

# Electronic Media

Published weekly by  
Crain Communications

AT PRESS TIME

## 'USA Today' to go abroad

NEW YORK—GTG Entertainment, producer and domestic syndicator of "USA Today," is expected to announce this week it has signed an agreement with Fremantle International to distribute the show abroad. GTG executives report interest in the show from China, Australia, Canada, Holland and Japan. Fremantle will take the show to MIP-TV in Cannes, France, next month.

## TCI ups stake in United

DENVER—Tele-Communications Inc. has increased its stake in United Cable Television by 8.65 million shares, at \$33.25 per share. The purchase increases TCI's stake in the company from 23.7 percent to 45.9 percent. With the purchase, TCI is also increasing its stake from 52 percent to roughly 63 percent in a new company expected to be formed from the pending merger of United Cable and United Artists Communications, ac-  
*(Continued on Page 31)*

\$1 A COPY; \$45 A YEAR

© Entire contents copyright 1988 by Crain Communications Inc. All rights reserved.

MARCH 21, 1988

## Network pilots reflect interest in news, sci-fi

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—The coming fall season may be the year of the journalist—or of the superhuman alien.

Judging from the 93 new series in development announced so far, those are the two most prominent new genres: there are eight pilots that have journalists as the stars, a la the hit movie "Broadcast News," and six that are science-fiction-based.

NBC, which presented its fall development plans to advertisers at a meeting last Thursday that was opened to the press for the first time, described 33 projects, including 16 comedies and 17 dramas.

CBS has 37 series it is considering, 21 comedies and 16 dramas. ABC, saying it only had a partial list, nevertheless reported 23 pilots, eight comedies and 15 dramas.

Some of the projects had been given series commitments by last Friday:

- NBC has committed to three new hour-long series, "The Disney Hour," "Tattinger's" and "The Jim Henson Hour," and six half-hours: "The Cheech Show," "Outrageous," "Empty Nest," "Dear John," "Channel 99" and "Baby Boom."

- CBS has given the go-ahead for three situation comedies: "The Van Dyke Show," "Mary Tyler Moore" and "The Dictator," the latter of which was scheduled as a midseason replacement but was delayed in production because of the Writers Guild of America strike.

- ABC was unable to confirm any series commitments at press time.

Among the studios with the most shows in the running are Universal and Lorimar, which each have at least seven pilots submitted. MGM/UA has six, both New World and Columbia have five, and Warner Bros., Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox and GTG Entertainment each have four.

*(Continued on Page 31)*



Photos by Jim Hubbard

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (r.) questions the NCTA's Jim Mooney at last week's congressional hearing.

## Cable grilled at hearing; re-regulation threatened

By DOUG HALONEN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—Unless the cable TV industry cleans up its act soon, Congress will move to re-regulate the business, a key senator warned at a congressional hearing here last week.

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, chairman of the Senate antitrust subcommittee, told a packed hearing last Thursday that if the cable industry doesn't take steps to "correct" itself, the "only possible solution is for the government to intercede."

The senator, echoing concerns that have been voiced in other Washington quarters, said he was disturbed that subscriber rates have "zoomed upwards" since the cable industry was deregulated 1½ years ago under the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984.

"Some of us feel we were had when we passed that bill," Sen. Metzenbaum said.

He also said he was "extremely bothered" by allegations that the cable industry is discouraging potential competitors by thwarting their access to satellite programming.

*(Continued on Page 31)*

## Cable attracting first-run productions

By JANET STILSON  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—Having established itself as a home for off-network programming, cable is now becoming a magnet for first-run productions as well.

First-run shows currently being offered to various cable networks cover a variety of genres, from sit-

coms to talk shows to game shows.

Titles include the Worldvision sitcom "Throb"; Viacom Enterprises' advice series, "Personal and Confidential"; TeleVenture's gossip magazine, "Scandal"; Harmony Gold's talk show, "The Rita Davenport Show"; and D.L. Taffner's game show, "Whose Baby?"

Thomas Burchill, Lifetime's president and chief executive officer,

explains the attractiveness of first-run syndicated product: "If we get involved in an original production (at the start-up) phase, we can give it a Lifetime point of view and help design the show."

From the syndicator's point of view, the advantages are obvious. Cable offers a new outlet for shows that might not make it in broadcast  
*(Continued on Page 29)*

### INSIDE:

#### 14 Brokaw most popular

An exclusive survey of TV viewers shows that Tom Brokaw is now the most popular network anchor.

#### 20 Wrestling for laughs

A new sitcom with a professional wrestling theme is headed for national syndication this fall.

#### 22 Robotics invade the news

NBC News is using robotic cameras on its network evening news, and the other networks may follow suit.

## NEWS SUMMARY

**At least 93 series pilots** are being developed for the three major commercial networks for the fall TV season. Several series have already received firm commitments. (Page 1)

**Cable television is becoming** a magnet for first-run productions, in addition to off-network programs. The first-run shows being pitched to cable by syndicators range from sitcoms to talk shows to game shows. (Page 1)

**Congress will move to re-regulate** cable TV unless the industry cleans up its act soon, Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, told a congressional hearing in Washington last week. (Page 1)

**In a hearing last week**, key lawmakers said Congress appears to be ready to take action against what it views as abuses in children's television programming. (Page 2)

**The two-week-old writers strike** continues to stall production of certain shows. No talks were held last week. (Page 2)

**A proposal that would have** prohibited news aircraft from flying over sites of disasters and other emergencies was rejected by the Federal Aviation Administration last week. (Page 3)

**If new syndicated exclusivity** rules are adopted, they should not be imposed retroactively, program syndicators say. (Page 3)

**CBS edged out ABC and NBC** in the ratings battle for the 1987-88 college basketball season. (Page 3)

**Fox Broadcasting Co.** has canceled three shows and added a new game show in a revamp of its low-rated Saturday prime-time schedule. (Page 3)

**Broadcast and cable TV network** representatives are discussing sharing the load for coverage of the 1992 Summer Olympics and Winter Olympics. (Page 3)

**Several prominent broadcast** journalists, including former CBS anchor Walter Cronkite, backed out of commitments to testify before a congressional hearing on South African press restrictions. (Page 4)

**"The Wil Shriner Show"** was canceled by Group W Productions last week due to poor ratings. (Page 4)

**Tom Brokaw has usurped** Dan Rather as the most popular network news anchor among viewers, according to a new survey conducted exclusively for ELECTRONIC MEDIA by SRI Inc. (Page 14)

**James Dauphinee has been** named managing director of programming for King World Productions' new Research and Development Network. (Page 14)

**Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C.**, said he will soon revive his controversial plan to impose a 2 percent to 4 percent tax on the sale of communications properties. (Page 14)

**"Great Weekend,"** a syndicated hour-long Saturday morning show for adults, has been renewed even though it has been cleared in 40 percent of the country. (Page 14)

**A sitcom with a professional wrestling** theme, "Learning the Ropes," is headed for the national syndication marketplace. (Page 20)

**The three major broadcast** networks have commissioned a study of people-meter systems to determine why this season's ratings are so different from last season's. (Page 20)

**Hollywood producer Burt Sugarman** said a lawsuit filed against him in federal court by Media General will not deter his efforts to seize control of the company. (Page 20)

**A new study by AGB Television Research** shows that owners of videocassette recorders use the devices an average of seven hours a week. (Page 20)

**NBC News has begun to use** robotic cameras on its evening newscasts, and the other networks may not be far behind. (Page 22)

**The "Music of Your Life"** big band radio format will become the eighth satellite-delivered radio format for Transtar Radio Networks. (Page 30)

## CONTENTS

Briefly Noted .....	30	Marketing .....	19
Calendar .....	18	Quick Takes .....	12
Classified Advertising .....	27	Season-to-date Ratings .....	28
Focus on Finance .....	25	Syndication Standings .....	30
The Insider .....	8	Technology and Equipment .....	22
Jobs .....	26	Viewpoint .....	12
Letters to the Editor .....	12	Who's News .....	24

Vol. 7, No. 12—ELECTRONIC MEDIA (ISSN 0745-0311) is published weekly by Grain Communications Inc., 740 Rush St., Chicago, Ill. 60611. Second-Class postage is paid at Chicago, Ill., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ELECTRONIC MEDIA, Circulation Department, 965 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48207.

# Lawmakers ready to take action on children's TV

By ROBERT HOMAN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—Congress is ready to take legislative action against what it views as abuses in children's television programming, key lawmakers said during a hearing last week.

Congress appears to be most concerned about what critics have called "program-length commercials," in which toy manufacturers join with TV producers to create a show that revolves around toy-based characters.

"We are now at the congressional stage," said Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the House telecommunications subcommittee. "If we do not act, commercial television will continue to be the video equivalent of a shopping mall for children, with the sales clerks masquerading as children's favorite cartoon characters."

