will have first crack at three recently renewed shows it already carries: "Bustin' Loose" and "Charles in Charge," both from MCA, in association with Tribune Entertainment; plus "Punky Brewster," from Columbia Pictures TV.

"With the programing we've renewed and the new programing we've recently acquired, we feel that KTLA can successfully enter a third season of checkerboarding," Mr. Bell said.

KTLA has only canceled one new sitcom this year, "The New Monkees" from LBS Communications. Also, a station spokesman said "The New Gidget," also from LBS, is being dropped by the station.

Despite the checkerboard's failure in most other markets where it's been tried, KTLA's lineup has generally outperformed KNBC-TV's, which also airs at 7:30 p.m.

During the November sweeps, the KTLA checkerboard was fifth in the half-hour time period with a 7.3 rating (percentage of TV homes) and an 11 rating (percentage of sets in use), according to A.C. Nielsen Co. In numbers reported by Arbitron Ratings Co., KTLA ranked fourth at 7:30 p.m. with a 7.4/12.

KTLA pioneered the major-market sitcom checkerboard concept in September 1986. #



"Private Lessons" stars Sylvia Kristel and Eric Brown.

## FCC fires first shot at TV 'indecenty'

(Continued from Page 1)

Among the scenes in "Private Lessons" is one in which actress Sylvia Kristel, as the governess, discovers Eric Brown, playing an inquisitive 15-year-old, spying on her.

"Would you like to watch me undress?" asks Ms. Kristel, whose breasts and buttocks are subsequently bared for Mr. Brown and viewers alike.

But the edited-for-TV version of the movie, which until recently had been included in MCA TV's package, "Universal's Exploitable 13," does not include nudity and has been broadcast in many other markets without apparent commotion, according to Ben Efraim, the movie's producer.

"I can't imagine anyone having a problem with (the TV version)," Mr. Efraim said.

Morton Kent, chairman of Chattanooga, Tenn.-based Media Central, which owns KZKC and six other TV stations, said the company didn't believe it had run afoul of the agency's indecency standards.

But he said that, spurred by complaints from KZKC viewers last year, he had personally reviewed the film, which he had been informed was the TV version, about a week after it aired. He determined that it was in violation of the company's own programing standards.

"If that was the cut version, I certainly wouldn't want my children to see the uncut version," he said.

Mr. Kent also said all of the personnel involved in running the film are no longer with the company, which he added is hoping to

emerge from Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings in a "month or two."

The FCC's action comes at a time when some TV stations seem to be shedding their traditional inhibitions about airing uncut R-rated fare.

Independent KCOP-TV in Los Angeles, for instance, aired "All That Jazz" from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Jan. 6, according to a station spokesman. The broadcast, which the spokesman said contained warnings to parents, included images of bare women's breasts, according to one viewer.

Also last week on the indecency front, the FCC, in a separate case, reversed field and warned that it might also try to determine whether certain programing is so out of bounds that it is obscene.

That warning came in a license renewal case involving WSNS-TV, a Spanish-language station in Chicago that used to operate as a subscription TV service.

In the WSNS case, the FCC last week declined to consider allegations that the station had aired obscene material. But, in discussing the case, the FCC made it clear that it was open to considering obscenity allegations in the future.

In the past, the agency had limited itself to trying to determine whether programing was indecent and referred obscenity allegations to the Justice Department for possible criminal prosecution.

Meanwhile, the executive committee of the National Association of Broadcasters voted last week to challenge the constitutionality of the FCC's toughening of its indecency rules. #

### JOBS

#### Broadcast TV

Phone: 713-626-2610, ext. 239.

**WTEN-TV** in Albany, N.Y., is seeking a **news promotion producer** with one to three years production experience. Send resumes to: Steve Wilkins, WTEN-TV, 341 Northern Blvd., Albany, N.Y. 12204. Phone: 518-436-4822.

