

# Electronic Media

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## AT PRESS TIME

### Exit polling upheld

ATLANTA—Acting in time for tomorrow's Super Tuesday voting, federal judges here and in Miami relaxed state laws designed to limit exit polling by journalists. ABC, CBS and NBC fought the statutes on First Amendment grounds. In Georgia, a temporary injunction narrowed exit-poll restrictions from within 250 to 25 feet of a polling place. A Florida law banning exit polling within 150 feet of balloting was overturned and a new 50-foot minimum was implemented.

### Cable hearings set

WASHINGTON—The Senate antitrust subcommittee hearings on the cable industry, set for March 17, will include a look at the elimination of must-carry rules, a subcommittee staff member said Friday. Meanwhile, the House telecommunications subcommittee tentatively scheduled the first of what's expected to amount to three days of hearings. (Continued on Page 39)

## Turner sets TNT start in October

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Turner Broadcasting System hopes to launch Turner Network Television on Oct. 3 with a 10 million to 15 million subscriber base.

Gerald Hogan, president of TBS's entertainment network unit, is trying to nail down subscriber commitments in a series of teleconferences with the multiple cable system operator executives who attended TBS's meeting on TNT last week.

Mr. Hogan and Ted Turner, TBS's chairman and chief executive, are also talking to board members in an effort to get their approval of the proposal, including the Oct. 3 kickoff.

Representatives of about 10 of the country's largest MSOs attended the Turner meeting last week. At least one, Tele-Communications Inc. President John Malone, has given the network his full support.

Others, such as Robert Miron, president of Newhouse Broadcasting, expressed some reservations.

"It was an interesting presentation," Mr. Miron said. "Ted had some innovative program ideas."

He said some aspects of the plan, plus channel capacity considerations, will lead him to review the proposal "very carefully."

Turner's plans for a 10 million to 15 million subscriber base would be "by far the largest subscriber launch of a (cable) network," Mr. Hogan (Continued on Page 39)



Paula Miller (r.), from WTKR-TV in Norfolk, Va., interviews Sen. Al Gore.

Photo by Timothy G. Mason

## Super Tuesday brings national politics home

By ROBERT HOMAN  
Staff reporter

When Democratic presidential candidate Jesse Jackson made a campaign stop in eastern Kentucky a couple of weeks ago, Tony Turner, news director at WYMT-TV in Hazard, Ky., met him at the airport, camera in hand.

"It was the first time a presidential candidate had come to the area," says Mr. Turner, who filmed and interviewed the Rev. Jackson on an hour-long bus ride to the rural, mountainous coal mining town of Hazard.

Mr. Turner is one of the many broadcast journalists who are chasing the presidential contenders on their 20-state trail to-

ward tomorrow's Super Tuesday, a sweeping primary day that has brought a new level of campaign coverage to many communities.

"We've never had anything that's come close to Super Tuesday," says Bill Foy, news director at WBTW-TV in Charlotte, N.C. "It's all brand new to us."

The primaries and caucuses have brought the campaign to many smaller cities in the South that received little or no attention during past presidential primaries.

In Joplin, Mo., Jenny Grzelak, news director at KODE-TV, said that before a recent appearance by Vice President George Bush, Spiro Agnew was the last vice (Continued on Page 39)

## Radio hit by 'payola' accusations

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

The radio industry last week braced for the possibility of further "payola" fallout in the wake of charges that independent record promoters paid cash and gave cocaine to get favorable airplay of records.

Indictments that were handed down on Feb. 26 against three record promoters and a former radio station general manager also have implicated seven station program directors in alleged payola schemes.

Four of the program directors were identified as government witnesses who had earned immunity from prosecution by testifying last summer before a Los Angeles grand jury.

It was unclear last week if the government, which is represented in the payola case by the U.S. attorney in Los Angeles, would indict any of the program directors.

Last week, officials in the U.S. attorney's office declined to comment about what the next step in its ongoing payola investigation would be.

In interviews with station executives around the country last week, some expressed concern that the allegations could spread beyond the initial indictments.

None of the implicated program directors, most of whom are still working at radio stations, would comment last week. Some of them went on a leave of absence last week, while others issued statements of "no comment" through their general managers.

In the indictments handed down on Feb. 26 in Los Angeles, U.S. Attorney Robert Bonner charged record promoters Ralph Tashjian, 40, and Valerie Tashjian, 31, of San Mateo, Calif., and William Craig, 42, currently of Scottsdale, Ariz., and formerly from the Detroit area. Each allegedly paid cash or (Continued on Page 39)

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### Post-NATPE polling

NATPE officials are asking members whether to move next year's convention back to January.

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### Warm welcome

CNN was able to overcome some Antarctic obstacles on its expedition to the South Pole

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### HBO kicked out of Philippines

HBO was not allowed to continue its production on a miniseries about the Aquino revolution.

## NEWS SUMMARY

**Turner Broadcasting** hopes to launch its Turner Network Television on Oct. 3 with a subscriber base of up to 15 million. (Page 1)

**The federal government** last week implicated seven radio station program directors in alleged "payola" schemes, and the industry is bracing for the possibility of further allegations. (Page 1)

**Tomorrow's Super Tuesday** voting has brought a new level of campaign coverage to a number of smaller communities, including Hazard, Ky., and Joplin, Mo. (Page 1)

**Movietime cable network** is expected to announce this week that it has sold a majority interest to a consortium of some of the nation's largest MSOs. (Page 3)

**Despite healthy ratings**, ABC's losses from its coverage of the Winter Olympic Games in Calgary are expected to greatly exceed the previous projections of a \$50 million deficit. (Page 3)

**After a generally lackluster** NATPE convention, association officials are already looking at ways to spice up the 1989 gathering. NATPE had announced that next year's convention would be held several weeks earlier, but now it's asking members when they think it should be. (Page 3)

**Cable and international issues** received more attention than usual during this year's NATPE convention. (Page 38)

**A San Francisco broadcaster** has agreed to hold annual fundraisers and make a \$1,000 charitable contribution to get a petition dropped that was blocking his purchase of a local radio station. (Page 3)

**CBS has conceded** that it will probably finish the 1987-88 TV season in last place after network officials studied the results of the February ratings sweeps. (Page 2)

**Media General officials are vowing** to fight Hollywood producer Burt Sugarman's bid to take over the company. Mr. Sugarman began the takeover effort last week with a \$1.7 billion cash merger offer for Media General, which was promptly rejected. (Page 4)

**The strength of syndicated** off-network programs and the usual local news battles highlighted the February sweeps in the nation's top three markets. (Page 4)

**The maneuvering between** Sumner Redstone and John Kluge for control of Orion Pictures Corp. accelerated last week as both men moved their stakes closer to 40 percent. (Page 4)

**The MCA board has strengthened** its takeover defense against possible suitors, including Donald Trump. (Page 4)

**HBO has been barred** from filming a miniseries in the Philippines about the fall of Ferdinand Marcos and the rise of President Corazon Aquino. The production was 21 days into its six-week shoot when HBO was ordered to stop work. It has moved the production to Australia. (Page 8)

**An Indianapolis media** watchdog group, tired of waiting for action on its indecency complaint, went to Washington to confront FCC officials face to face. (Page 8)

**Think Entertainment**, the production company recently formed by Shelley Duvall, made a programming agreement last week with Turner Broadcasting System. (Page 12)

**NBC is adopting a plan** that will redistribute some of its affiliate compensation dollars to daytime in an effort to improve station clearances. (Page 12)

**Tele-Communications Inc.** President John Malone says reports that TCI is interested in buying another chunk of United Cable Television are exaggerated. (Page 12)

**The broadcasting industry's** support for getting rid of the fairness doctrine could trigger the elimination of other rules the industry favors, says Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. (Page 26)

**United Stations' adult-oriented** radio network increased its audience among 25- to 54-year-olds by more than 40 percent in the second half of last year, according to the latest RADAR report. (Page 30)

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# CBS concedes last place finish in ratings likely

By RICHARD TEDESCO

Staff reporter

NEW YORK—CBS, in assessing national results from the February sweeps, conceded last week that it likely will finish this television season in last place.

"If we run at this same level, we will lose," said David Poltrack, vice president of marketing for the CBS Television Network.

CBS will finish last for the first time in its history if it doesn't make up 1½ ratings points during the remaining seven weeks of the season. "It's doable, but it's going to mean some pitched battles," Mr. Poltrack said.

ABC took the sweeps with a 17.4 rating (percentage of TV homes) and a 27 share (percentage of sets in use) over NBC at 16/25 and CBS at 13.8/21 in results from A.C. Nielsen Co.

In Arbitron Ratings Co. numbers, ABC led with a 17.3/27, over NBC at 15.9/25 and CBS at 13.8/21.

Through the end of February, ABC held a slim lead over CBS, with a 14.1 average rating on the season to CBS's 13.6, according to Nielsen. NBC maintained a comfortable lead with a 16.3 rating.

CBS/Broadcast Group President Gene Jankowski said the prospects for passing ABC are still "very good." He said the network is building for the future with new shows such as "Frank's Place" and "Beauty and the Beast."

As far as second place or third place goes, he said, "It's an emotional issue more than a financial one. Nobody says we're happy being third, but it has more of an impact on people's emotions."

Ben Tucker, executive vice president of Retlaw Broadcasting and chairman of the CBS affiliate advisory board, said: "I don't like to see CBS concede to third place, but with the race as close as it is, it's probably a practical assessment."

"All of the networks pretty well acknowledged that the success of the Olympics was going to determine second and third," he said. "It's tougher to be a weak No. 2 than it is to be No. 3."

Meanwhile, CBS last week announced it would advance the start of its prime-time season for next fall as a result of disruptions posed by the Sept. 17-Oct. 2 Summer

## CBS finance officer quits

By DIANE MERMIGAS

Senior reporter

CBS Inc.'s chief financial officer, Fred Meyer, resigned last week to join Omnicom Group, an advertising firm, in a similar position.

Mr. Meyer is the third high-level corporate executive to leave in recent months. Many industry observers view the departures as an attempt by Laurence Tisch, CBS president and chief executive officer, to streamline the corporate ranks.

But CBS officials denied there are plans afoot for other high-level executive changes.

"I don't suspect there will be any more," said CBS/Broadcast Group President Gene Jankowski. "This was a good opportunity for Fred Meyer. I think the team is in place, and we're all working hard on the same thing—which is to make CBS more efficient and effective."

CBS sources said that Mr. Meyer, who leaves April 1, had planned to leave the company at the end of his contract term later this year, but moved up his timetable in light of the Omnicom offer. He could not be reached for comment at press time.

Sources said it's likely that Mr. Meyer will not be directly replaced and his duties will be assumed by others under him, including Peter Keegan, CBS vice president and controller, as part of a planned reorganization of CBS's entire corporate staff and functions. The restructuring could be discussed this week at the monthly board meeting.

Also at CBS last week, executives of the recently sold records division filed a class-action lawsuit charging that CBS and Mr. Tisch "maliciously and fraudulently" underpaid 1987 bonuses to them by \$1.5 million. The lawsuit, filed March 3 in the New York Supreme Court on behalf of as many as 130 executives, also seeks \$3 million in punitive damages and legal costs.

The outcome of the suit could effect the current dispute between CBS Inc. and Sony Corp., to whom CBS Records was sold on Jan. 5, over an adjustment in the \$2 billion purchase price. The squabble over the true value of CBS Records could mean an additional payment of more than \$100 million by Sony.

Basic to both the lawsuit and purchase price dispute is the question of how much the records unit earned in 1987 while it was still under CBS's wing. CBS, which didn't comment publicly on the suit, says it cannot disclose its earnings figures for the division until it reports its first-quarter statistics in April.

"Our requests for their earnings figures on records have been continually been turned down," CBS Records President Walter Yetnikoff told ELECTRONIC MEDIA. "Mr. Tisch thinks he can bully a whole class of employees, but I'm not going to let him." #

Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea.