Rep. Al Swift, D-Wash., added that the Federal Communications Commission has been "daring us to pass legislation" following the commission's repeal of advertising

guidelines on children's TV programs in 1984.

"We're here because the FCC hasn't been doing its job," Rep. Swift said.

Rep. Markey and Rep. Terry Bruce, D-Ill., introduced a bill in Congress last fall that would reimpose the FCC guidelines, which had limited advertising on children's TV to 9½ minutes per hour on week-ends and 12 minutes per hour during the week.

Rep. Markey has promised a subcommittee vote on the bill. That action is expected soon.

Another bill, introduced by Rep. John Bryant, D-Texas, and co-sponsored by Rep. Markey, would require broadcasters to daily air at least an hour of educational programming.

But Rep. Tom Tauke, R-Iowa, attacked the Democrats' bills, saying they come too close to regulating programming content and tampering with the First Amendment.

Rep. Tauke has introduced a bill that would exempt the broadcast and cable industries from antitrust

laws so they could develop voluntary guidelines on children's programming.

Wally Jorgenson, joint board chairman of the National Association of Broadcasters, told the subcommittee that there is no need for legislation regarding children's television programming.

"There is an effective marketplace acting to regulate the possibility of the overcommercialization of children's programming," Mr. Jorgenson said. "There does not appear to be a deluge of commercials raining down upon the viewers."

Mr. Jorgenson cited a survey, conducted by the NAB, that found that the average children's program contained slightly more than 8½ minutes of commercial time per hour on weekdays and slightly more than 8 minutes per hour on weekends.

But Peggy Charren, president of Action for Children's Television, said: "The National Association of Broadcasters likes the marketplace except when it comes to must-carry regulation and a few other bottom-line hassles." #

# Warner plans Lorimar bid

By DIANE MERMIGAS  
Senior reporter

A firm offer from Warner Communications to merge with Lorimar Telepictures could come as early as this week, sources say.

Those close to the talks remained cautiously optimistic.

Warner executives last week continued poring over Lorimar Telepictures' financial data, attempting to assess the value of the company.

One source said discussions had accelerated to a more detailed level.

A potential Warner-Lorimar Telepictures combination was informally discussed at a regularly scheduled, five-hour closed Lorimar Telepictures board meeting on March 16.

However, executives of both companies declined official comment on the ongoing talks.

Lorimar Telepictures officials have said they would "bear in mind" a conditional \$17-per-share offer made earlier by billionaire oil man Marvin Davis as they continue their talks with Warner.

Other suitors failed to materialize last week, despite speculation about parties such as Disney, Fox Broad-

casting, Gulf & Western, independent producer Jerry Perenchio and several Australian and West German entertainment companies.

Culver City, Calif.-based Lorimar Telepictures has never seriously negotiated with any of the suitors that have approached it in the past.

Some Wall Street analysts predict Warner will offer what amounts to \$17 or \$18 per share for Lorimar in the form of stock and cash and the assumption of the company's estimated \$600 million in outstanding debt.

If so, the deal could be worth about \$1.4 billion.

However, analysts generally estimate Lorimar's takeover value to be between \$18 and \$21 per share, with 45.9 million shares of common stock outstanding.

Warner's major interest in Lorimar Telepictures would be its first-run syndication and network TV program production and distribution operations.

Last week, sources close to the talks indicated that Warner may not opt to sell off as many of Lorimar's assets as analysts have been predicting if a merger deal can be worked out.

Analysts have speculated that Warner would sell unprofitable or unrelated assets, such as US magazine, Lorimar's Culver City real estate and the company's feature film and home video operations. #

# Programers feel strike's impact

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—Effects of the 2-week-old writers' strike are continuing to be felt among networks and program producers.

No talks were held last week between representatives of the striking Writers Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers. Though the WGA expressed willingness to resume talks, none had been scheduled at press time.

The WGA turned down requests from about 80 independent producers to sign individual contracts to allow stalled shows, such as "The

Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson," to resume production.

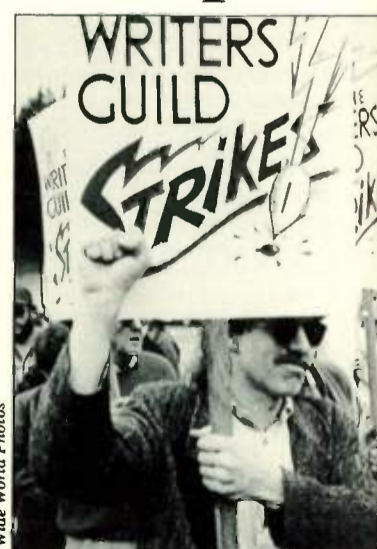
Meanwhile, NBC's "Saturday Night Live" last Saturday joined "Carson" and "Late Night With David Letterman" in turning to repeat episodes after the strike forced that show to cease production.

At ABC, "Moonlighting" was due to air its last original show this Tuesday. It then will be forced into repeats beginning March 29 because of the work stoppage, which involves 9,000 WGA members.

NBC Entertainment President Brandon Tartikoff last week said the strike has had an impact on the network's program pilot plans and some summer programming. It also could very likely cause some series to fall short of their production orders, he said.

"The Cosby Show" could fall three episodes behind and "L.A. Law" could be two short if the strike continues, NBC sources said.

A CBS spokesman said producers of a new "Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" plan to circumvent the strike and continue making the show.



Wide World Photos

The strike by the Writers Guild of America is now two weeks old.

The WGA and the Alliance have been unable to agree on several issues, including the residuals from hour-long TV shows. #

# Syndicators oppose retroactive exclusivity

By RICHARD MAHLER  
Los Angeles bureau chief

LOS ANGELES—Program syndicators interviewed last week said new syndicated exclusivity rules should not be imposed retroactively.

Syndicators unanimously said they support new rules, which would require cable TV operators to black out syndicated programs from distant TV signals when a TV station in their local area has bought exclusive rights to the same show.

The distributors were reacting to word that the Federal Communications Commission ap-

pears to be preparing to approve new rules, which would replace exclusivity rules lifted in 1980. The FCC action is expected as early as next month.

One of the questions that the FCC apparently is wrestling with is whether the rules should be applied retroactively to shows that stations already are contracted to air.

But in interviews, most syndicators said they believe it would be "a waste of valuable legislative time and energy," as one syndicator put it, for the FCC to try and make new syndication exclusivity rules retroactive.

Dick Cignarelli, executive vice president of domestic syndication for MGM/UA Telecom-

munications, speaks for many distributors who believe such regulations should be phased in as old contracts run out and new ones are signed.

"If it's retroactive, we'll have a lot of yelling and crying from both syndicators and broadcasters about how unfair the terms of their contracts are," he says. "A return to the old rules has to be the answer."

As a practical matter, he says he doesn't think the lack of syndication exclusivity rules affects his company much, "but in terms of the industry as a whole, something has to be done. Things are out of control now."

George Back, president of All-American

Television, says it would be "a bureaucratic nightmare" to come up with a retroactive set of rules.

The Tribune Broadcasting Co., owner of superstation WGN-TV as well as a major syndication subsidiary, is on record against retroactive rules, reasoning that a functioning marketplace must first be allowed to develop under the new restrictions.

Since many deals have already been cut for programing that won't air for several years, many feel the fairest approach would be to apply the rules only as of the date they go into effect and not to any deals made prior to that.

(Continued on Page 29)

## Fox alters Saturday schedule

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—Fox Broadcasting Co. revamped its low-rated Saturday prime-time schedule last week by canceling three shows and unveiling a new game show.

Fox will add "Family Double Dare," an adult version of the live-action children's series "Double Dare," to its Saturday schedule next month.

Like the children's show, the adult version will be produced by the Nickelodeon cable network.

The network has canceled the sitcoms "Women in Prison," "Mr. President" and "The New Adventures of Beans Baxter." The cancellation of the latter two shows had been expected.

"Family Double Dare" will kick off the service's Saturday schedule at 8 p.m. (ET) beginning April 9. It will be followed by Fox's one remaining Saturday sitcom, the 3-month-old "Boys Will Be Boys."

"Women in Prison" departs April 2, while "Beans Baxter" and "Mr. President" will have their last telecasts on April 23.

After the previously announced new Fox series "The Dirty Dozen" has its two-hour premiere on April 30, that hour-long drama will settle in at 9 p.m. Saturdays.

Regarding the decision to add "Family Double Dare," a Fox spokesman said: "We feel that it's strong counter-programing."

The Fox spokesman also confirmed that the service is interested in "America's Most Wanted," which is currently airing on the Fox-owned stations.

"We are very, very high on 'America's Most Wanted,'" he said. "We're looking for a place in the lineup where the affiliates will accept it, but there isn't one right now." #



Wide World Photo

CBS topped ABC and NBC this season for the college basketball ratings title.