**KRIV-TV** in Houston is seeking to fill two positions:

**Master control operator** with a minimum of three years experience. FCC license or SBE five-year certification is required.

**Maintenance engineer** with a minimum of five years TV maintenance experience and a digital and analog electronics background.

Send resumes to: Sheila Wachenchwanz, KRIV-TV, P.O. Box 22810, Houston, Texas 77227.

#### Journalism

**WIS-TV** in Columbus, S.C., is seeking a **senior reporter** with an in-depth knowledge of politics and five years print and/or broadcast journalism experience. Send resumes to: Scott Parks, news director, WIS-TV, P.O. Box 367, Columbia, S.C. 29202. Phone: 803-799-1010.

**The Independent News Network** in Hollywood is seeking a **reporter/producer** for its Los Angeles bureau. Must have experience in field reporting and producing for a network news show. Send resumes to: Marc Curtis, Broadcast News Service, 7033 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 322, Hollywood, Calif. 90028.

Phone: 213-460-4575.

**WSLS-TV** in Roanoke, Va., is seeking an **aggressive news director**. Send resumes to: James DeSchepper, vice president and general manager, WSLS-TV, P.O. Box 2161, Roanoke, Va. 24009. Phone: 703-981-9110.

#### Radio

**National Public Radio** in Washington is seeking an **editor** for "Performance Today" with a B.A. or the equivalent. Four years of music and arts administrative/editorial experience required. Send resumes to: Personnel, National Public Radio, 2025 M St. N.W., Washington D.C. 20036. Phone: 202-822-2000.

**WKXX-FM** in St. Louis is seeking a

**sales manager** with major-market sales management experience. Send resumes to: Shelly Davis, president, WKXX-FM, 111 West Port Plaza, Suite 1000, St. Louis, Mo. 63146. Phone: 314-878-1040.

**KABC-FM** in Los Angeles is seeking a **producer** to write, produce and schedule all on-air promotional material. Send resumes to: Charlotte Claiborne, KABC-AM, P.O. Box 79, Los Angeles, Calif. 90016. Phone: 213-557-5373.

The "Jobs" column is an editorial feature. Brief job descriptions can be sent to Elizabeth Edgerton at ELECTRONIC MEDIA, 740 N. Rush St., Chicago, 60611. She can be reached by telephone at 312-649-5453. Decisions which items are published and wording is used are made entirely ELECTRONIC MEDIA'S editorial staff. #



# CBS plans return to comedies

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

REDONDO BEACH, CALIF.—CBS Entertainment President Kim LeMasters last week said the network plans to drop some one-hour shows and return to its original staple: the half-hour situation comedy.

Mr. LeMasters, in his first appearance during the television critics tour as CBS's chief programmer, said the network's balance of shows is too heavily geared toward dramas rather than comedies.

"CBS was the king of comedy," Mr. LeMasters said. "It was known for its comedies, and I think that in a perfect world it would be a nice place to return to."

CBS put on seven new dramas last fall, but none except Friday's "Beauty and the Beast" has

caught fire in the ratings.

Faced with competition from ABC's Jan. 31 Super Bowl telecast and its Winter Olympics coverage during the February sweeps, Mr. LeMasters conceded that the ratings race may heat up and that CBS might not finish in second at the end of the prime-time season.

"The unknown factor in the whole thing is how the Super Bowl performs and, more specifically, how the Winter Olympics perform," he said.

To counter ABC's efforts, CBS is lining up several new comedies to trot out later this season or in the fall. The network has already committed to three separate shows for Dick Van Dyke, Mary Tyler Moore and Christopher Lloyd.

In addition, at least four other comedy orders have either been firmed up or are in advanced stages of development.

Mr. LeMasters also said several hour-long CBS

shows, such as "Falcon Crest," "Dallas" and "Knot's Landing," have all been on the schedule for some time and may become candidates for replacement before too long.