CBS will begin introducing its new 1988-89 prime-time shows on Labor Day, Sept. 5, two weeks before the Games. ABC and NBC haven't decided when their seasons will start.

NBC, meanwhile, sought to downplay the powerful impact of the Olympics in its interpretation of the February sweeps results. Gerald Jaffe, NBC's vice president of research projects, provided average

prime-time ratings that excluded the numbers from the Winter Games.

Aside from the Winter Games, ABC had the highest-rated miniseries for the sweeps period—and the season—with "Elvis and Me" getting a 24.5/36.

In a four-week average of the February news race, "ABC's World News Tonight" led the way with an 11.9/21, beating "The CBS Evening News" at 11.4/20 and "The NBC Nightly News" at 10.4/18. #

# Writers Guild expected to picket

By WILLIAM MAHONEY

Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—Members of the Writers Guild of America were expected to start informational picketing today if weekend talks hadn't settled the dispute that last week led the group to authorize a strike against movie and TV producers.

The 9,000 WGA members last week voted overwhelmingly to reject a proposed three-year contract offered by the Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers, ABC, CBS and NBC.

On March 2, 93 percent of WGA/East members authorized guild executives to call a strike, one day after more than 96 percent of WGA/West members approved the same measure.

The informational picket, in which union members hand out leaflets outlining their grievances, would be a last step before a full-fledged strike.

One of the obstacles in the talks is the Alliance's attempt to replace the fixed rate for residuals from hour-long shows, which have become increasingly hard to sell in off-network syndication, with a percentage of the gross. WGA members see that as a rollback in fees.

Other sticking points in the dispute center on fees for programs sold internationally, "creative rights," over-

scale payments and cable TV residuals.

The previous contract expired at midnight Feb. 29. Guild members last walked out in 1985 for two weeks.

Nicholas Counter, president of the alliance, met privately with Brian Walton, executive director and chief negotiator of the WGA, on March 2, but no resolution came out of those talks. More negotiations were planned for March 5.

A walkout would not affect the 600 guild members working in news operations at ABC and CBS. They agreed to contracts last year after a six-week strike. NBC news staffers are represented by a different union.

Separately, members of the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists on March 3 authorized a strike against the producers of radio and TV commercials, although at press time union officials of those groups had not ordered a walkout. #

## CORRECTIONS

A column on Page 19 of the Feb. 29 issue incorrectly reported that United Broadcasting is selling KDBC-TV, El Paso, Texas, to Emmis Broadcasting. Mickey Waddington, president of United Broadcasting, said Imes Broadcasting agreed last week to buy the station for an estimated \$32 million. #

# NATPE looks to spice up 1989 gathering

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

HOUSTON—Coming out of a generally lackluster convention, National Association of Television Program Executives officials are already looking at ways to breathe new life into next year's gathering.

Many syndicators characterized the Feb. 25-29 exhibition in Houston as a mop-up session. They said many TV stations were idly shopping for programing odds and ends, apparently because they had already lined up

Convention notebook, Page 12.

replacement shows or had decided to stick with their proven performers.

In addition, attendance at this year's show was down about 300 from last year's 7,837; NATPE attributed the decline primarily to the fact that there were 25 fewer distributors on the floor.

Syndicators responded to the tighter-than-ever market by making projects "a firm go"

with fewer clearances than they had in previous years.

"That's much of an indication of the tightness of the marketplace," says Dick Cignarelli, executive vice president of domestic TV distribution for MGM/UA Telecommunications, who predicts a shakeout soon as a result of the production go-aheads.

Mr. Cignarelli doubts that some of the programs given a green light with unusually low clearances will actually make it on the air.

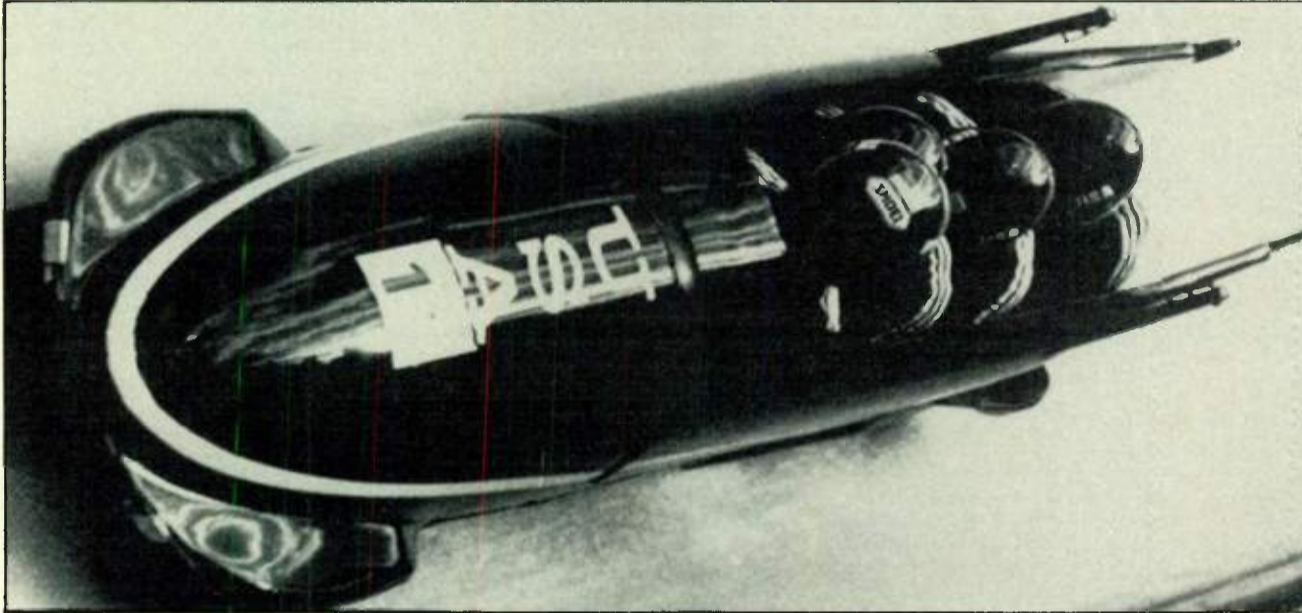
Barter shows traditionally must reach 70 percent of U.S. TV homes to attract national

advertisers, but some distributors insist they'll launch first-run fare with clearance levels of 50 percent or lower.

Responding to criticism about NATPE's late-February date this year, the organization announced early in the meeting that the convention will be held several weeks earlier next year.

Attendees, especially broadcasters, generally applauded the decision to move to January. However, distributors who met Feb. 29 after the exhibits closed complained that the

(Continued on Page 38)



Wide World photo

ABC finished with a 19.3 average national rating for the 1988 Winter Olympics, which included bobsledding.

## Olympics losses to exceed forecast

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Despite strong ratings, ABC's losses from the Winter Olympic Games are expected to greatly exceed previous projections of \$40 million to \$50 million.

Late last week, ABC executives were calculating exactly how large the loss would be and declined to comment.

But they confirmed that the amount will be larger than expected and will put ABC Sports in the red for this year.

It appears that the loss, including rights fees, production costs and advertiser make-goods, will be in the range of \$70 million to \$80 million.

Robert Iger, vice president of programming for ABC Sports, said the Winter Games will make profitability "an impossibility" for the division this year.

The final week of the Winter Games produced one record-setting telecast of 43 million viewers, which helped ABC finish with a 19.3 average national rating (percentage of TV homes).

ABC shelled out \$309 million in broadcast rights fees and about \$100 million in production costs.

There was also an estimated \$35 million to \$40 million loss in make-goods for advertisers, most of which ABC satisfied with unsold inventory during the final week of the Olympic telecasts.

Mr. Iger pointed to advance money

ABC paid to the International Olympic Committee and the negative impact of last October's stock market crash on Olympics ad sales as prime factors for the increased costs.

The expense of the Winter Games didn't prompt ABC to cut back production costs, which were the highest ever for a Winter Olympics, according to Dennis Lewin, ABC senior vice president in production.

"We always knew our losses were going to be staggering," he said.

Mr. Iger said that, from the outset, ABC was apprehensive about viewership with its plans for the longest Winter Olympics in history—16 days.

"There was an extreme fear on our part that broadcasting the Winter Olympics with as many hours as we were going to was a serious risk," he explained. "The Winter Olympics are fragile, and there are just so many things you can put on that people will watch."

But enough viewers tuned in to put ABC close to the 21.5 overall rating it guaranteed advertisers.

"We really expected the numbers to come in somewhere between the Lake Placid Olympics and Sarajevo games in '84," said Larry Hyams, ABC director of audience research.

While the final number was nowhere near the record 23.7 average rating and 37 share (percentage of sets in use) ABC hit in 1980 at Lake Placid, N.Y., the

19.3 was a boost over the 18.7 average from the initial week of the Calgary telecast and the 18.3 average of the Games in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

But ABC came close enough to the mark to satisfy advertisers on the basis of the 10 percent margin tacitly acknowledged in the business, said Bart McHugh, senior vice president and media director for DDB Needham Worldwide, a New York ad agency.

The final weekend of the Olympics tipped the scales in ABC's favor, when those 43 million viewers—the most for any Winter Olympics telecast—watched the Saturday night women's figure-skating confrontation. That translated to a 26.4 rating, the fourth highest for a Winter Games broadcast, and a 43 share.

The national numbers for the Feb. 28 closing ceremonies were 17.2/27.

ABC took care of make-goods for advertisers as the Winter Games went along, according to Jake Keever, executive vice president of sales for the ABC TV Network.

"It appears that we made up the bulk of it in the Olympics," he said.

ABC did not add units during the Olympics telecast, according to Mr. Keever, who said late last week that the network did not have a firm figure on make-goods from the Games. He said the network has reserved inventory, primarily in weekend sports programming, to make up obligations to advertisers. #

## MSOs to buy into Movietime

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—The Movietime cable network is expected to announce this week that it has sold a majority interest to a consortium of multiple cable system operators.

The potential investors include some of the nation's largest MSOs. According to sources familiar with the impending transaction, they are: Newhouse Broadcasting, Cox Cable Communications, Continental Cablevision, American Television & Communications, Warner Cable Communications and United Cable Television.

MSO representatives joined Movietime President Larry Namer in New York last Thursday to iron out what could be the final arrangements for roughly an 80 percent buy-in, sources said.

While top officials of most of the companies involved, including Movietime, could not be reached for comment, Robert Miron, president of Newhouse Broadcasting, confirmed his company is among those in the negotiations.

In addition to an infusion of capital, Movietime would benefit from the MSOs' service to a total of 11 million basic subscribers.

The Los Angeles-based Movietime, now 7 months old and 4.5 million subscribers strong, could gain enough subscribers with the transaction to qualify for A.C. Nielsen Co. ratings reports, which in turn could benefit its drive for more advertisers.

To date, Movietime's advertisers have mostly been movie studios.

Mike Sobel, the channel's vice president of ad sales, said advertisers include the studios Paramount Pictures, Columbia Pictures, Orion, United Artists and Universal, plus Honda scooters and Nestle.

Movietime has been described as a cross between MTV and a 24-hour version of "Entertainment Tonight." In addition to Hollywood show business news, Movietime is developing system-specific schedule information on local theaters and cable systems.

With the deal, Movietime will follow in the steps of The Discovery Channel and other networks that have benefited from the money and distribution of MSO investors.

Movietime was launched July 31, 1987, with 2 million subscribers. It was started by Mr. Namer, currently its president and a former director of operations at Time Inc.'s Manhattan Cable system, and Alan Mruvka, its chairman, who had been a real-estate developer.