## CBS takes ratings title for college basketball

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—The college basketball ratings race remained a tight battle through the regular season, but in the end CBS narrowly edged out its network competitors.

CBS retained its lead with a final overall average 4.2 rating (percentage of TV homes) and an 11 share (percentage of sets in use) for 20 regular-season broadcasts, a 7 percent drop from last season's 4.5/12.

ABC, which finished second, scored a 3.6/9 for 11 telecasts this season, but that was a 50 percent increase over its 2.4/6 last season.

NBC was third with a season average of 3.3/9, 8 percent off last year's 3.6/10 aver-

age.

The highest-rated game for the networks was an early-season showdown between Kentucky and Indiana, which earned a 6 rating for ABC.

Regional syndicators and the proliferation of college basketball on cable TV outlets, particularly ESPN, once again contributed to the continuing fractionalization of the audience, with more than 1,000 games available this season on one channel or another.

In only its second year of regularly televising college basketball, ABC has established a good position on the crowded court, with the ultimate goal of scoring some piece of the lucrative NCAA tournament, a network spokesman said.

(Continued on Page 29)

## FAA won't limit news copter use

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

The Federal Aviation Administration has rejected a proposal that would have prohibited news aircraft from flying over sites of disasters and other emergencies.

The FAA, however, did announce tougher sanctions against pilots who violate flight restrictions that are sometimes imposed on a case-by-case basis at the request of rescue officials.

A flat ban on flights over emergency scenes was proposed to the FAA last Dec. 8 by the National Transportation Safety Board. Although the ban would have pertained to all non-rescue aircraft, the NTSB's proposal was sparked by flights involving aircraft operated by news organizations.

In seeking the ban, the NTSB cited seven incidents during the past 14 years in which media aircraft allegedly interfered with rescue operations.

The FAA rejected the NTSB proposal on March 4, explaining that amending existing rules would be too difficult.

"In order to amend the current regulations, it would be necessary to describe every type of potential disaster or hazard that may occur," FAA Administrator T. Allan McArtor said in a letter to NTSB Chairman Jim Burnett.

Currently, news media aircraft can fly over disasters unless ground-based rescue officials believe the aircraft are hindering rescue efforts.

When that happens, authorities must ask the NTSB to issue a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) to bar non-rescue aircraft from the area. In his letter to Mr. Burnett, Mr. McArtor said the FAA is satisfied with that system.

Initial media reaction to the FAA's decision was favorable. "I'm glad to see that McArtor recognizes it was a ridiculous proposal to begin with," said Leo Galanis, a helicopter pilot for KUSA-TV in Denver and president of the National Broadcast Pilots Association.

Meanwhile, the NTSB said little, commenting through a spokesman that the FAA's ruling is "under review."

The tougher sanctions announced by the FAA were aimed at pilots who intentionally violate NOTAMs once they are issued. Under a new policy, the FAA said, pilots who commit such violations will lose their licenses for a minimum of six months. Under the old policy, that was the maximum punishment. #

## Broadcasters, cable discuss Olympics alliances

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—The odds are increasing that broadcast and cable networks will become media bedfellows in cooperative-rights bidding for the 1992 Olympic Games.

As the International Olympics Committee prepares to meet next week with the local organizing group for the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France, exploratory talks are taking place between pros-

spective U.S. TV rights seekers considering the team approach.

Richard Pound, IOC vice president, said a U.S. broadcast-cable combination appears likely. "All the networks are turning to it, particularly with the games being in Europe," he said.

CBS and NBC have acknowledged discussions with cable networks. Although they won't specify who those conversations are with, HBO executives have indicated they have discussed various scenarios with

their broadcast counterparts.

Turner Broadcasting System executives have set up meetings with both CBS and NBC, according to Rex Lardner, TBS vice president of programing.

"In Barcelona (the 1992 Summer Games site) and Albertville, because of the time difference, there's got to be a change in the American network's bidding," Mr. Lardner said.

The IOC has also heard from the Fox network and cable's USA Network about their interest in the

1992 games, according to Mr. Pound.

ABC and NBC have expressed interest in the Barcelona games, he said, while CBS has expressed its interest in Albertville.

ABC executives had already expressed the view last fall, before the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary, Alberta, that cable would enter the picture in 1992.

ESPN, which has declared its interest in obtaining some portion of the 1992 rights, would likely be

ABC's bidding partner. Executives at both ESPN and ABC declined comment on their Olympic plans.

Mr. Pound said changes in the bidding structure could include offering the U.S. networks an opportunity to bid for both the '92 Winter and Summer games as a package.

That would potentially provide the IOC with an additional rights premium that it would not realize in conducting the bidding for the summer and winter competition in the

(Continued on Page 29)

# Group W pulling the plug on low-rated 'Wil Shriner'

By RICHARD MAHLER  
Los Angeles bureau chief

LOS ANGELES—Group W Productions confirmed last week that poor ratings have killed "The Wil Shriner Show," the hour-long syndicated talk strip it introduced last September.

The final segment of "The Wil Shriner Show" will be taped during June, and stations will be shipped repeat episodes throughout the summer.

Many broadcasters, including Group W-owned KPIX-TV in San Francisco, have already buried the

talk program in early morning time slots, and others have declined to pick up contract renewal options for the second half of the television season.

"The ratings situation made it impossible to justify continuation of the program," explained a Group W spokesman in announcing the cancellation of "The Wil Shriner Show."

Group W said it hopes to continue its association with Mr. Shriner, an actor and stand-up comedian, although at this point no firm offers have been extended by the syndicator.

Many broadcasters bought "The Wil Shriner Show" as a late-morning replacement for King World's "The Oprah Winfrey Show," which shifted to early fringe time periods in many markets as of last September. But the Wil Shriner talk strip never developed a significant audience.

Separately, Group W Productions confirmed that President Ed Vane will depart the company March 31, even though no successor has yet been hired.

Mr. Vane cited personal reasons in announcing his resignation last January. #



"The Wil Shriner Show" will tape its last episode in June. Mr. Shriner interviewed such celebrities as Michael J. Fox (left) on his talk show.

BEAR  
STEARNS

The

# NEW YORK POST

has been purchased by

## Kalikow Media Incorporated

from

## News America Publishing Incorporated

We acted as financial advisor to Kalikow Media Incorporated.

## Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.

New York/Atlanta/Boston/Chicago/Dallas/Los Angeles/San Francisco  
Amsterdam/Geneva/Hong Kong/London/Paris/Tokyo

March 1988

## Journalists back out of hearing

By ROBERT HOMAN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—Several prominent broadcast journalists, including former CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite, backed out of commitments to testify before a congressional hearing last week on press restrictions in South Africa.

Rep. Howard Wolpe, D-Mich., chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, said the journalists may have canceled their appearances out of fear that the South African government would retaliate against their news organizations.

In addition to Mr. Cronkite, others who canceled included John McChesney, senior editor with National Public Radio; and Brian Ellis, producer of the CBS documentary "Children of Apartheid," which aired in December.

CBS News issued a statement saying it was "not appropriate for Mr. Cronkite and Mr. Ellis to appear before a House committee under circumstances in which the editorial process, protected by the First Amendment, could come under scrutiny."

But a subcommittee spokesman told ELECTRONIC MEDIA that when Mr. Cronkite agreed to appear, "we made it absolutely clear that his purpose in coming was to discuss the problems they had in South Africa while filming 'Children of Apartheid.'"

"He would not be called on to discuss CBS's editorial decision-making process," the spokesman said.

When asked why Mr. McChesney canceled, an NPR spokeswoman said: "NPR news personnel do not testify before congressional committees."

Kenneth Walker, a former ABC White House correspondent and co-anchor of GTG Entertainment's "USA Today" program, which is scheduled for a September launch, was the only U.S. broadcast journalist to testify.

He said U.S. television networks have distributed video cameras in black South African townships, "but they resolutely refuse to use the video. Why are they saving it?"

Rep. Mike Lowry, D-Wash., said he's planning to introduce legislation imposing penalties on South Africa unless the press restrictions are lifted. #

**UPDATE:**  
5% OF THE COUNTRY  
CLEARED AND 10 OF THE  
TOP 10 MARKETS!

# REALITY FOR SEPT. 88!

**WCBS**  
New York

**KCOP**  
Los Angeles

**WPWR**  
Chicago

**WTAF**  
Philadelphia

**KPIX**  
San Francisco

**WBZ**  
Boston

**WDIV**  
Detroit

**KDFI**  
Dallas

**WJLA**  
Washington

**KTXH**  
Houston

**WXIA**  
Atlanta

**KSTW**  
Seattle

**WCIX**  
Miami

**WPXI**  
Pittsburgh

**KSDK**  
St. Louis

**ON  
TRIAL**<sup>TM</sup>

REAL PEOPLE.  
REAL CASES.  
REAL LIFE.