"We are in the unfortunate position of still having a lot of those shows on the air," he said.

Also, he disclosed last week that "Magnum, P.I." will have its final original one-hour telecast on Feb. 17 and that the show would bow out with a two-hour finale during the May sweeps. The departure of the 7-year-old program had been expected.

Mr. LeMasters said CBS is considering picking up its option for an eighth year of "Cagney & Lacey," since it is performing well in its new 10 p.m. (ET) time slot on Tuesdays.

The Lifetime cable network has purchased the rights to begin airing reruns of the program next month. #

## AT PRESS TIME CONTINUED

United Cable announcement released last Thursday. In other news, General Instrument Corp. announced that its Jerrold division plans to sell \$50 million of addressable impulse equipment to United Cable for its 400,000 subscribers in the Hartford, Conn.; Tulsa, Okla.; and Denver systems.

● CHARLOTTE, N.C.—Talks have heated up again between ABC affiliate WSOC-TV here and NBC over a possible change of affiliation. NBC courted WSOC last year after being turned down by CBS affiliate WBTV-TV. NBC's current affiliate, WPCQ-TV, is a UHF outlet.

● WASHINGTON—Rupert Murdoch brought his effort to retain his newspapers and TV stations in New York and Boston to the FCC on Thursday, even though a recently enacted law bars the agency from altering its newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership rules. If the FCC turns him down, Mr. Murdoch can then file a lawsuit to overturn the cross-ownership rules.

● BURBANK, CALIF.—Kerry Ketchem, 36, was arrested by U.S. Secret Service agents here last Thursday when he went to Mark Goodson Productions to pick up a check for the record \$58,000 he won in four recent appearances on the NBC game show "Password." Employees of an Anchorage, Alaska, bank saw Mr. Ketchem using the alias Patrick Quinn on the TV show and notified authorities that he was the fugitive being sought in a \$25,000 scam involving the bank. NBC was determining whether it was legally required to award the prize money.

● NEW YORK—"Geraldo," the daily talk series from Tribune Entertainment hosted by Geraldo Rivera, is being moved from MCA's WWOR-TV here to NBC's WNBC-TV as a 9 a.m. replacement for Group W's "The Wil Shriner Show," effective Jan. 25. Also, Multimedia Entertainment is moving its "Donahue" talk strip from NBC affiliate KING-TV in Seattle to CBS affiliate KIRO-TV, effective Feb. 1.

● DALLAS—Roger Mudd will moderate "The Texas Debates," a live prime-time exchange here among Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, on Feb. 18 and 19. The debates are sponsored by non-commercial KERA-TV in Dallas and will be offered to PBS affiliates and American Public Radio stations.

● NEW YORK—The National Academy of Cable Programming announced last Thursday its first Governor's Award will be presented to Ralph Baruch, former Viacom International chairman. The Discovery Channel will be presented with the academy's Golden ACE Award.

● WASHINGTON—FCC Commissioner James Quello was expected to charge Saturday that the agency was "primarily" to blame for a federal appellate court's recent decision eliminating the must-carry rules. "The commission never provided a sufficient justification," Mr. Quello says in the text of a speech to the Alabama Broadcasters Association. #

## San Antonio presses to buy cable system

(Continued from Page 1)

Mr. Fox said he has received phone calls from "everybody in the (cable) business" making offers to buy the system and what he called "firm offers" to pay the city 5 percent of the system's market value to manage it.

A less likely scenario, Mr. Fox conceded, would have the city buying the system and letting the local electric utility, City Public Service, manage it.

The city council will receive the city manager's report on Rogers this month, with a strong recommendation to become an equity partner, according to Mr. Fox.

City Councilman Weir Labatt sees no reason for his nine fellow council members to resist the idea.

"As elected officials, we would be remiss not to take advantage of this. From San Antonio's perspective, we're looking at the possibility of helping ourselves," Mr. Labatt said.