In addition to the \$100,000 the two executives invested in Movietime, the company obtained \$8 million in funding, with additional lines of credit, from the bond house Mabon Nugent & Co., Mr. Namer said after the channel's launch. #

## Broadcaster makes concessions to FM challenger

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

A San Francisco broadcaster has agreed to hold annual fundraisers and make a \$1,000 charitable donation to get a petition dropped that was blocking his purchase of a local radio station.

Jim Gabbert, owner of San Francisco's KOFY-TV and KOFY-AM, has been trying to buy KHIT-FM there, previously known to listeners as KKCY: The City.

The transfer was rejected by the Federal Communications Commission last month.

Thomas Ballantyne, a San Francisco businessman petitioning against the transfer, had made earlier "proposals" suggesting he be paid cash by Mr. Gabbert to drop his petition, but last week the two parties agreed on other terms.

Mr. Ballantyne, who runs Ballantyne & Associates, an executive search firm in San Francisco, told ELECTRONIC MEDIA he withdrew his petition after Mr. Gabbert agreed to

hold an annual telethon for the next five years to raise \$500,000 for a local charity.

Mr. Gabbert also agreed to donate \$1,000 to ARIS, an AIDS-related service agency.

Mr. Gabbert conceded that the two parties had reached an agreement but would not confirm the specifics, saying it was confidential and Mr. Ballantyne had no right to make it public.

In a recent taped telephone interview with ELECTRONIC MEDIA, Mr. Gabbert said that Mr. Ballantyne had suggested in a Feb. 24 letter

that the broadcaster would have to meet the following terms before he'd drop his petition:

- Payment to Mr. Ballantyne of \$15,000 by Mr. Gabbert for the expenses and legal fees the petitioner accrued in opposing the transfer.

- Hiring of an ombudsman to act as an advocate on behalf of Mr. Gabbert's listeners and viewers at a salary of \$50,000 a year. "I propose myself as the first ombudsman with a two-year term and the option to appoint my

(Continued on Page 37)



New York's WNYW-TV scored well in the sweeps with the syndicated "Diff'rent Strokes."

## Syndicated fare, newscast battles heat up local sweeps

By ADAM BUCKMAN, RICHARD MAHLER and DIANE MERMIGAS

ELECTRONIC MEDIA staff

While ABC's Winter Olympics telecasts dominated talk of the February sweeps, the top three markets engaged in heated battles in the areas of local news and syndicated fare.

Here are some of the highlights from the ratings books, released last week in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago:

### NEW YORK

In local news time slots at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., syndicated shows on New York's independent stations beat the news programs on the owned-and-operated stations during the sweeps.

For example, at 5 p.m., "Diff'rent Strokes" on Fox Television's WNYW-TV received an 8.5 rating (percentage of TV homes) and an 18 share (percentage of sets in use), and "Facts of Life," which follows "Strokes" at 5:30 p.m., had a 9/18, according to A.C. Nielsen Co.

Among the o&o's, WABC-TV's newshour had an 8.6/

18, WNBC-TV's "Live at Five" had a 7.3/15 and WCBS-TV had a 7.9/17 at 5 p.m. and a 7.8/16 at 5:30 p.m., Nielsen said.

According to Arbitron Ratings Co., "Strokes" received an 8.7/20 and "Facts" had a 9.7/21.

Arbitron said WABC's 5 p.m. news had a 9.5/21, WNBC had a 5/11 and WCBS had a 6.6/16 and a 7.4/16.

From 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., WNYW's success continued with "Three's Company" and "Family Ties." The two shows earned a 9.4/18 and a 10.9/20, respectively, according to Nielsen.

Of the local news shows, WABC's half-hour news at 6 p.m. had a 9.1/17, Nielsen said. ABC's "World News Tonight," which airs on WABC at 6:30 p.m., had a 9.8/18, Nielsen said. WCBS's 6 p.m. news had a 6.9/16, while WNBC had an 8.9/16, Nielsen said.

Arbitron said "Three's Company" had a 9.8/19 and "Family Ties" had an 11.4/21.

Of the 6 p.m. news shows, Arbitron said WABC had a 9.8/19, WCBS had an 8.2/16 and WNBC had a 6.3/12.

"World News Tonight" had a 10.4/19, according to Arbitron.

(Continued on Page 38)

# Media General vows to resist takeover effort

By DIANE MERMIGAS

Staff reporter

Media General officials are vowing to fight Hollywood producer Burt Sugarman's bid to take over the company, an effort he began with a \$1.7 billion cash merger offer last week.

In a four-sentence letter to Mr. Sugarman, Media General President James S. Evans said the founding Bryan family, which owns a controlling interest in the company, deemed the offer unacceptable.

Mr. Evans stated that the family would vote against the proposal if put to a shareholder vote. He also said that "under the circumstances, no further action on the part of the board is appropriate."

"We are not interested in selling the company to anyone at any price," J. Stewart Bryan III, the firm's executive vice president and vice chairman, told ELECTRONIC MEDIA. "We want only to preserve and protect the integrity and independence of Media General."

Wall Street analyst Alan Kassin, of Shearson Lehman Hutton, who has long recommended Media General stock, says the management could be forced to consider taking the company private as a means of narrowing the gap between public- and private-market values.

But Mr. Bryan said, "We are not going to be forced to consider our options at the end of a gun barrel. We are constantly reviewing new opportunities for our company. But the time to consider those is not when we're under pressure from someone like Mr. Sugarman."

He added, "Quite frankly, our biggest concern is that we will wind up spending all of our time fighting



BURT SUGARMAN  
Made \$1.7 billion merger offer

a hostile takeover and not managing the company's assets productively."

The Bryan family controls about 70 percent of the company's 560,000 voting Class B shares of stock and controls the board of the Richmond, Va.-based publishing, broadcast and cable TV company.

For his part, Mr. Sugarman said last week that he didn't intend to just go away.

His Barris Industries, which has produced "The Dating Game" and "The Gong Show," and Giant Group Ltd., a Beverly Hills, Calif.-based cement maker, hold 9.8 percent, or the largest single block, of Media General's 27.7 million shares of Class A stock.

Mr. Sugarman stated, both in a letter to the Bryan family and in (Continued on Page 38)

## Redstone, Kluge step up maneuvering for Orion

By DIANE MERMIGAS

Senior reporter

The cat-and-mouse game between Viacom chief Sumner Redstone and billionaire John Kluge for control of Orion Pictures Corp. accelerated last week as both men moved their stakes closer to 40 percent.

Mr. Kluge's Metromedia Inc. told the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 1 that it had raised its stake in the company to an equivalent of 39.5 percent, from a previous 28.3 percent of the common shares outstanding. Metromedia, a closely held Secaucus, N.J.-based partnership, recently filed for clearance to buy up to 50 percent of Orion.

Meanwhile, sources last week said Mr. Redstone has also been cleared to increase his stake in Orion to about 36 percent.

Both men purchased shares of Orion common stock on the open market and exercised warrants. Messrs. Kluge and Redstone have steadily increased their holdings in Orion over the past several months.

One of the next logical moves could be for both men to request federal clearance under the Harte-Scott-Rodino Act to accumulate more than 50 percent of Orion's stock.

However, doing so would force the investors to be more specific about their intentions. To date, Messrs. Kluge and Redstone have only said they believe the company represents a good investment.

Many Wall Street analysts last week speculated that one of the investors eventually will make a tender offer for the company of at least \$25 per share.

"We do not want to be minority shareholders in a public company. We would not want to see our investment eliminated," Mr. Redstone told ELECTRONIC MEDIA in a recent interview.

"We will do what we have to to escalate and protect our investment position in Orion, which we had a stake in before we acquired Viacom," said Mr. Redstone, who took over Viacom by similar means last year.

However, Mr. Redstone cautioned, "We have not yet made a decision to acquire Orion by ourselves or with others," he said.

Mr. Redstone said that if invited to take a seat on the Orion board as a principal shareholder, he would decline because Viacom takes up his time.

"But just like our investment interest in Orion, I'm not saying that a month or two from now all that might change," he said.

Industry analysts say Orion would be a logical fit for Viacom, which has long wanted to add a movie studio to its diversified holdings.

Mr. Kluge, who last year sold off all his broadcast- and entertainment-related assets, has been less forthcoming about his interest in Orion. He was unavailable for comment.

Orion executives have declined to comment publicly. #

## MCA board strengthens anti-takeover provisions

By DIANE MERMIGAS

Senior reporter

The MCA board last week strengthened its takeover defense against possible suitors, including real-estate magnate Donald Trump.

In a special meeting, the board amended its share purchase-rights agreement so that MCA Chairman Lew Wasserman has the ability to lead a leveraged buyout for the entertainment company, thereby taking it private, or to accumulate shares of stock as an anti-takeover defense.

Specifically, the board agreed to exclude Mr. Wasserman and certain related trusts and associates from a "poison pill" plan that goes into effect after anyone acquires 10 percent of the company's shares.

The board said Mr. Wasserman could be exempt from the 10 percent rule because it is unlikely he "would engage in any transaction that would be to the disadvantage of stockholders."

No further acquisition by Mr. Wasserman of the company's securities, that would expand his current 7 percent holdings, will trigger the poison pill plan, the board said.

Mr. Wasserman, 74, controls more than 15 percent of MCA's outstanding shares

held by friendly institutions or other company officers.

When MCA's board adopted its share purchase-rights agreement last July, it stipulated that the poison pill would go into effect if anyone acquired 20 percent of the company's shares.

The plan still entitles shareholders, among other things, to purchase 760,000 shares of new preferred stock "to guard against partial tender offers and other abusive tactics." The plan states that if a potential raider acquires 20 percent of the company, MCA shareholders would be allowed to purchase the company's common stock at a substantially discounted price.

Mr. Trump, who declined comment on MCA's action, disclosed last month that he owned 375,000 shares of MCA stock at the time of his filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. He also disclosed that he might acquire as much as 24.9 percent of the company's 74 million common shares, which would represent about a \$1.3 billion investment.

Industry sources say Mr. Trump has received U.S. Justice Department clearance to substantially increase his stake in the company. Financial analysts speculate the 41-year-old real estate tycoon may be primarily interested in MCA's land holdings. #

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The George R. Brown Convention Center was the site of the 1988 NATPE convention.

Staff photo by Mary Herlehy

## MTM breaks 'St. Elsewhere' silence

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
and MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
ELECTRONIC MEDIA staff

HOUSTON—The 25th annual National Association of Television Program Executives convention brought the television industry together from Feb. 23 to 29 for business and fun. Here are some of the highlights and snippets of the action:

After a NATPE Saturday session, during which executives discussed "Hours, Minis and Movies: Making Them Work for You," panel member and MTM Distribution Group President Joe Indelli broke his long silence on the status of syndicating "St. Elsewhere."

Mr. Indelli said MTM had only sold the series to about 20 stations, about half of which were allowed to buy the show on a one-year commitment instead of the standard four-year deal.

He said an unspecified cable network, believed to be Lifetime, had shown strong interest in the series, but not until after MTM had made some cash deals with stations and therefore had precluded itself from making a cable sale for the off-network series.

During the session, Mr. Indelli defended hour-long shows in syndication and insisted that there's a misperception in the marketplace that hours are not effective.

\* \* \*

Pierson Mapes, president of the NBC Television Network, pleaded with the network's affiliates to stop pre-empting prime-time programs with syndicated

### CONVENTION NOTEBOOK

specials. The forum was a closed NBC affiliates meeting during NATPE. Mr. Mapes later briefed the press.

According to Mr. Mapes, LBS Communications' "Return to the Titanic . . . Live," which was carried by many affiliates in prime time on Oct. 28, 1987, created a combined 2.7 rating drop, or \$1.5 million loss in ad revenue, for all three networks.

Mr. Mapes also said that Multimedia Entertainment's Oct. 31 prime-time special, "The Search for Houdini," caused a combined three-network 2.2 rating loss, or about \$1.3 million worth of ad revenue.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, the seven NBC owned-and-operated TV stations gathered at NATPE to reiterate their policies regarding the use of fee, promotional, and video billboard items in first-run syndicated shows.