Reeves Entertainment Group

A Woody Fraser/Reeves  
Entertainment Group  
Production in

association with Republic Pictures.



REPUBLIC  
PICTURES

Distributed Exclusively by Republic Pictures.

Los Angeles (213) 306-4040 New York (203) 454-8989  
Atlanta (404) 438-1507 Dallas (817) 488-0213

© 1988 Republic Pictures Corporation

**Q: Do you  
have any  
secret  
wishes?**



**ALF: Sure. I wish cats really did have nine lives. I love leftovers.**



**ALF**<sup>®</sup>

**alien productions**

100 Half-Hours  
Available Fall '90

**LORIMAR**<sup>™</sup>  
**SYNDICATION**  
A LORIMAR TELEPICTURES COMPANY

ALF is a Registered Trademark of Alien Productions © 1987 Alien Productions All Rights Reserved

# Cable freebie leads to legislation

The brouhaha sparked in Baltimore when a cable TV system offered state legislators free subscriptions has led to legislation to ban such practices. Charlie Ross, president of the Cable Television Association of Maryland, Delaware and Washington, is drafting a statute in Maryland prohibiting any free or discounted service to anyone in the state, if the service is franchised by state or local governments. Mr. Ross also reports that United Cable of Baltimore has withdrawn its free offer to 40 state legislators, although, according to Mr. Ross, "No one took United Cable up on it."

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, the **upfront barter advertising market** for children's shows is starting to sizzle. Karl Kuechenmeister, Lorimar Telepictures president of media sales, confirms that one major toy company has already sealed its deals with Lorimar. Most advertisers are expected to wrap up children's show deals in the next few weeks and turn their attention to the network upfront children's arena.

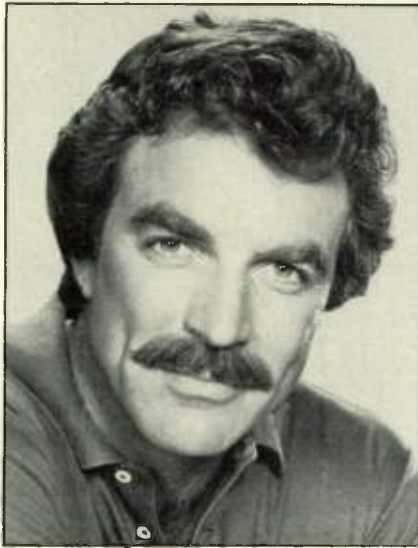
\* \* \*

**Scotch that rumor** about the Fox TV station division laying off several senior executives. In an accounting move, the unit has placed its top vice presidents under the fiscal wings of various individual Fox-owned stations, including New York's WNYW-TV and Los Angeles' KTTV-TV. Insiders speculate that the reclassifying move is primarily designed to shave \$1 million or more off the overhead for the station group, which hasn't been performing as well as expected.

\* \* \*

Several daily reality-based shows haven't missed a beat during the two-week **Writers Guild of America strike**. The news programs of the three networks are written by members of separate unions, and "Entertainment Tonight," the syndicated strip from Paramount, is using non-union members of its existing production staff. A WGA source said the guild is disappointed with the apparent lack of solidarity among

## THE INSIDER



**TOM SELLECK**  
Working with Hawaii officials



**JAKE STEINFELD**  
He wants your body

scribes, but shrugged, "From a practical standpoint there's not much we can do about it."

\* \* \*

**ABC's silence on the sweeps may draw to an end.** While NBC and CBS routinely hold press conferences after each sweeps period to give their own interpretations of ratings results, ABC usually doesn't bother. But ABC's new research honcho, Alan Wurtzel, tells *The Insider* he's thinking about holding his own news briefings.

\* \* \*

After wrapping up the final episode of "Magnum, P.I." in Hawaii, series star and independent producer Tom Selleck

met with state government officials to discuss ways they might fill the production vacuum left as the CBS show completes eight years of filming there. The program's departure is expected to have a serious impact on the modest Hawaiian TV industry, since "Magnum, P.I." had a per-episode budget of \$2 million when it was unplugged.

\* \* \*

Look for the long-anticipated unveiling of **The Movie Channel's new look** at the National Cable Television Association show in April. Viacom International has hired the Madison Avenue agency Fred/Alan Inc., whose principals worked on the creation of the MTV logo, for an on-air graphics and logo makeover.

\* \* \*

Look for **KHJ-TV** in Los Angeles to carry on the studio's family image if and when The Walt Disney Co. takes control of the station from RKO General, pending FCC approval. Disney has already warehoused its own "Duck Tales" and "Chip 'n' Dale," and recently added "ALF" (plus "Valerie's Family" and "Perfect Strangers," sources say). KHJ's current owners acquired Disney's "Win, Lose or Draw" and "Live With Regis and Kathie Lee." There's one important addendum to the Disney deals for "Who's the Boss?" and "ALF": If the acquisition of KHJ falls through, Disney will be stuck with the programs it purchased for KHJ and could be forced to dump them at what could become fire-sale prices.

\* \* \*

And finally, *The Insider* caught up with **Jake Steinfeld**, host of "Body by Jake," to get a post-NATPE briefing from the "trainer to the stars." Jake, who had many NATPE attendees panting in early-morning workout sessions, says the crowd, overall, was in pretty good shape. But Jake confided that some of the syndicators "seemed more concerned about a 'firm go' than their soft middles." "Body by Jake," the first-run syndicated strip distributed by Samuel Goldwyn Television, has been cleared in 45 percent of the country. #

—Written by Marianne Paskowski from bureau reports

## LET VIDEO DUB PUT YOU INTO ORBIT!

America's finest videotape duplication center offers program syndicators a choice:

- 1) They can have their programs transmitted via a satellite signal, or
- 2) They can have them distributed to stations in the form of videotape.

The videotapes—in all formats—are prepared and shipped from Video Dub's New York facilities, or satellited through our own up-link system to all of your destinations.

Moreover, with VDI's exclusive ComSyn+® service we'll provide a computerized link between scheduling, duplication and tape or satellite distribution of your programs.

Tape or satellite. We'll get you where you want to go.