He conceded that there was some truth to "greenmail" charges leveled at the city by some Rogers officials, but said the city's need was his prime consideration.

"We, as a city, are scrambling right now. We're healthy financially, but times are tough," he said.

Normally, buyout clauses are included in franchise agreements to protect a municipality against a cable operator who fails to provide services as stipulated in its contract.

And while Rogers has received some heat from the city over delays in wiring the downtown area for cable, Mr. Fox said the city is generally satisfied with the cable company's performance.

Rogers' San Antonio system is the nation's fourth-largest and one of the most sophisticated. It's equipped with a state-of-the-art two-way addressable system with 42-channel capacity designed by Zenith Electronics.

Rogers executives believe the city may be acting in a way contrary to the spirit of the buyout clause. "It's just a case of a city looking at an agreement and, perhaps, misinterpreting it," said Colin Watson, president of Rogers Cablesystems. "There might be those who might

speculate that it's not legal."

Rogers has maintained good relations with the city since taking over the system from UA/Columbia in 1983, according to Mr. Watson, who remains confident that a solution satisfactory to both his company and the city can be reached.

David Edwards, general manager of Rogers' San Antonio system, sees the public statements from Mr. Fox as a "trial balloon" motivated by the city's need for revenues in a flagging Texas economy. "The city of San Antonio sees this as a way of making some money," he said. "San Antonio is in a bind. But we'll fight it all the way."

Mr. Fox, who negotiated the original franchise agreement for the city, denied that a need for money was behind the move, although he characterized it as "another angle" to defray city costs.

"I'm not looking at it as a money grab," Mr. Fox said.

He pointed out that the city's bond rating stands at AA plus, according to the Standard & Poor's system.

He also noted that San Antonio owns its electric, gas, water and sewer companies, in addition to a stake in a nuclear power plant, with plans for part-ownership of two local coal plants going into operation this year.

It also has a history of public-private ventures, including cooperative deals with the Hyatt, Marriott and Sheraton hotels and the new Rivercenter mall project in downtown San Antonio.

Mr. Fox said Rogers' Mr. Edwards has admitted that the city has the cable company in a tough spot, and he left little doubt that San Antonio intends to press its advantage.

"He acknowledges, in the crass Marine Corps vernacular, that we've got them by the balls," Mr. Fox said.

"There will be some benefit to the city, whatever happens."

In the 48 U.S. municipalities with some involvement in running local cable systems, no system tops the 10,000-subscriber mark, according to the most recent survey of cable systems from the American Public Power Association. #

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## Paramount, station try to settle 'Trek' dispute

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

Lawyers for Paramount Television and WTXX-TV in Waterbury, Conn., were negotiating out of court last week to settle a dispute over broadcast rights to "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

If the two sides can't reach a settlement themselves, the case could come before a U.S. district court judge in Hartford, Conn., on Jan. 20, according to a well-placed source.

Late last month, Paramount tried to take the "Star Trek" rights away from WTXX and reas-

sign them to WTIC-TV. Both stations serve the Hartford market.

According to court documents, Paramount accused WTXX of failing to make "timely payments" of rights fees (ELECTRONIC MEDIA, Jan. 4, Page 2).

Since the conflict erupted in late December, both WTXX and WTIC have been airing identical episodes of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" during the same Saturday and Sunday night time periods.

The situation has resulted in disappointing ratings for both stations, says Arnold Chase, owner

of WTIC. He said Hartford viewers with cable TV also have a third channel, New York's WPIX-TV, to see the Paramount show on during the same Saturday and Sunday time periods.

"It's obviously a situation that can't continue," Mr. Chase said.

The out-of-court negotiations were ordered by Judge Peter Dorsey of U.S. district court in Hartford. Judge Dorsey said he wouldn't set a date to hear arguments in the case until lawyers for the two sides can show him that they need his help to settle the dispute. A source said attorneys might request that he intervene on Jan. 20. #

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