Like the NBC Television Network, the NBC-owned stations are engaged in an "anti-clutter" movement, said Wes Harris, vice president of programming for the station group.

The NBC stations will not buy first-run shows that carry fee or promotional items, except for game shows where the items are clearly associated with the production of the show. For example, a fee item on Pontiac would be allowed if the show was giving away a Pontiac to contestants, explained Mr. Harris.

On the matter of billboard announcements, the NBC stations will allow billboards on barter shows if the advertiser

has already purchased two commercials within a half-hour show.

Mr. Harris said that none of the guidelines was new, but that the stations felt there was a need to summarize and formalize existing policy.

\* \* \*

Donald Trump, whose most recent acquisition target appears to be MCA, was seen in and around the convention. Mr. Trump was trailed by a crew from ABC News that captured footage for an upcoming Barbara Walters profile on "20/20."

\* \* \*

First-run product was nowhere to be found at the Columbia Pictures Television booth. When asked about the status of such projects, a staff member shrugged and said, "Management still hasn't decided what to do about first-run syndication."

Columbia Pictures parents Coca-Cola and Tri-Star dissolved Coca-Cola Telecommunications on Dec. 31 and have kept mum about the new unit's first-run plans.

\* \* \*

NATPE attendees seemed to have little enthusiasm for the Democratic presidential candidates' debate held at the convention on Feb. 28. The debate yielded little news, and some attendees expressed disappointment that candidates Michael Dukakis and Dick Gephardt were no-shows.

Instead they watched the four other Democratic hopefuls—Jesse Jackson, Albert Gore, Paul Simon and Gary Hart—shoot it out. In the end, though, it was Linda Ellerbee who won the most praise for her fearless manner as moderator. #

# NBC seeks improved clearances

By DIANE MERMIGAS  
Senior reporter

NBC is adopting a plan, similar to one in effect at CBS, that will redistribute some of its affiliate compensation dollars to weak dayparts in hopes of improving station clearances.

NBC said it's creating a \$5 million pool of additional compensation for daytime clearances—a daypart where the network runs third in the ratings—by standardizing its payments for carriage of "The NBC Nightly News."

The network announced the compensation plan at its affiliates meeting held during the recent National Association of Television Program Executives convention in Houston.

NBC will increase its current \$35 million in daytime compensation by about 14 percent, retroactive to Feb. 1, according to Pierson Mapes, president of the NBC Television Network.

"The reason we did it is that for the past four or five years, all three networks have been begging their affiliates to improve their daytime clearances, especially in the morning, and that has done very little good," Mr. Mapes said.

"This additional money, coupled with the spiraling cost of first-run syndicated programming, could provide a 'make it or break it' incentive to some stations."

Under the plan, all NBC affiliates, regardless of their size or market location, will be paid 10 percent of their individual hourly compensation rate for clearing the evening news. An hourly rate is determined by such factors as market and audience size.

NBC essentially will reduce its "Nightly News"-related compensation to about \$2 million annually for its more than 200 TV affiliates.

The change will not mean a reduction in the overall compensation payment made to most NBC affiliates, because the additional \$5 million from "The NBC Evening News" will be shifted to stations' daytime reimbursement, Mr. Mapes said.

However, the additional funds will be used as an incentive to stations that currently pre-empt parts of NBC's daytime schedule to begin clearing all of the network's programming.

"Stations will now have to think twice before committing to a syndicated product that they may not make much off of. This is as much a defensive as an offensive mechanism," Mr. Mapes said.

Jim Siefert, NBC affiliate board chairman, said stations probably would consider taking advantage of

(Continued on Page 38)

## TCI President Malone denies large United Cable stock buy

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Reports that Tele-Communications Inc. is interested in buying another chunk of United Cable Television are exaggerated, says TCI President John Malone.

Mr. Malone told an analysts meeting here recently that TCI had filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission to increase its 24 percent stake in United Cable to as much as 49 percent.

However, Mr. Malone said that under an agreement between the two companies, TCI is allowed to increase its shares proportionately if United Cable issues additional shares to other parties.

TCI wants to narrow a gap of about 900,000 shares, or roughly 1½ percent of stock, that had occurred, he said. That would push its holdings past the 25 percent level, requiring SEC approval.

"That filing was made six weeks ago," Mr. Malone says, "before the merger discussions between United Artists (Cablesystems) and United Cable were reinitiated . . . We can't buy anything right now because we're insiders on all these transactions."

United Artists, which is 65 percent owned by TCI, and United Cable have been discussing a merger in recent weeks, after breaking off a combination agreement after the stock market crash. A UCT-UA merger would give

TCI a 46 percent stake in the combined company.

The SEC filing is one of several recent occurrences affecting the size of TCI:

- On Feb. 23, two partially owned TCI companies, Western Tele-Communications and Marcus Communications, merged to form WestMarc Communications, subject to shareholder approval. The following day, TCI increased its 50.7 percent stake in the new firm to 57 percent.

- Comcast Cable Communications executives told a recent analysts meeting that the company plans to exercise an option to acquire a 20 percent holding in the TCI-owned Heritage Communications properties, pending resolution of certain tax problems.

- An agreement by a consortium of multiple cable system operators, including TCI, to purchase the Storer Communications properties for \$1.65 billion fell through Feb. 26. Kohlberg, Kravis & Roberts, which owns Storer, terminated the agreement when the parties failed to resolve the MSOs' dispute over liabilities that were unforeseen when they reached an agreement Dec. 24.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," says Mr. Malone in explaining the termination. "I think the sellers felt like we weren't doing everything they wanted us to do, and the buyers felt that some of the things they represented to us weren't quite accurate and we wanted modifications and/or (liability) indemnities to make their representations accurate." #

## Shelley Duvall, TBS reach programming deal

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Shelley Duvall's recently formed Think Entertainment reached a programming agreement last week with Turner Broadcasting System.

The financial details and number of programs have yet to be worked out, says Gerald Hogan, president of TBS's entertainment network. However, the shows probably will be made-for-TV movies or mini-series, he says.

"It might be 18 to 24 months before (the first Think program) debuts," Mr. Hogan says, "and it could be a prelude to (the planned network) TNT. But we don't have a firm go on that yet."

Think's productions are also slated to premiere on superstation TBS, he says.

The Turner executive added that so far Turner and Think have exchanged program ideas, but haven't decided what will be produced.

Jim Mullany, chief financial officer and vice president of finance at Think, says the company has reached agreements with other cable networks, but those deals haven't been announced yet.

"There's one (production) beyond the idea stage that could lead to a multiprogram deal," Mr. Mullany says.

Rights for the syndication aftermarket will be negotiated with networks on a program-by-program basis, he says.

Ms. Duvall formed Think in January with the backing of several multiple cable system operators. The company plans to produce a wide variety of programming exclusively for cable debuts. #



# Who's The Boss?



## A must buy.

# 'Summer' at the South Pole



A CNN crew tries to establish contact with two Antarctic natives.

## CNN tackles Antarctic obstacles in filming expedition

By EILEEN NORRIS

Special to ELECTRONIC MEDIA

CNN's science editor, Charles Crawford, considered his three-man crew extremely lucky to encounter a temperature of only 25 degrees below zero when their Navy-driven C-130 cargo plane landed at the South Pole.

The warm November temperature—it's typically minus-55 degrees Fahrenheit during the "summer" months, and that's not including the wind-chill factor—meant fewer technical problems for shooting CNN's remote reports from the ice-covered region.

CNN made the trip at the invitation of the National Science Foundation, which each year selects one TV network to visit Antarctica. CBS, for example, went in 1986.

Despite warnings that their equipment might not be able to take the extreme cold, the CNN team made the most of its trip by filming a series of seven reports without incident.

"We were told our tapes would freeze and the lenses would fog up, but we only had minor problems, like tapes flaking a little and a slight problem with the zoom lens," said Ric Blackburn, cameraman and editor in the CNN Science and Technology unit.

Sony loaned CNN two of its Betacam, which house the camera and recorder in one unit. The crew needed two cameras in case one failed in the cold, said Mr. Blackburn.

"There was no time to waste because we only had 24 hours at the South Pole, and the plane was waiting to take us back," he explained.

"Back" meant the 750-mile ride to McMurdo Station, situated in a region of the Antarctic that has milder temperatures. It's also where the U.S. Navy base and National Science Foundation are based. At McMurdo, the temperature remained a balmy 30 degrees during the crew's 10-day stay.

CNN's trip had been a long time in the making, and the preparations were painstaking. The crew, including cameraman Tyrone Edwards, even packed camera covers heated by a battery belt.

But the covers, which resembled dog sweaters, got in the way when a crew member was changing the tape in the Betacam, so they weren't of much use, Mr. Edwards said.

And lighting was never a problem because the frigid region had around-the-clock daylight until last month, when total darkness sets in for six months.

Mr. Crawford, for example, remembers doing one story at



CNN sent (left to right) Tyrone Edwards, Ric Blackburn and Charles Crawford to the Antarctic.

11 p.m. so the sun would be in the right position to catch him and Mt. Erebus, an active volcano, with head-on lighting.

The story was on the global transport of pollutants: Since the region has no pollution, scientists can track air particles from its source of pollution, the volcano, fairly easily.

CNN also did a story on how the Emperor penguin can dive 1,000 feet and stay under water for up to 16 minutes and then shoot straight back out of the water. Scientists researching the penguins attached sensors on the birds' backs to help them gain a better understanding of the penguins' underwater abilities.

The science unit did another piece about a man catching fish at a depth of 1,100 feet.

The unit had to whittle its "wish list" of stories from 16 down to seven reports because of time constraints and because some of the scientists had finished their research and were back in the United States.

The crew's four months of preparation began in August, when the National Science Foundation notified CNN it had been chosen, along with a couple of print reporters, to visit Antarctica around Thanksgiving.

In October, Mr. Crawford flew to Washington for an orientation session and to get an idea of what scientific research projects would be in the works when the crew was there.

"We're always looking for fresh, new material because at CNN we have 'Science and Technology Today,' a report that airs three times each weekday and a weekly review show as well," says Mr. Crawford, who visited Antarctica in 1979 when he was a science correspondent for CBS.

After passing intense physical exams, the CNN crew left Atlanta the day after Thanksgiving.

Some 30-plus hours of air time and several planes later, they arrived in New Zealand, where the National Science Foundation has a support force. There, they were outfitted with the proper clothing before they made the trip to McMurdo Station.

The crew members were each given a survival bag with extra layers of clothing in case they were caught in an ice storm, which, they were warned, could blow up any time.

Because the crew ate in a mess hall and slept in a dormitory with the scientists and military people at the base, CNN was able to hold expenses for the trip down to about \$8,000, and that was mostly for air travel.

Entertainment at McMurdo consisted of grabbing a beer at the Navy officers club or tuning in to K-ICE, a closed-circuit TV station that airs old movies and an evening newscast.

"One night we watched a two-week old Monday night football game on video that someone's wife had sent," Mr. Blackburn said.

K-ICE is pretty small, so it couldn't have supplied CNN with the kind of film footage of the Antarctic the network was looking for, said Mr. Blackburn.

"Our science unit is very specialized, and it would have been impossible for (K-ICE) to get the stories we were after."

Says Mr. Crawford, "Only 10,000 or so people have visited the Antarctic in the history of the planet, so there's a lot of fascination out there with that part of the world."

"The feedback to the station has been incredible," he adds. "People want to see more."

CNN is planning to answer that interest. In the works is an untitled, half-hour special to air March 19 and again March 20 that will give viewers the "more" they've been asking for.