**VIDEO DUB INC.**

423 WEST 55TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10019 (212) 757-3300



92

**SOLD IN ~~85~~ MARKETS.  
GET WITH IT!**



# KATE & ALLIE

Produced by Reeves Entertainment Group  
Distributed by

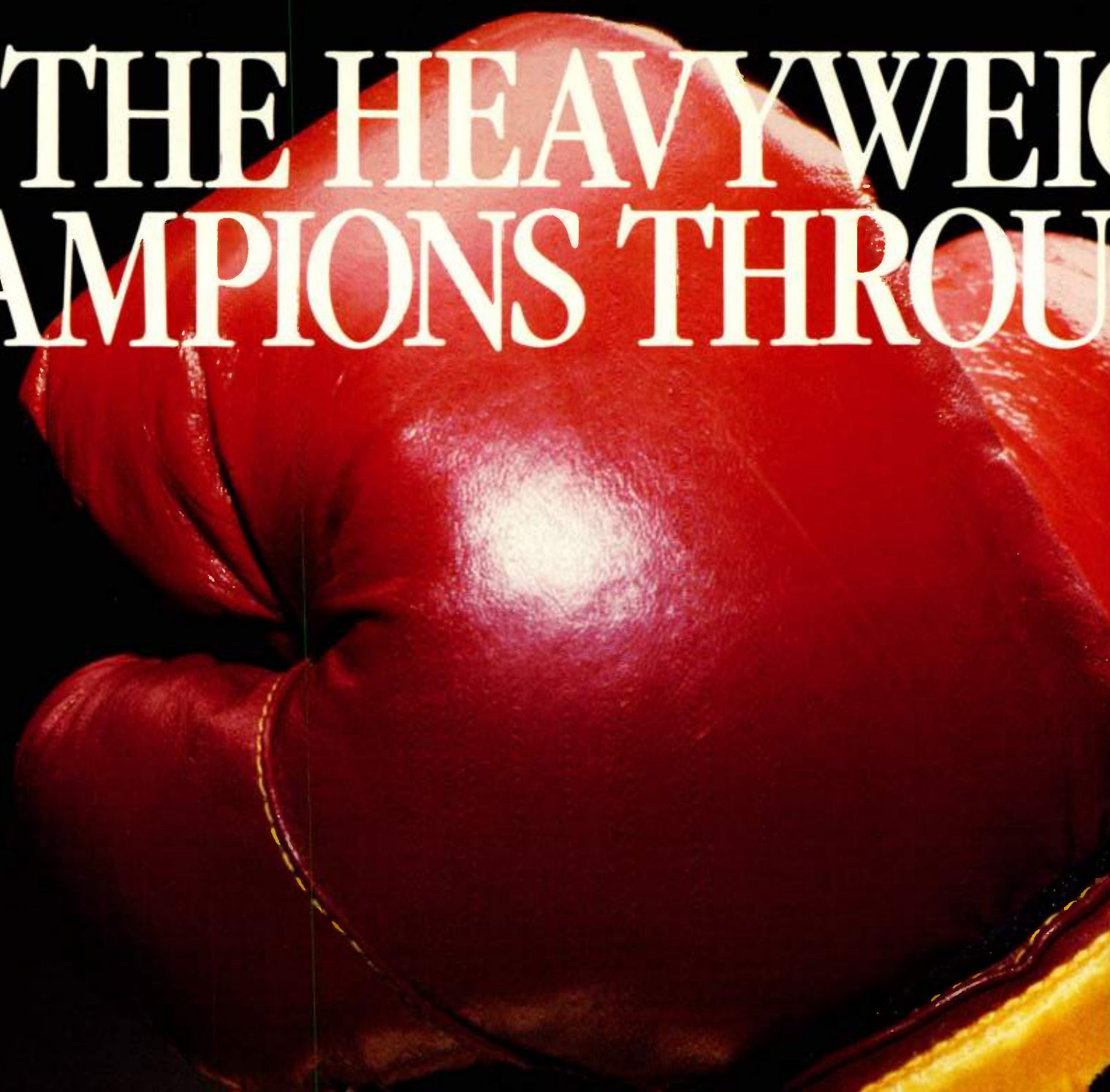
## MCA TV

© 1988 MCA TV. All rights reserved.

World Radio History

**STARTS THIS FALL!**

# THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONS THROUGH



JUPARDY

W

# HIT H 1992

# 40

## stations planning a knockout future

Renewed through the 1991-1992 season

STATION	REP.	OWNER	AFFILIATE
WLS, Chicago	Cap Cities/ABC	Cap Cities/ABC	ABC
WPVI, Philadelphia	Cap Cities/ABC	Cap Cities/ABC	ABC
KRON, San Francisco	Petry	Chronicle Broadcasting	NBC
WNEV, Boston	TeleRep	New England Television	CBS
WDIV, Detroit	Petry	Post-Newsweek	NBC
KSDK, St. Louis	Katz	Multimedia	NBC
KTSP, Phoenix	HRP	Great American Broadcasting	CBS
KXTV, Sacramento	TeleRep	Belo Corporation	CBS
WMAR, Baltimore	TeleRep	Gillett Broadcasting	NBC
WTNH, Hartford	Blair	Cook Inlet Comm.	ABC
KCST, San Diego	Gillett Sales	Gillett Broadcasting	NBC
WFTV, Orlando	TeleRep	Cox Broadcasting	ABC
KCTV, Kansas City	MMT	Meredith Corporation	CBS
WTMJ, Milwaukee	MMT	Journal Communications	NBC
WWL, New Orleans	Katz	Loyola University of the South	CBS
WLOS, Greenville/Spartanburg	HRP	Anchor Media	ABC
WBNS, Columbus	Blair	Dispatch Printing	CBS
WTVD, Raleigh	Cap Cities/ABC	Cap Cities/ABC	ABC
KWTV, Oklahoma City	TeleRep	Griffin Television	CBS
WZZM, Grand Rapids	Katz	Price Communications	ABC
WKBW, Buffalo	Blair	Queen City Broadcasting	ABC
KTVX, Salt Lake City	MMT	United Television	ABC
KMOL, San Antonio	MMT	United Television	NBC
WPRI, Providence	HRP	Knight-Ridder	ABC
WVEC, Norfolk	TeleRep	Belo Broadcasting	ABC
WLKY, Louisville	Katz	Pulitzer Broadcasting	ABC
WHIO, Dayton	TeleRep	Miami Valley Broadcasting	CBS
WPEC, West Palm Beach	Katz	Photo Electronics	ABC
WXEX, Richmond	Katz	Nationwide Communications	ABC
KTBS, Shreveport	Katz	KTBS, Inc.	ABC
KFSN, Fresno	Cap Cities/ABC	Cap Cities/ABC	ABC
WDBJ, Roanoke	HRP	Schurz Communications	CBS
WAPT, Jackson, MS	MMT	Price Communications	CBS
KVBC, Las Vegas	Blair	Valley Broadcasting	NBC
WWAY, Wilmington	MMT	Price Communications	ABC
KTVN, Reno	Katz	Sarkes Tarzian	CBS
KJAC, Beaumont	Katz	Price Communications	NBC
KFDX, Wichita Falls	Katz	Price Communications	NBC
WXVT, Greenwood/Greenville	Seltel	Big River Broadcasting	CBS
WHAG, Hagerstown	Katz	Great Trails Broadcasting	NBC

## WHEEL OF FORTUNE JEOPARDY!

Produced by  
 **MERV GRIFFIN**  
 ENTERPRISES  
 A unit of Columbia Pictures Entertainment Inc.

Distributed by  
**KINGWORLD**

TM

# Our censoring Navy

If any of our readers ever find themselves growing apathetic on the subject of government censorship, we hope they'll remember last week's "Supercarrier" story.

As we reported on Page 4 of our March 14 issue, there was bad news and worse news about the relationship between the producers of the ABC series and the U.S. Navy, whose cooperation is of considerable, if not crucial, importance to the show.

The bad news is, the Navy found several "Supercarrier" scripts objectionable and responded by withdrawing its permission for the producer, Fries Entertainment, to film Navy ships and aircraft for the show.

The worse news is that the Navy subsequently announced it would reinstate its support, but only if the objectionable scripts were rewritten.

And what did the sensitive Navy censors find so objectionable? They refuse to say. Maybe there were too many "darns" in the admiral's script. We can only guess.

Just who in the name of John Paul Jones do these Navy bureaucrats think they are? It seems to us that these tax-paid defenders of our freedom (except for, we suppose, our First Amendment freedoms) should

be obligated to cooperate with producers as long as doing so does not imperil national security or result in something equally dire.

Unfortunately, our military academies don't seem to be doing a very good job of teaching military leaders the fundamentals of democracy. Those fundamentals include a hefty respect for the value of free expression, not just because free expression is good for the individual, but also because it is good for the whole of society.

In the interests, we suspect, of maintaining a squeaky clean image for the Navy and a secure career path for themselves, military censors would undoubtedly control all that is spoken or written about military life. That is as outrageous as it is dangerous.

The producer of "Supercarrier" says a lack of Navy cooperation wouldn't sink the series. Maybe not, but it could. And that, in turn, would cost the television industry a number of jobs and dollars.

The Navy may be quick to prop up its over-charging defense contractors, but it doesn't mind torpedoing a legitimate television business operation. Then again, defense contractors make weapons, they don't produce anything as dangerous and threatening as television shows. #

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### USA Network has been profitable for the past three years

Your "Business Beat" column in the Feb. 15 issue of ELECTRONIC MEDIA (Page 22) quotes Robert Wright of NBC as saying, "USA Network still isn't making any money . . ."

In fact, USA is a \$100 million-plus company that has been profitable for the past three years. The network has enjoyed a 20 to 30 percent growth rate per year and has been enormously successful in building viewership during all dayparts, overall ratings, advertising revenue and affiliate and subscriber growth.

The company has established a mutually beneficial working relationship with cable operators who have expressed their favorable impressions of our ongoing programming development and superior local ad sales support. Cooperation remains at a high level.

Our recent acquisitions of exclusive rights to such series as "Miami Vice" and "Murder, She Wrote" attests to financial growth which has enabled USA to aggressively pursue major off-network shows and underwrite an ambitious lineup of our own

original productions.

After eight years, USA has built a solid foundation for continued future growth. Our business strategies and long-range planning have put "America's All-Entertainment Network" at the forefront of the cable industry, which is now a healthy, thriving part of the broadcasting business in the 1980s.

**James Murray**  
manager of public relations  
USA Network  
New York

### Florida station takes standards seriously

I am quite dismayed by statements attributed to me in your article about R-rated movies being shown in Florida (Feb. 29, Page 6). I am concerned because certain statements published were never made and others, which were important to the story, were omitted.

First, in referring to the movies "Taxi Driver" and "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" (please note that we did not show "Straw Dogs" as indicated), I stated that we did make minor modifications in the films.

Secondly, the comment regarding possible pressure from a group was that of the writer, not mine, and at no time did I state that "Kansas City is not South Florida."

What I did state, however, was the fact that this station takes community stan-

dards very seriously. I indicated to the writer that this station has undertaken an extensive survey to determine community standards, and we are guided by the results of that survey. We operate at all times within the bounds of good taste. When a scene in any movie oversteps those bounds, we will always edit. We are careful about our selections of pictures, and we are always cognizant of the content.