Mr. Blackburn said the special will have little narration—"we'll just let the pictures and natural setting tell the story." #

## Cox Cable, telephone firm running PPV project

C&P Telephone, a Bell Atlantic company, and Cox Cable Hampton Roads are running the country's largest trial of **pay-per-view TV supported by a telephone company** through automatic number identification. The yearlong project, which began in January, is offering about 90,000 Cox customers in the Virginia communities of Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach the PPV service, called "First View Connection." The service is entirely automated, allowing impulse buying, and it's compatible with rotary or touch-tone dialing. Equipment in C&P's central offices will read the number dialed and the number

### TECHNOLOGY BRIEFS

from which the call was placed. That data will then transmit the calling-number data to the cable franchisee's computer, which then fills the order. Cable customers will be charged on their cable bills for PPV programming, and C&P will bill Cox Cable for completed PPV calls.

\* \* \*

NBC has ordered 20 Cyphers, several Paintboxes, Digital Library Systems and "Harry" digital editing systems from Quantel for graphic support when it covers the 1988 Sum-

mer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. The equipment, which will back up the network's existing Quantel equipment, cost \$3 million. The new Cyphers—the largest part of the order—will be used as the principal character generators at the control areas and at the sports venues during the Summer Games. In addition, they can integrate with the "Harry" systems to manipulate 3-D picture cutouts.

\* \* \*

**Bennett Productions**, a video post-production facility, has opened in Los Angeles. The facility, at 5950 Wilshire Blvd., features a ¾-inch editing bay. The fully equipped off-

line bay has two Sony BVU-800s, a Convergence 195 edit controller and extensive list management support. In addition, the facility offers an eight-inch Greco disk drive that can store an outputted CMX 300 series EDL for on-line auto assembly. The entire facility is offered for \$45 an hour, which doesn't include an operator.

\* \* \*

**Walters & Steinberg Productions** of Lafayette, Ind., now has a 3-D animation service. Using a Cubicomp system, the company offers affordable 3-D animation, in addition to its regular video and post-production services. #

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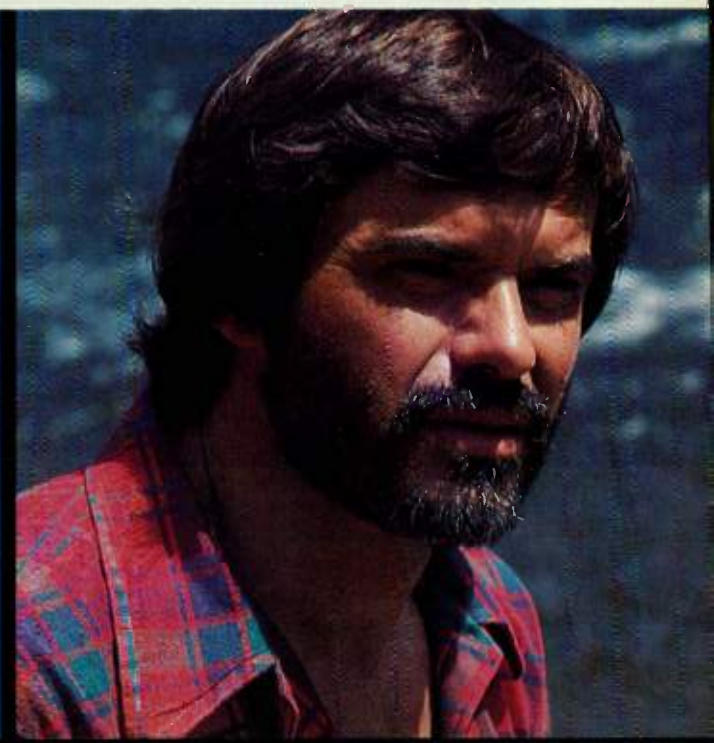


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# Rep. Dingell raps industry's fairness stance

By DOUG HALONEN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—The broadcasting industry's support for the elimination of the fairness doctrine is "short-sighted and could be disastrous" for broadcasters, a key congressman said last week.

Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said the Federal Communications Commission, by eliminating the doctrine, has damaged the justification for regulations that the industry supports.

Among those regulations that he said are

undermined are must-carry rules, which the industry has been lobbying Congress to reimpose, the prime-time access rule and network syndication restrictions.

Rep. Dingell, whose committee oversees communications matters, made his remarks at the National Association of Broadcasters' state leadership conference here last week.

The congressman vowed that Congress' fight to get the fairness doctrine reinstated "is not over."

"If the Congress does not reinstate it this year," he said, "it will next year. If not the next year, then the year after."

Rep. Dingell said the FCC's fairness deci-

sion has undermined the "scarcity argument," which holds that broadcast content rules are constitutionally justifiable because not everyone who wants a broadcast license can get one due to limited spectrum space.

If the courts buy the FCC's argument, other agency rules based on the same logic would be vulnerable, the congressman said.

And, he said, that's the way the Department of Justice is interpreting the FCC's fairness decision.

Among the rules he sees as being vulnerable is the prime-access rule, which requires network affiliates in the largest markets to set aside time in the early evening for non-net-

work programming.

Network syndication rules bar the major TV networks from syndicating programming.

He also warned that the broadcast industry's support of the doctrine's demolition could work against the effort to get additional spectrum for high-definition TV.

The day after Rep. Dingell's remarks, the NAB executive committee said it had agreed to earmark \$6,000 to support the FCC's elimination of the doctrine in the courts.

"There's some things we don't back off from, and one of these is our First Amendment rights," said NAB executive committee member Ted Snider. #

## WHO'S NEWS

### Broadcast TV

**Ronald Lightstone** to executive vice president of corporate and legal affairs, Aaron Spelling Productions, Los Angeles, from senior vice president of corporate and legal affairs, Viacom International, New York.

**James Carey** to vice president and director of Eastern sales, ABC, New York, from account executive.

**Alvin Leitl** to president and general manager, WEAU-TV, Eau Claire, Wis., from president and general manager, WRLH-TV, Richmond, Va.

**Michael Bock** to vice president and director of broadcast operations, Guy Gannett Broadcasting Services, Portland, Maine, from vice president and general manager, KGAN-TV, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Mr. Bock will be succeeded at KGAN by **Richard Herbst**, who moves from general manager, WGEM-AM/FM/TV, Quincy, Ill.

**Eric Tannenbaum** to director of dramatic development, New World Television, Los Angeles, from manager of creative affairs.

**Bill Boggs** to executive producer, "The Morton Downey Jr. Show," New York, from host, "Time Out



**DICK HAMMER**  
CBN Cable Network



**KELLY CHURCH**  
KUPL-AM/FM



**HYLTON PHILIPSON**  
Henry Ansbacher Inc.



**JODI GOALSTONE**  
BPME

With Bill Boggs," KYW-TV, Philadelphia.

**Jo Ann Wise** to executive producer in creative services, WTAE-TV, Philadelphia, from promotion producer.

**Randy Price** to chief engineer, WISN-TV, Milwaukee, from chief engineer, WDTN-TV, Dayton, Ohio.

### Cable TV

**Melvin Bijou** to vice president for operations, Microband Wireless Cable of New York, from operations manager, Cox Cable Communications, New York.

**Dr. Tom Rockwell** to chairman of Lifetime Medical Television, Los Angeles, from president. Also, **David Moore** to president, Lifetime Medical Television, New York, from vice president and general manager.

**Dick Hammer** to acting director of advertising sales, CBN Cable Network, New York, from Eastern sales manager.

**Lew Scharfberg** to operations manager, Cable Six TV, Middletown, N.Y., from manager of creative services, Cablevision of Islip, Islip, N.Y.

**Scott Abbot** to manager of national accounts, The Disney Channel, New York, from director of affiliate audit, HBO, New York. Also, **Eva Dahm** to regional director of the central region, The Disney Channel, Chicago, from area marketing manager; **Ronda Paschal** to regional director of the Southwest area, The Disney Channel, Dallas, from marketing manager.

### Radio

**Kevin Smith** to vice president and general manager, WLLZ-FM, Detroit, from station manager, KDWB-AM/FM, Minneapolis.

**Ken MacKenzie** to operations manager, WPAT-AM/FM, New York. He continues as afternoon-drive air personality.

**Bill Bartlett** to director of affili-

ate relations, MCA Radio Network, Los Angeles, from director of national album promotion, Capitol Records, Los Angeles.

**Pat White** to director of client services, WKXX-FM, St. Louis, from on-air personality, KYKY-FM, St. Louis.

**Chuck Chackel**, general manager of KUGN-AM/FM, Eugene, Ore.; **Jack Lee**, general manager of WEMP-AM, Hales Corners, Wis.; and **Don Tool**, general manager of KRNT-AM, Des Moines, Iowa, have been elected to the Arbitron Radio Advisory Council.

### Journalism

**J. Michael Theodore** to managing editor, KPIX-TV, San Francisco, from Western regional coordinator, CBS News Services, Los Angeles.

**Rick Mitchell** to 5 p.m. newscast producer, KOMO-TV, Seattle, from 5 p.m. newscast producer, WDAF-TV, Kansas City, Mo. Also, **Len Cannon** to general assignment reporter from reporter, WDSU-TV, New Orleans.

**Joe Oliver** to weekend anchor, KCRA-TV, Sacramento, Calif. He continues as weekday reporter.

**Kelly Church** to news anchor, KUPL-AM/FM, Portland, Ore., from part-time reporter.

### Syndication

**Michael Spitalnik** to senior vice president and general sales manager, Independent Television Sales, New York, from vice president and East Coast manager. Also, **Martin Owens** to senior vice president, ITS, Los Angeles, from vice president and West Coast manager. **James Warner** to senior vice president, ITS, Chicago, from vice president and Midwest manager.

**Charles Lizzo** to senior vice president and director of national sales, MMT Sales, New York, from vice president and director of independent station sales, MMT, New York.

**Jonathan Birkhahn** to vice pres-

ident of business and legal affairs, King World, New York, from senior attorney for legal affairs, Polygram Records, New York.

**Jack Firestone** to director of sales, Michael Krauss Syndication, White Plains, N.Y., from sales executive, Barris Program Sales, New York.

**Mindy Gildin** to director of business affairs, Viacom Enterprises, New York, from attorney in the antitrust and trade department, Weil, Gotshal & Manges, New York.

### Other

**Hylton Philipson** to president and chief executive officer, Henry Ansbacher Inc., New York, from managing director.

**Richard Hummers** to corporate controller, Microband Cos., New York, from assistant vice president for financial affairs. Also, **Michael Abramson** to treasurer from director of the cash and banking system, M. Lowenstein Corp., New York.

**Mary Fichter** to executive vice president for sales, Teleworld, Los Angeles, from senior vice president for sales, Management Insights, Dallas.

**Bernie Brillstein**, chairman of Lorimar Film Entertainment and the Brillstein Co., Los Angeles, has been named to the board of Lorimar Telepictures Corp., Los Angeles.

**Nick Norton** to vice president of sales and marketing, Galanty & Co., Santa Monica, Calif., from senior product manager, Lorimar Home Video, Culver City, Calif.

**Jodi Goalstone** to communications manager, Broadcast Promotion and Marketing Executives, Los Angeles, from president, The Write Idea, New York.

### Obituary

**Carla Laufer**, an affiliate marketing representative for The Disney Channel, died Feb. 14 of cancer. Ms. Laufer, 37, was a resident of Palos Heights, Ill. #

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Airwo'f's high-tech adventures and its balanced demos—an equal number of men 18-49, women 18-49, and kids & teens—give it a unique advantage in two critical dayparts.

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And its balanced demos are just what the weekend ordered.

## AIRWOLF

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## MCATV

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WCCO  
TELEVISION  
WINNER OF  
THE COVETED  
du-PONT COLUMBIA  
EDWARD R. MURROW  
GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY  
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AWARDS





In 1987 WCCO Television became the most honored station in America, winning virtually every major broadcast journalism award.