**Murray Green**  
vice president and general manager  
WFLX-TV  
West Palm Beach, Fla.

### 'Sleaze' is unneeded in radio promotions

I certainly hope your radio readers did not take Susan Spillman's piece in the Feb. 8 edition (Page 40) too seriously. Tacky

promotions may get some short-term attention, but if you're in it for the long haul, building community involvement and credibility is better done with fun, innovative promotions. And I certainly do not believe they need to include some sort of "sleaze" factor to be successful.

Promotions that stoop to giving away such prizes as a breast enlargement operation only make big boobs out of the radio station making the offer. I can't think of anything more negative than giving away funerals and divorces. We have plenty of negative already . . . I believe radio can and should be a positive medium. Sure, make 'em imaginative and by all means fun for everyone, but don't do "tacky" just for the sake of a quick buck. That's just not the "Ranger Way."

**Sam Kirkaldie**  
general manager  
KICE-FM (The Radio Rangers)  
Bend, Ore.

## QUICK TAKES

### What is the biggest shortcoming of TV news at the local level?



**John McKean**  
news director  
KGGM-TV  
(CBS)  
Albuquerque,  
N.M.

"Expertise. The average local news department is made up of generalists. The industry needs to cultivate experts. Covering the economy is a perfect example. We have reporters that don't even have a home mortgage telling viewers how to run their financial lives."



**Mendes Napoli**  
news director  
KSTP-TV  
(ABC)  
St. Paul, Minn.

"We need more people doing research on stories. We need to find ways to get more people developing and researching stories, turning up more substantive, detailed information that reporters working alone can't get."



**Larry Dietz**  
vice president of news and production  
WVLA-TV  
(NBC)  
Baton Rouge, La.

"In smaller markets, it's a lack of depth. My budget doesn't allow me to hire experienced individuals all the time. They may know how to gather the facts and put across a viable package, but they have trouble with stories that have been going on at the local level for months or years."

# Electronic Media

Editor-in-chief	Rance Crain (Chicago)
Editor and Publisher	Ron Alridge (Chicago)
Executive editor	David Klein (Chicago)
News editor	Craig Leddy (Chicago)
Bureau chiefs	Richard Mahler (Los Angeles) Marianne Paskowski (New York)
Special projects editor	Karen Egolf (Chicago)
Copy chief	Howard J. Anderson (Chicago)
Senior reporter	Diane Mermigas (Chicago)
Reporters	Richard Tedesco (New York) Adam Buckman (New York) William Mahoney (Los Angeles) Janet Stilson (New York) Doug Halonen (Washington) Robert Homan (Washington)
Copy editors	Kathy Maeglin (Chicago) Mark Mandernach (Chicago)
Art editor	Susan Graening (Chicago)
Asst. to the editor and publisher	Lissy Peace (Chicago)
Editorial assistant	Elizabeth Edgerton (Chicago)
Contributing editors	M. Howard Gelfand (Minneapolis) Susan Spillman (Los Angeles)

Advertising director	Marc White (New York)
Advertising sales	Millie Chiavelli (New York) John Melkonian (New York) Karla Keyser (Los Angeles) Fotini A. Sposato (New York)
Sales assistant	Lisa Padilla (Los Angeles)
Administrative assistant	Elizabeth Kovaly (New York)
Ad production manager	Fran Prybylo (Chicago)
Circulation manager	Eileen Figure Sandlin (Detroit)
Vice President, Group Publisher	Stephen D. Gilkenson (New York)

## TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Editorial	Chicago: 312-649-5293 Los Angeles: 213-651-3710 New York: 212-210-0233 Washington: 202-662-7208
Advertising	New York: 212-210-0217 Los Angeles: 213-651-3710 Chicago: 312-649-5293
Circulation	Detroit: 800-992-9970

Published by Crain Communications Inc., Chicago

<b>MRS. G.D. CRAIN</b> chairman	<b>RANCE CRAIN</b> president
<b>KEITH E. CRAIN</b> vice chairman	<b>S.R. BERNSTEIN</b> chairman/executive committee
<b>MARY KAY CRAIN</b> treasurer	<b>MERRILEE P. CRAIN</b> secretary
<b>WILLIAM A. MORROW</b> senior vp/operations	<b>JAMES FRANKLIN</b> vp/finance and administration
<b>ALICE SIELOFF</b> corporate marketing manager	<b>H.L. STEVENSON</b> corporate editor

ELECTRONIC MEDIA is published weekly by Crain Communications Inc. at 740 N. Rush St. Chicago 60611 (312-649-5200). Offices at 220 E. 42nd St., New York 10017 (212-210-0100); 814 National Press Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20045 (202-662-7200); 965 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit 48207 (313-446-0497); 6404 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90048 (213-651-3710); 5327 N. Central Expwy., Suite 200, Dallas 75205 (214-521-6650).

Chicago cable address: CRAINCOM. Telex number: 687-1241.

\$1 a copy, \$45 a year in U.S. Canada and all other foreign countries, add \$12 for surface delivery. Europe and Middle East only, add \$48 for air delivery. First-class mail to U.S. and Canada only, add \$39.

WILLIAM STRONG, vp-circulation. Four weeks' notice required for change of address. Address all subscription correspondence to circulation department, ELECTRONIC MEDIA, 965 Jefferson Ave., Detroit, MI 48207.

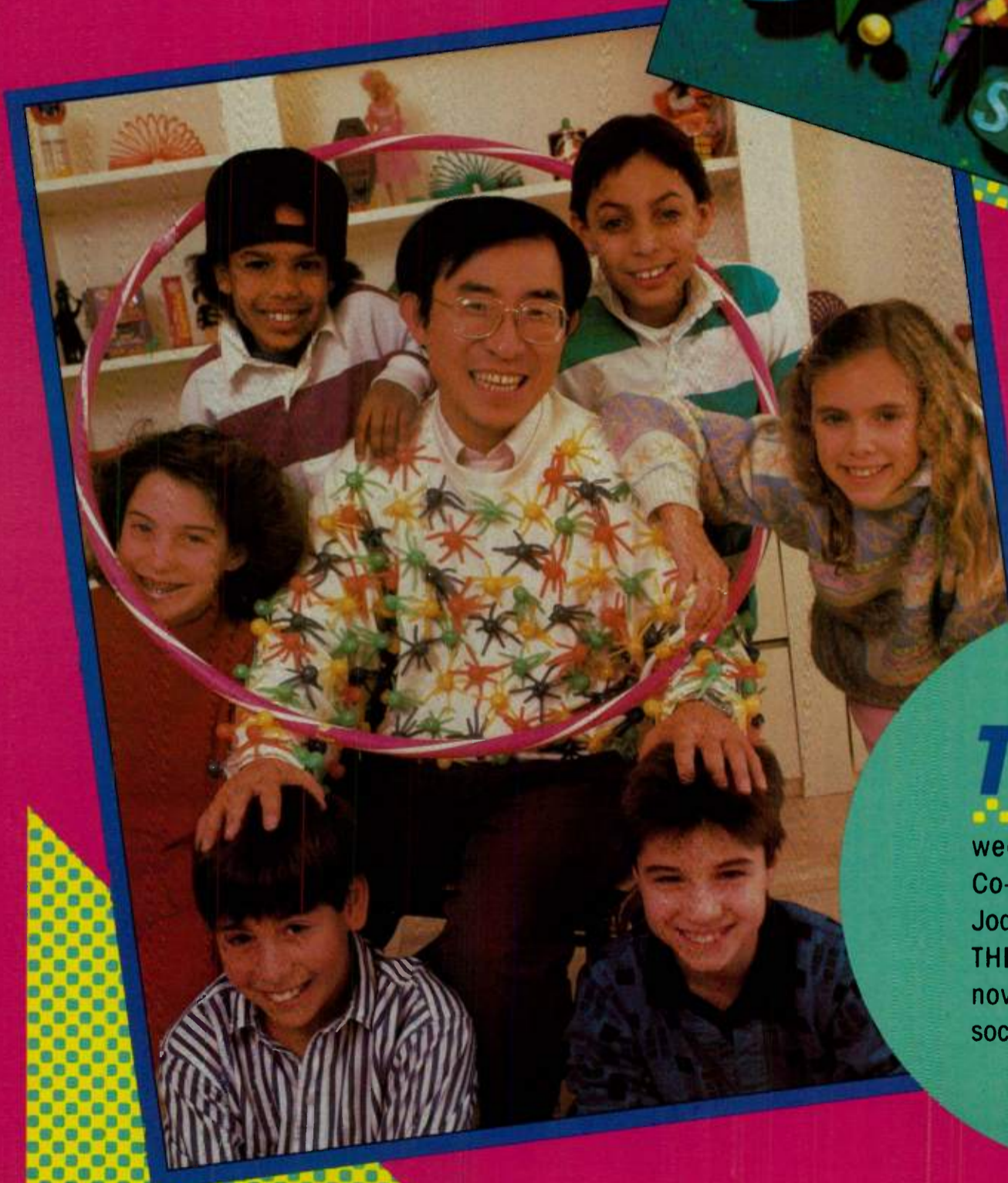
Portions of the editorial content of this issue are available for reprint or reproduction. For information and rates to reproduce in other media, contact: ART MERTZ, Crain Syndicate, 740 Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611, 312-649-5303. For reprints or reprint permission contact: Reprint Dept., ELECTRONIC MEDIA, 740 Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611, 312-649-5293.