Our efforts paid off as Twin Cities viewers once again placed WCCO Television on top of the competition. With news dominance at 5:00, 6:00, and 10:00PM, WCCO Television has the highest 9:00AM-MID share of any station in the top 15 markets. With the addition of satellite stations KCCO Alexandria and KCCW Walker, WCCO+ continues to be the dominant force in the nation's 12th largest DMA.

**WCCO TELEVISION, WINNING THROUGH EXCELLENCE**



LOCAL NEWS	STATION	TV RATING	AUDIENCE SHARE
5:00 PM Mon-Fri	WCCO+/CBS	3	29%
	KSTP+/ABC	11	24%
	KARE/NBC	6	14%
6:00 PM Mon-Fri	WCCO+/CBS	18	32%
	KSTP+/ABC	12	20%
	KARE/NBC	7	12%
10:00 PM Mon-Sun	WCCO+/CBS	17	32%
	KSTP+/ABC	13	25%
	KARE/NBC	14	28%

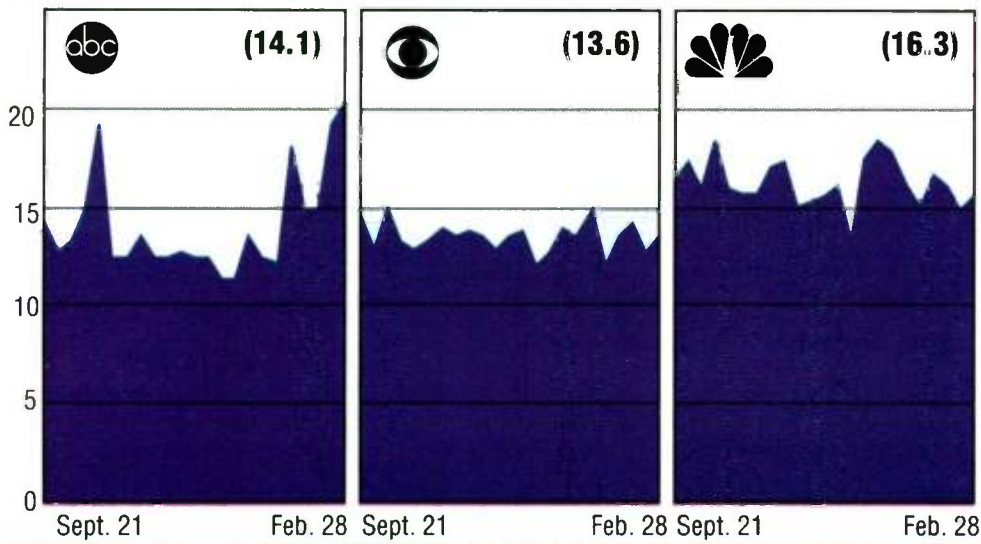
A.C. NIELSEN JANUARY 1988		HH SHARES SUN/SAT 9 AM-MID		
RANK	MARKET	CBS	ABC	NBC
1	New York	18	21	19
2	Los Angeles	18	18	19
3	Chicago	15	25	17
4	Philadelphia	15	24	18
5	San Francisco	16	18	18
6	Boston	16	18	20
7	Detroit	20	24	25
8	Dallas*	20	20	21
9	Washington, D.C.	24	20	19
10	Houston*	18	24	19
11	Cleveland	24	20	22
<b>12</b>	<b>Minneapolis St. Paul</b>	<b>29</b>	20	19
13	Atlanta	21	23	19
14	Tampa*	27	18	23
15	Seattle*	19	21	21

\*Nov 87 NSI Reports, no Jan 88 data

**SEASON-TO-DATE RATINGS (AVERAGES)**

**WEEKS 1-23: SEPT. 21 THROUGH FEB. 28**

**NETWORK PRIME TIME**



**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

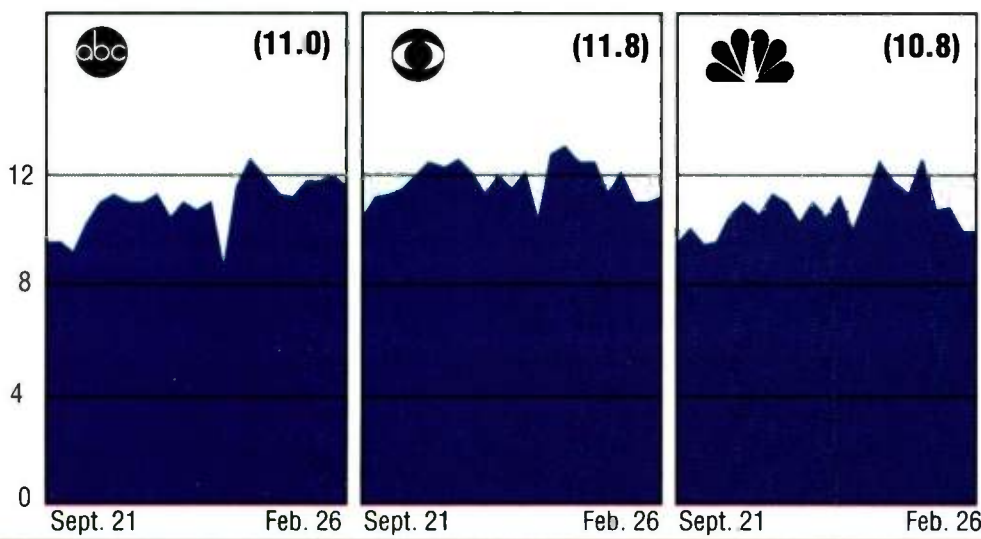
**Top Olympic half hours**

Date	Time (ET)	Rating
Feb. 27	10:30-11	35.7
Feb. 27	10-10:30	33.7
Feb. 27	9:30-10	29.8
Feb. 16	10-10:30	29.3
Feb. 16	10:30-11	27.8
Feb. 27	9-9:30	27.0
Feb. 20	10-10:30	26.3
Feb. 23	10-10:30	26.1
Feb. 16	9:30-10	25.7
Feb. 23	9:30-10	25.6

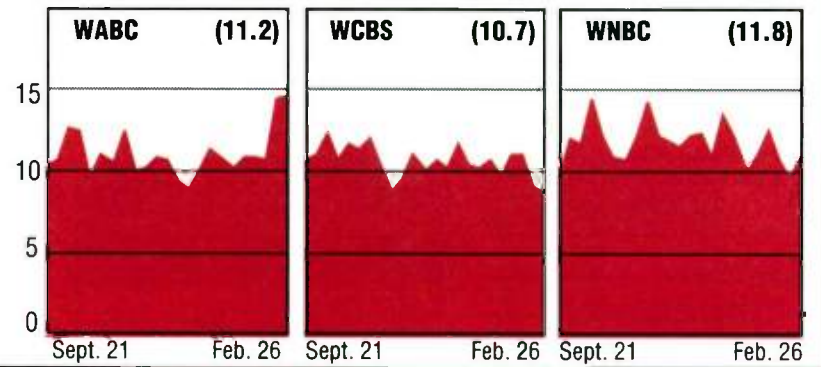


Wide World Photos  
Debi Thomas

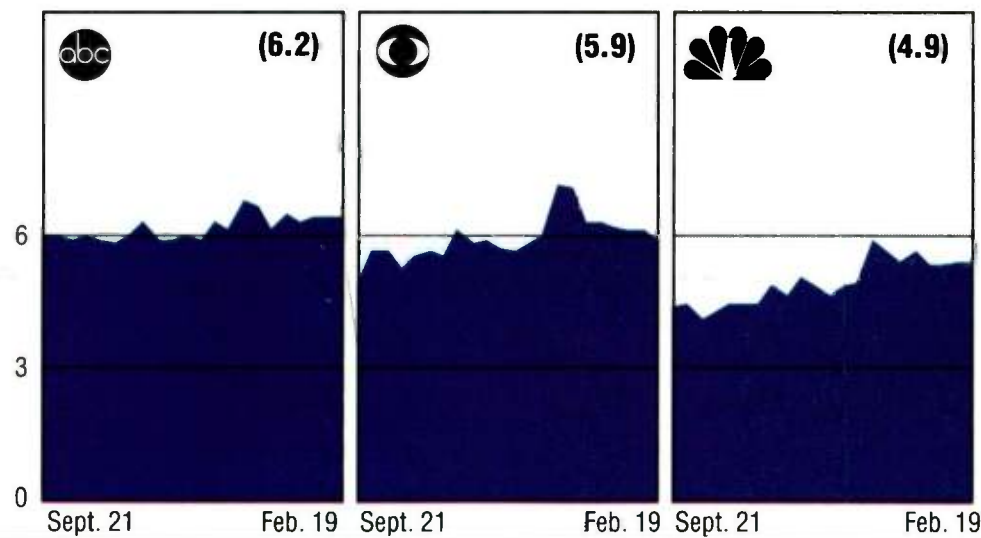
**NETWORK EVENING NEWS**



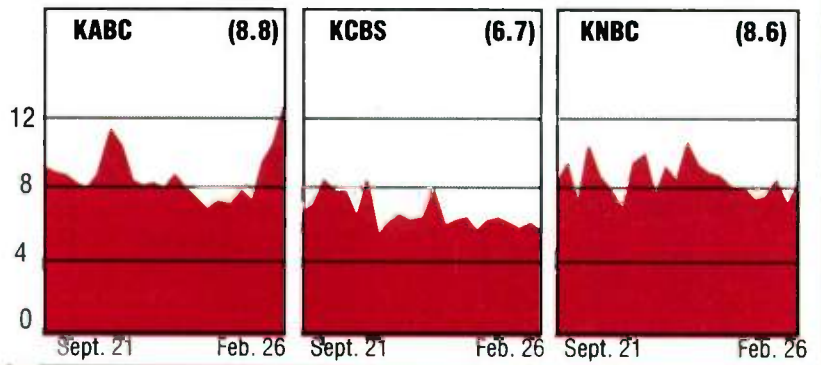
**NEW YORK 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



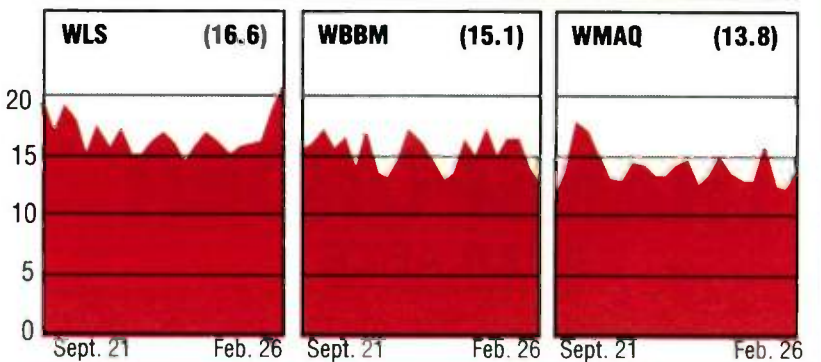
**NETWORK DAYTIME—SEPT. 21 TO FEB. 19**



**LOS ANGELES 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



**CHICAGO 10 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



**SEASON-TO-DATE RATINGS/SHARES OF REGULAR PRIME-TIME NETWORK PROGRAMS**

1. The Cosby Show	NBC 25.3/45	(t) NBC Sunday Night Movie	NBC 16.8/27	(t) St. Elsewhere	NBC 13.3/23	(t) Oldest Rookie	CBS 10.3/17
2. A Different World	NBC 25.1/40	24. Head of the Class	ABC 16.7/26	46. 'Slap' Maxwell	ABC 13.1/21	68. Law & Harry McGraw	CBS 10.2/17
3. Cheers	NBC 23.0/37	25. Newhart	CBS 16.6/25	47. MacGyver	ABC 12.8/20	69. Houston Knights	CBS 9.6/16
4. Growing Pains	ABC 22.8/34	26. Hunter	NBC 16.5/28	(t) Simon & Simon	CBS 12.8/19	(t) Rags to Riches	NBC 9.6/17
5. Night Court	NBC 22.8/36	27. Perfect Strangers	ABC 16.1/26	49. 20/20	ABC 12.7/23	71. Hotel	ABC 9.4/18
6. Golden Girls	NBC 22.3/38	28. Hoopman	ABC 15.7/25	50. Equalizer	CBS 12.6/22	72. Thoms	ABC 9.2/15
7. Who's the Boss?	ABC 21.7/33	(t) Designing Women	CBS 15.7/24	(t) Frank's Place	CBS 12.6/19	(t) ABC Thursday Night Movie	ABC 9.2/16
8. 60 Minutes	CBS 21.0/33	30. Knots Landing	CBS 15.6/26	52. A Year in the Life	NBC 12.3/19	74. Pursuit of Happiness	ABC 9.1/16
9. Murder, She Wrote	CBS 20.4/30	31. ABC Monday Night Movie	ABC 15.5/24	53. Jake & the Fatman	CBS 12.2/19	75. 48 Hours	CBS 8.9/13
10. Moonlighting	ABC 19.2/30	32. ABC Sunday Night Movie	ABC 15.3/23	54. Crime Story	NBC 12.1/21	76. Ohara	ABC 8.7/15
11. L.A. Law	NBC 18.8/32	33. Kate & Allie	CBS 15.0/22	55. High Mountain Rangers	CBS 11.9/20	77. CBS Saturday Movie	CBS 8.3/15
(t) ALF	NBC 18.8/28	34. Facts of Life	NBC 14.9/26	56. Mr. Belvedere	ABC 11.6/19	78. Sledge Hammer!	ABC 7.7/12
13. Family Ties	NBC 18.2/27	35. Highway to Heaven	ABC 14.7/23	(t) Wiseguy	CBS 11.6/19	79. West 57th	CBS 7.6/14
14. Matlock	NBC 17.8/27	36. Dynasty	ABC 14.6/25	(t) Star House	NBC 11.6/18	80. Charmings	ABC 7.5/12
15. CBS Sunday Movie	CBS 17.7/28	37. Falcon Crest	CBS 14.5/26	59. Sonny Spoon	NBC 11.5/20	81. Sable	ABC 7.4/13
(t) Amen	NBC 17.7/31	38. Magnum, P.I.	CBS 14.4/22	60. Disney Sunday Movie	ABC 11.3/18	82. My Sister Sam	CBS 7.3/14
17. NFL Monday Night Football	ABC 17.4/31	39. Miami Vice	NBC 13.8/23	61. Tour of Duty	CBS 11.2/17	83. Max Headroom	ABC 6.6/12
18. Dallas	CBS 17.1/27	40. thirtysomething	ABC 13.7/24	62. Sponsor: Far Hire	ABC 11.1/17	84. Everything's Relative	CBS 6.5/11
19. Valerie's Family	NBC 17.0/25	41. Dolly	ABC 13.6/21	63. Buck James	ABC 10.9/18	85. Leg Work	CBS 6.2/11
(t) My Two Dads	NBC 17.0/25	42. Beauty & the Beast	CBS 13.5/23	64. Full House	ABC 10.4/18	86. Once a Hero	ABC 4.1/8
21. NBC Monday Night Movies	NBC 17.0/27	43. Cagney & Lacey	CBS 13.3/23	(t) Private Eye	NBC 10.4/19		
22. 227	NBC 16.8/29	(t) J.J. Starbuck	NBC 13.3/23	66. I Married Dora	ABC 10.3/18		

# Broadcaster makes concessions in bid for FM

(Continued from Page 3)  
 successor," Mr. Ballantyne stated in the letter, according to Mr. Gabbert.

- Cash donations by Mr. Gabbert of \$10,000 each to two separate charities.
- Fundraisers by Mr. Gabbert's stations that would generate a minimum of \$500,000 a year for charities in their service area.

Mr. Ballantyne refused to confirm the specifics of that letter, but he acknowledged stating what he termed "proposals" at Mr. Gabbert's request.

He expressed shock that Mr. Gabbert made supposedly confidential material between them public.

Mr. Ballantyne called the conditions "purely theoretical" and said the letter was "worded very specifically as a proposal" and "was supposed to be the beginning of a negotiation process."

Despite the petition's withdrawal, the FCC at press time had still refused to give Mr. Gabbert another multiple-ownership "note of exception" to allow him his third broadcast license in San Francisco, arguing that such a move wouldn't be in the public interest.

The FCC's stand could have serious ramifications for Mr. Gabbert, who has agreed to pay Seattle-based Olympic Broadcasting, KHIT's owner, \$1 million if the \$11 million deal doesn't close by April 17.

Mr. Gabbert, who was in Washington last week lobbying for a successful repeal of the decision, met with several FCC members, including Mass Media Bureau Chief Alex Felker, who wrote the letter denying the transfer.

Until Mr. Gabbert persuaded Mr. Ballantyne to drop his petition—the second and last petition against the transfer—such contact with the FCC was prohibited.

Two weeks ago, Mr. Gabbert persuaded the Coalition to Save the City, an organized group of listeners who were loyal to KHIT when it was dubbed The City, to drop its petition.

He said he would restore the eclectic music format the group is trying to resurrect.

The group had Mr. Gabbert read the new agreement in principle live on his TV station and secured signed legal documents to prevent him from changing his course again, said Gaynell Rogers, a coalition board member.

Ms. Rogers, who told ELECTRONIC MEDIA her

involvement in the coalition was "a labor of love," later confirmed that music recorded by her husband, Roy Rogers, was played by disc jockeys under the old format but is no longer used under the station's current regime.

Mr. Gabbert's latest strategy to push for FCC approval by the April 17 deadline comes on the heels of an earlier approach that apparently backfired.

Shortly before the FCC denied the transfer last month, Mr. Gabbert told ELECTRONIC MEDIA that he would lose the \$1 million in escrow only if the FCC didn't act one way or the other by April 17.

"That was the story Jim was giving out," says his attorney, Roger Metzler. "It was always clear to me that if (the FCC) said 'no,' his money was in danger."

Asked about the discrepancy, Mr. Gabbert said: "Maybe it was misunderstood, miscommunication on my part. I don't know."

But sources close to Mr. Gabbert say he went to the press with this to pressure the FCC to act, believing it would approve the transfer.

Mr. Gabbert will say only that he was sur-

prised by the commission's denial.

The commission had granted an exception to Mr. Gabbert in 1986 to purchase his AM station on the grounds that it would help the UHF outlet he already owned.

However, the FCC questioned how buying KHIT, which was losing more than \$100,000 a month under its old format, would improve the financial picture of KOFY-TV.

Mr. Gabbert documented that KOFY is losing \$1.2 million to \$3.2 million a year.

However, Mr. Gabbert contends that if time on the AM and FM stations was sold together, they could generate billings of at least \$6.5 million a year instead of the \$1 million they'd earn separately.

Meanwhile, sources say the paperwork in the appeals process at the FCC will take at least 60 days; it's not known how long it will take the commission to act on the matter after that. The 60-day period takes Mr. Gabbert through the end of April, just shy of the May 17 date when he actually has to come up with the \$1 million owed Olympic.

Says Mr. Gabbert, "We're running it to the wire." #

## NETWORK PRIME-TIME HOUSEHOLD RATINGS

A.C. Nielsen Co.  
 ratings/shares  
 for the week of  
 Feb. 22 to Feb.  
 28.

	8 p.m.	9 p.m.	10 p.m.
Monday	abc Olympics 21.3/31		
	eyebrow Kate & Allie 13.3/20	Designing Women 13.7/20	Newhart 15.8/22
	nbc ALF 18.2/27	Valerie's Family 16.0/23	Noble House 15.9/24
Tuesday	abc Olympics 23.5/35		
	eyebrow Garfield 10.0/15	Charlie Brown 10.4/15	Jake & the Fatman 12.4/18
	nbc Matlock 19.0/28		Noble House 15.0/22
Wednesday	abc Pres. Speech N/A	Olympics 18.8/28	
	eyebrow Pres. Speech N/A	Wizard of Oz 15.3/22	Equalizer 9.3/17
	nbc Pres. Speech N/A	Highway to Heaven 14.0/21	Noble House 16.3/26
Thursday	abc Olympics 20.3/30		
	eyebrow Tour of Duty 12.9/19	Simon & Simon 12.7/18	Knots Landing 15.2/23
	nbc The Cosby Show 24.8/37	A Different World 21.3/31	Cheers 20.4/30
Friday	abc Olympics 14.5/25		
	eyebrow Beauty & the Beast 13.1/22	Dallas 16.6/27	Falcon Crest 13.8/24
	nbc Friday Night Surprise 13.4/23	Miami Vice 12.7/21	Sonny Spoon 11.2/20
Saturday	abc Olympics 26.4/43		
	eyebrow High Mountain Rangers 9.3/15	Houston Knights 7.5/12	West 57th 5.5/9
	nbc Facts of Life 15.0/24	227 15.3/24	Golden Girls 18.2/28
Sunday	abc Olympics 17.2/27		
	eyebrow 60 Minutes 20.5/33	Murder, She Wrote 19.7/29	CBS Sunday Night Movie: Bluegrass, Part 1 17.6/27
	nbc Our House 10.2/17	Family Ties 16.7/25	My Two Dads 14.4/21

Source: A.C. Nielsen Co.

## AGB HOUSEHOLD RATINGS

For the week of Feb. 22 to Feb. 28

	Rating/share
1. Winter Olympics, Sat.	ABC 25.6/41
2. The Cosby Show	NBC 24.5/37
3. Winter Olympics, Tues.	ABC 22.7/34
4. Different World	NBC 21.2/31
5. Cheers	NBC 20.9/31
6. Winter Olympics, Mon.	ABC 20.6/32
7. Winter Olympics, Thurs.	ABC 20.3/31
8. Murder, She Wrote	CBS 20.2/29
9. Matlock	NBC 19.1/28
10. 60 Minutes	CBS 18.7/29
11. Night Court	NBC 18.6/28
12. Winter Olympics, Wed.	ABC 18.3/29
13. ALF	NBC 18.1/27
14. Winter Olympics, Sun.	ABC 17.7/27
15. Golden Girls	NBC 17.7/27
16. Family Ties	NBC 17.2/25
17. CBS Sunday Night Movie	CBS 16.8/25
18. Dallas	CBS 16.4/27
19. Valerie's Family	NBC 16.4/24
20. 227	NBC 15.9/24
21. Newhart	CBS 15.8/23
22. Noble House, Wed.	NBC 15.3/26
23. Winter Olympics, Fri.	ABC 15.3/26
24. Sunday Night at the Movies	NBC 15.2/23
25. Facts of Life	NBC 15.1/24
26. Friday Night Surprise	NBC 14.7/24
27. My Two Dads	NBC 14.6/20
28. Amen	NBC 14.2/21
29. Falcon Crest	CBS 14.2/25
30. L.A. Law	NBC 13.9/22
31. Highway to Heaven	NBC 13.8/21
32. Noble House, Tues.	NBC 13.8/21
33. Special Movie Presentation	CBS 13.7/21
34. Designing Women	CBS 13.4/20
35. Noble House, Mon.	NBC 13.4/21
36. Kate & Allie	CBS 13.3/20
37. Jake and the Fatman	CBS 13.3/20
38. Beauty and the Beast	CBS 13.2/22
39. Knots Landing	CBS 12.6/20
40. Frank's Place	CBS 12.0/18
41. Our House	NBC 11.8/19
42. Miami Vice	NBC 11.8/19
43. Charlie Brown special	CBS 11.2/16
44. Tour of Duty	CBS 10.6/16
45. Garfield in Paradise	CBS 10.5/16
46. Sonny Spoon Detective	NBC 10.5/19
47. Simon & Simon	CBS 10.4/16
48. Cagney & Lacey	CBS 10.4/17
49. Equalizer	CBS 9.3/18
50. High Mountain Rangers	CBS 8.9/14
51. J.J. Starbuck	NBC 8.5/14
52. Wiseguy	CBS 8.4/14
53. Houston Knights	CBS 8.0/12
54. West 57th	CBS 6.0/10

# Local sweeps heated up by news battles

(Continued from Page 4)

In prime access, WABC's "Jeopardy!" was the market leader at 7 p.m. with a 16.4/28, according to Nielsen, and a 15.2/27, according to Arbitron.