DR. FAD WELCOMES  
KXAS DALLAS,  
KDKA PITTSBURGH,  
KING SEATTLE

**FOX/LORBER**  
**ASSOCIATES, INC.**

P R E S E N T S



**T**he surprise hit of NATPE, THE DR. FAD SHOW is a definite go for once a week airing in September. Co-produced by WCBS and Joanne Roberts Productions, THE DR. FAD SHOW is innovative, entertaining and socially responsible.

Station Clearances  
FOX/LORBER Associates, Inc.  
Telephone N.Y. (212) 586-6777 L.A. (213) 277-3270

Time Sales:  
ALL AMERICAN TELEVISION  
Telephone (212) 815-1200

World Radio History

A Division of Entertainment Communications Company  
Artwork and Design © 1988 Pravin Entertainment

# Brokaw top anchor in EM's exclusive poll

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

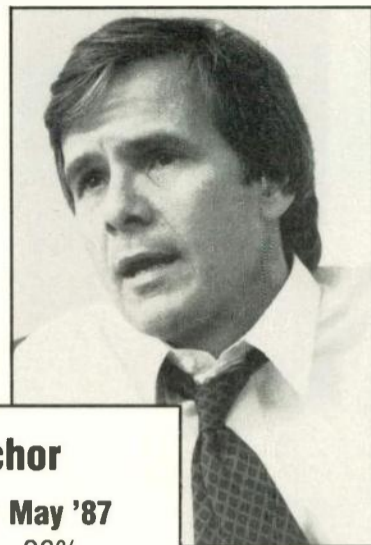
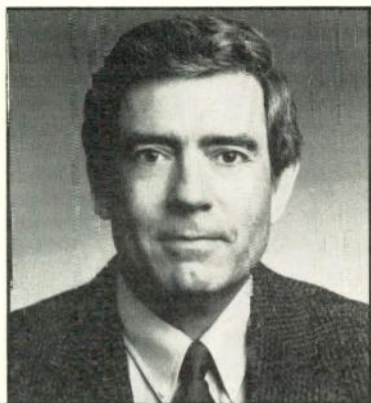
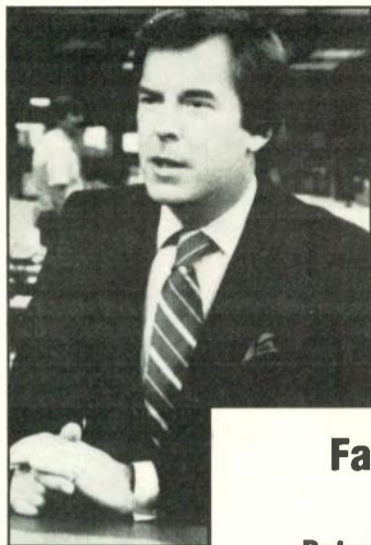
NEW YORK—The network news ratings may not reflect it, but Dan Rather has slipped from first to third, and Tom Brokaw has taken his place at the top of the popularity heap.

That's according to a scientific survey of 1,000 television viewers taken last month by SRI Inc., a Lincoln, Neb.-based national marketing research company.

The poll, conducted exclusively for ELECTRONIC MEDIA, showed NBC's Mr. Brokaw as the favorite news anchor of 32 percent of the respondents. ABC's Peter Jennings was selected by 29 percent of those participating, and Dan Rather finished third with 28 percent.

An earlier SRI survey, taken last July, showed Mr. Rather in first place, tied with Mr. Jennings at 33 percent. At that time, Mr. Brokaw was in third place with 25 percent.

In SRI's February survey, Mr. Brokaw was most popular with women ages 35 to 44, who named him as their favorite anchor 40 percent of the time, compared to 26 percent for Mr. Jennings and 24



## Favorite network news anchor

	Feb. '88	July '87	May '87
Peter Jennings (ABC)	29%	33%	26%
Dan Rather (CBS)	28%	33%	31%
Tom Brokaw (NBC)	32%	25%	24%

Source: SRI Research

percent for Mr. Rather.

Among male viewers, Messrs. Brokaw and Jennings both drew 31 percent in the poll, with Mr. Rather

at 24 percent.

One of the more interesting demographic twists is that Mr. Jennings is the top vote-getter among viewers

with annual incomes of \$60,000 or more, while Mr. Rather draws top points from those with lower incomes.

## 'Great Weekend' attempts to attract adults on Saturdays

By WILLIAM MAHONEY  
Staff reporter

LOS ANGELES—Gangway, "Smurfs" and "Flintstone Kids": Stanley Hubbard's invading your turf with "Great Weekend," an hour-long Saturday morning show for adults.

Mr. Hubbard conceived the live weekly program after seeing that grown-ups largely were being ignored among Saturday morning offerings.

The series is produced and distributed by USTV here, the syndication arm of the Hubbard family's Hubbard Broadcasting in St. Paul, Minn.

"Great Weekend" is a compilation of news, sports, weather, entertainment and fashion reports which is designed to help families plan and enjoy their leisure time.

Currently, about 30 stations are using the show to counter-program cartoons by airing it sometime between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m.

According to the limited audience data available since the program's Jan. 2 sign-on in 16 markets, stations are starting to tap into adult demographics that they didn't reach before.

But the show hasn't drastically improved their ratings so far.

Also, it has been virtually ignored by the nation's television critics.

"Great Weekend" is co-hosted by Dale Harimoto and Bob Goen and produced by George Merlis, a former executive producer of ABC's "Good Morning America" and Paramount's "Entertainment Tonight."

Mr. Hubbard, who's also the force behind Conus Communications, is standing behind his new project.

The show was recently renewed, even though it has been cleared in 40 percent of the country.

"We feel so strongly about the success of the show that we're willing to absorb some of the costs until it catches on," says Lionel Schae, president of USTV.

"Great Weekend's" initial 17-week cash run ends on April 23.

After April 23, Hubbard will change the agreement to a 52-week barter basis.

Under those terms, stations will be given seven minutes of ad time and USTV will retain six minutes of national ad time.

Last week, Great Weekend got a key clearance in New York on WWOR-TV.

Among stations now carrying the show are independents KHJ-TV in Los Angeles and WPWR-TV in Chicago and ABC affiliate WCVB-TV in Boston.

Hubbard's own KSTP-TV airs it in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Stations have the option of using one of three feeds offered at 7 a.m., 8 a.m. or 9 a.m. (ET).

Although station officials last week generally refused to discuss the length of their contracts, several admitted that they are only airing the program on a trial basis to test the waters for adult-oriented Saturday morning fare.

USTV was able to sign on six stations at the 1988 National Association of Television Program Executives convention in Houston last month.

It expects to sign on another five stations by the end of this month, Mr. Schae said.

He said USTV hopes to reach 75 percent clearance.

Mr. Schae said that, with 75 percent clearance, national advertisers will be attracted to what he calls "a newspaper with sound and pictures." #

## King World names director for syndication research unit

By MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
New York bureau chief

NEW YORK—King World Productions last week named James Dauphinee as managing director of programming for the Research and Development Network it formed last month with four station groups.

As head of the new research unit, Mr. Dauphinee, who is vice president of programming and development for King World Productions, will identify and develop new first-run programming concepts that will be test marketed by the TV alliance.

The four station groups, representing 16 stations, are Gillett, Midwest Communications, Post-Newsweek and Scripps Howard.

Because each of the station groups is backing the \$6 million project, they all hold an equity position in the Research & Development Network. They also will share in the profits of any new show that King World, which serves as the managing partner of the consortium, launches.

The group intends to fully produce, promote, advertise

and air promising programming ideas to test their viability. If a show succeeds, it will be put into national syndication.

Mr. Dauphinee said the first task is to identify time-period opportunities on the 16 stations.

He said the group will look at programming ideas from the independent production community and local TV markets, as well as the more traditional sources of programming.

Mr. Dauphinee hopes to begin testing new programs as early as this summer in order to bring new product to the 1989 National Association of Television Program Executives convention.