At 7:30 p.m., WCBS's "Wheel of Fortune" was the leader with a Nielsen score of 16.1/26 and an Arbitron rating of 14.8/25.

WABC's 11 p.m. news benefited from a nightly Winter Olympics lead-in to lead the market's late-night newscasts. WABC's 11 p.m. news received a 12.5/25 for the Nielsen sweeps period of Feb. 4 to March 2.

WNBC's late-night news had a 10.9/22 during the sweeps, and WCBS had a 10.6/21, Nielsen said.

On the Arbitron scoreboard, which covered Feb. 3 to March 1, WABC had an 11.8/25 for its late news, WCBS had an 8.3/18 and WNBC had an 8.4/18.

## LOS ANGELES

ABC-owned-and-operated KABC-TV here remained the local news ratings leader during the February sweeps, edging out NBC-owned KNBC-TV in key time periods and finishing well ahead of CBS-owned KCBS-TV.

KABC's local news even beat the network evening newscasts on both KNBC and KCBS at 6:30 p.m.

At 11 p.m., according to Nielsen overnight numbers, KABC drew a 10.3/25, ahead of KNBC's 8.4/20 and KCBS's 6.4/16.

According to Arbitron, KABC is on top for the 11 p.m. newscast with a 10.5/28, followed by KNBC's 7.5/20 and KCBS's 5.8/16.

For these and other earlier local newscasts, KABC generally posted modest gains over the same period a year ago, while KNBC lost some ground and KCBS held firm.

Among shows on independent stations, "Wheel of Fortune" remained dominant at 7 p.m. on KCOP-TV with an 11.5/18 in Nielsen and an 11.4/19 in Arbitron, although both reflect a slight decline from February 1987.

King World's other high-rated game show, "Jeopardy!," remains strong on KCOP with an 11.2/17 in Nielsen and an 11.4/19 in Arbitron.

From 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., KTLA-TV's reruns of "Magnum, P.I." generated a dominating 9.3/16 under Nielsen, while Arbitron reported an 8/15. Arbitron gave the time period to the off-network sitcoms "Three's Company" (8.6/16) and "Too Close for Comfort" (9/16) on KTTV-TV.

At 7:30 p.m., KNBC's sitcom checkerboard was defeated by KTLA's similar lineup, but both stations were behind KABC's in-house magazine "Eye On L.A." (11.3/17 under Nielsen, 8.5/14 by Arbitron) and KTTV's "M\*A\*S\*H" (10.4/16 Nielsen, 9.1/15 Arbitron).

In the 8 p.m.-to-10 p.m. independent movie race, KTLA finished first under Arbitron, with slightly higher averages than last year, while both second-place KTTV and third-place KCOP made gains over 1987. According to Nielsen, KCOP finished ahead of KTLA, with KTTV in third place.

## CHICAGO

The Winter Olympics strengthened ABC-owned WLS-TV's longtime dominance of the February sweeps here.

CBS-owned WBBM-TV generally maintained second place in early evening and afternoon local newscasts, with NBC-owned WMAQ-TV running third.

However Nielsen and Arbitron ratings disagreed on which of WLS's rivals placed second in the important 10 p.m. local news race: Nielsen had WBBM in second place, while Arbitron had WMAQ in second.

In the 10 p.m. weeknight local news race, Nielsen reported WLS averaged a 17.9/29, to WBBM's 14.7/24 and WMAQ's 12.9/21. Arbitron said WLS averaged an 18.6/31, to WMAQ's 14/23 and WBBM's 12.9/21.

WMAQ is the only one of the three network-owned Chicago TV stations that still subscribes to Arbitron, although a number of local ad agencies still rely heavily on the service.

WLS's strong winning margin, which sometimes doubled the ratings of its competitors, held for each of its afternoon, early-evening and late-night newscasts.

The station's syndicated programs also continued to overshadow the competition: "The Oprah Winfrey Show" earned a 45 share weekdays at 9 a.m., and "Win, Lose or Draw" got a 33 share and "Jeopardy!" got a 34 share coming out of ABC's highly rated afternoon soap operas.

The local independents' syndicated off-network series reruns, such as "Family Ties" and "Cheers," continued to outrank the half-hour 6 p.m. local newscasts on WBBM and WMAQ.

With a boost from the Winter Olympics, ABC averaged a 21/31 in prime time in Chicago during the February sweeps. WLS's 10 p.m. news generally lost several ratings and share points from that unusually high lead-in.

Both Nielsen and Arbitron said they would publish a second set of February sweep reports that will exclude Olympics-related numbers.

However, most local broadcasters said that, regardless, February could not be considered an ordinary ratings sweep period. #

# NATPE dates debate grows

(Continued from Page 3)

organization had not consulted them before deciding, reacting instead to about 35 telephone calls it had received.

NATPE responded last week by sending out a questionnaire to its members, although it had originally locked in the February dates for 1988 and 1989 based on a similar poll several years ago.

NATPE says it can meet next year either the last week of January or the third week of February at Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center.

"The January dates condense the selling season, which begins in late fall, and reflects the availability of overnight data from a dozen markets," says the letter accompanying the latest poll.

"The February dates spread the buying season by an additional 30 days and makes demos available from the 21 markets which have January ratings books."

Some small syndicators at this year's convention say they were especially hurt by the late date because, unlike larger companies that can send sales representatives around the country, they rely heavily on selling on the exhibition floor.

Big syndicators say the late date gives them less time to boost their clearance figures before the upfront barter market opens.

And distributors say the fact that the convention fell during the February sweeps also slowed down business.

"It's absolutely ludicrous to hold NATPE in the middle of the ratings sweep," said MGM/UA's Mr. Cignarelli. "You go in there as a public relations gesture because the stations have a bona fide reason to wait" to make a decision.

Besides the overall timing of the event, NATPE is also considering whether to have the convention over a weekend again or to schedule it entirely on weekdays next year.

Some NATPE-goers speculated that attendance dropped off dramatically on Sunday because executives left Houston to be home with their families.

NATPE officials had predicted as the convention got under way that attendance would hit 8,000, but it fell nearly 500 short of that mark.

## Cable key topic at meet

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

Two key words kept coming up at this year's National Association of Television Program Executives convention: cable and international.

More cable representatives than ever before were shopping for off-network series and first-run shows at the meeting—and hawking their own programs for syndication and negotiating co-production deals.

Linda Kahn, vice president of acquisitions for the Nickelodeon basic cable network and moderator of a convention panel, called 1988 a "watershed year" for her industry at NATPE.

But at press time, syndicators said few deals had materialized in this area despite cable's increased visibility.

NATPE's biggest cable-related syndication deal involved Nickelodeon, which joined with Viacom Enterprises and Fox Television Stations to announce that the cable-ori-

ginated strip "Finders Keepers" will begin airing on the seven Fox-owned stations in September.

Nickelodeon will produce 130 first-run episodes of the daily children's series to be distributed on a barter basis.

Other efforts weren't as definitive. MGM/UA, for example, talked to some cable services at NATPE about producing new first-run episodes of "Sea Hunt" and "We've Got it Made" for cable, but nothing was finalized.

Meanwhile, the NATPE organization took note of cable's growing importance last week, naming David Kenin, USA Network senior vice president of programming, to the NATPE board for a one-year term—the first cable executive to be named to the NATPE board.

On the international front, the group last week also appointed its first overseas board member, Vivien Wallace, the London-based chief executive of Granada Television International. #

In another move, NATPE has again approached the Association of Independent Television Stations about merging their exhibitions. But INTV again has refused, according to a NATPE board member who asked not to be identified.

INTV's annual convention is slated for Jan. 4 to 8 at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles.

NATPE would also like to get involved in the screening groups that are held in December, although antitrust considerations may be a factor. Most major distributors and stations in the top 35 markets currently participate in the sessions, hosted by station groups and rep firms.

Other news coming out of the 1988 NATPE convention included:

- Four broadcast groups announced the "handshake" formation of a large ad hoc TV programming network of 17

stations. The stations, from the MCA, Chris-Craft, Westinghouse and Gaylord broadcast groups, together cover 35 percent of the country. The yet-unnamed group said it will focus on breakthrough event programs, such as miniseries or specials.

- King World formed a joint venture with four station groups, Gillett, Scripps-Howard, Midwest Communications and Post-Newsweek, to test a limited number of first-run episodes of proposed shows before attempting national rollouts by the syndicator. King World has allocated \$6 million for the effort.

- NATPE established the new position of chairman and appointed Joseph Weber, associate director of programming for MMT Sales, to fill that post. Former NATPE Executive Director Phil Corvo was boosted to president. #

# Media General to resist takeover

(Continued from Page 4)

a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission last week, that he would consider waging a proxy fight at a May 20 annual meeting for three available seats on Media General's board, if the company rejected his offer to pay \$61.50 cash for both Class A and B shares.

Also, the acquisition of 51 percent of Media General's Class A stock by Mr. Sugarman and his companies would entitle them to three of the media concern's eight board seats.

Among the other options Mr. Sugarman is considering are making an outright tender offer for the company or filing a shareholder's lawsuit.

"I will be meeting with my associates in the next several days to determine what to do," Mr. Sugarman said last week.

In his SEC filing, Mr. Sugarman said if he was successful in taking over the company, he would merge Media General into an entity owned by Barris and Giant Group.

He said he would likely sell some of the publishing and broadcasting firm's assets and would review the management.

Mr. Sugarman declined comment on how he would finance such a buyout, except to say that he is "highly confident the necessary financing could be obtained" and that he has retained Bear, Stearns & Co. as a financial adviser.

Any merger of Media General would require approval from two-thirds of the Class B stock, which also elects a majority of the Media General board. Under Virginia law, a board cannot vote to merge a company if 70 percent of one class of its stock is opposed to it, Mr. Bryan said.

A 1987 family trust absolves the Bryans of having to consider tender offers for the company—something Mr. Sugarman says is "a violation of shareholder rights."

Mr. Sugarman said he objects to the dual class of stock, which Media General adopted as a takeover defense in 1966, because it gives the Bryans the ability to "deny other shareholders the unlocking of millions of dollars of investment value that rightfully belongs to them. #

# NBC seeks to boost clearances

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the new plan as their existing annual contract cycles for syndicated daytime programs expire by summer.

Many NBC affiliates currently pre-empt some portion of the network's morning schedule with syndicated fare, including talk shows.

Affiliate clearances for morning game shows and other network variety programs dip to the low- to mid-70 percent range at all three networks, "which brings us closer to the point of not being able to justify providing a national service in that daypart," Mr. Mapes said.

Network sources estimate that if NBC's new effort succeeds, the network could realize an additional \$30 million to \$50 million in national ad revenues due to improved clearances.

At CBS, Anthony Malara, senior vice president for the CBS Television Network, said the redistribution of compensation money for daytime and late night has been successful in improving clearances.

However, the collective improvement in national clearance for the dayparts has been marginal—only 1 percent to 2 percent.

"It's proven a very effective way of working with the stations to address the clearance problem we all face," Mr. Malara said.

For its part, ABC has no plans to follow the other networks. "We have considered engaging in the same kind of redistribution of compensation dollars, and we've decided that it is just not an effective way of improving clearances," said George Newi, ABC affiliate relations senior vice president.

ABC, instead, is resorting to continuous conversations with affiliates underscoring their responsibility to each other. #



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