One project Mr. Dauphinee admits he has his eye on, but is not in negotiations for, is "Night Time," a local, late-night show produced by WLS-TV, the ABC-owned station in Chicago. "Night Time" is a one-week experiment that will air at the end of this month on WLS.

The show's director, Jim McPharlin, is also the director of "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

King World already distributes "Oprah Winfrey," which is also produced by WLS. #

## Hollings to revive station sale tax

By ROBERT HUMAN  
Staff reporter

WASHINGTON—Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ernest Hollings says he will soon revive his controversial proposal to tax broadcast station sales.

In an interview with ELECTRONIC MEDIA last week, Sen. Hollings, D-S.C., said hearings will be held within a month on his proposal to impose a 2 percent to 4 percent tax on the sales of communications properties.

Sen. Hollings also said he didn't expect the Senate to codify the fairness doctrine this year.

But the senator noted that President Reagan, who has promised to veto any legislation that includes the fairness doctrine, has less than a year remaining in office.

He also said he doesn't know when confirmation hearings will be held for Federal Communications Commission nominees Brad Holmes and Susan Wing. Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, chairman of the Senate Communications Subcommittee, "says he's not in any hurry,"



SEN. ERNEST HOLLINGS  
To hold hearings on tax

Sen. Hollings said.

Under Sen. Hollings' tax proposal, proceeds from the sale of communications properties,

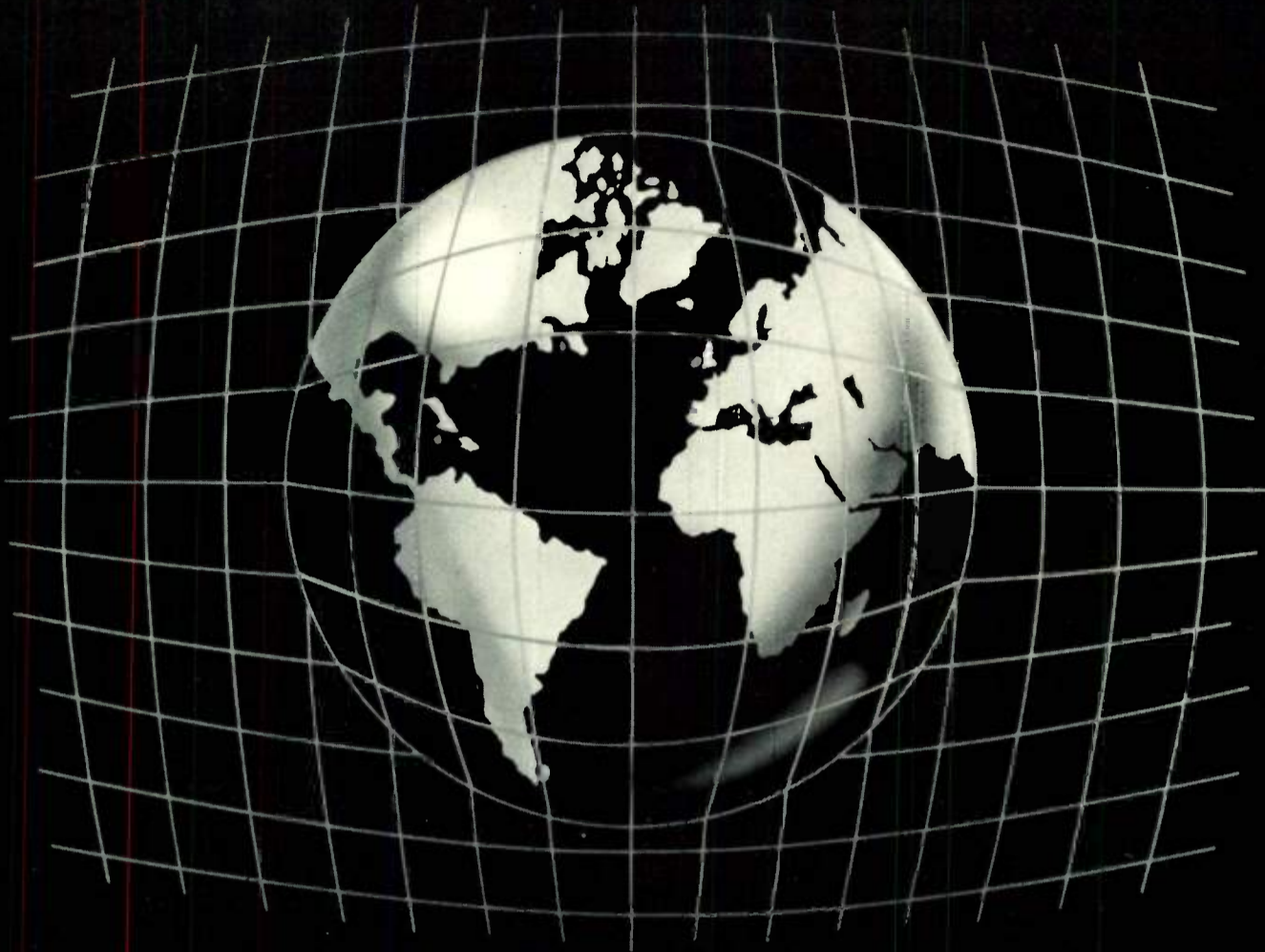
amounting to about \$50 million in fiscal 1990, would be designated for a public broadcasting trust fund. The senator's effort to pass a similar measure failed twice last year, in part because of a massive lobbying effort by the National Association of Broadcasters.

A bill introduced last December by Sen. Hollings contains both the fairness doctrine and the tax proposal. But Tom Cohen, an aide to Sen. Hollings, said the hearings on the tax plan won't include a discussion of the fairness doctrine.

Sen. Hollings also said he was trying to determine at a Senate hearing last week how much money he should attempt to raise for public broadcasting with the tax. At the hearing, David Brugger, president of the National Association of Public Television Stations, said the public broadcasting system will need about \$2.3 billion in fiscal 1991 "to do its job properly."

The public broadcasting system operated on about \$1 billion in 1986 from viewer support and federal funding sources, according to NAPTS. #

# THE WORLD OF TELEVISION FOR THE TELEVISION OF THE WORLD



**Your international spring-time market  
is at MIP-TV.**

It's happening at MIP-TV because at MIP-TV you'll meet everyone and see everything in the world of television.

In 1987, 5917 participants, representing 1496 companies from 106 countries were present at MIP-TV. In 1988 MIP-TV will once again be THE international meeting place for television stations, programme and feature film production and distribution companies and programme buyers.

It's happening at MIP-TV because MIP-TV is at the heart of the programmes which make television.

MIP-TV is the world's largest market for buying, selling and co-producing. It's the place to learn about the evolution of market demands and to discover new trends and new projects.

Be part of the vitality, energy and growth of today's television:  
be at MIP-TV'88.

# MIP-TV 88

24th International Television Programme Market

28th April - 3rd May 1988 - Palais des Festivals - Cannes, FRANCE

Market  
your programmes and meet  
the professionals  
from all over the world.

Please rush me further details on MIP-TV'88

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

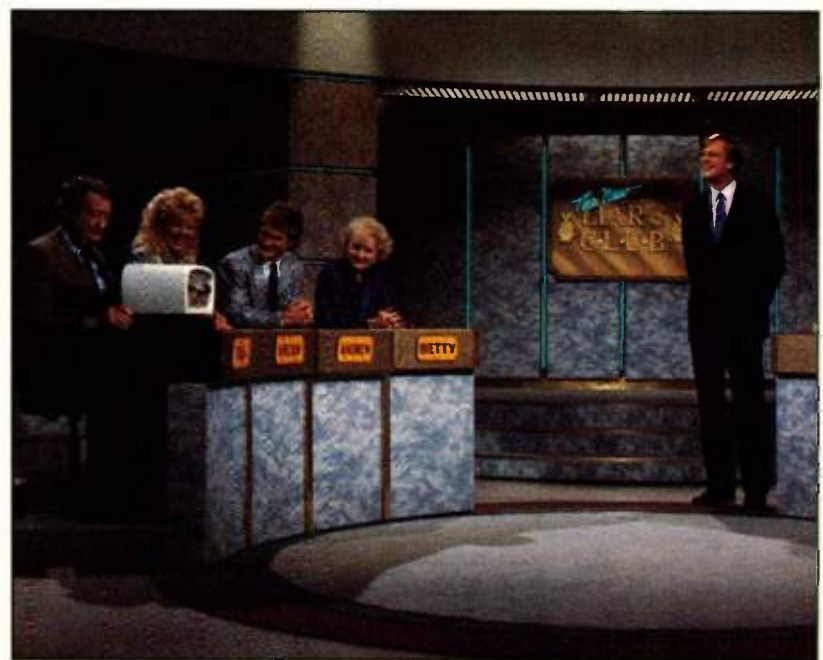
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to MIP-TV - Perard Associates - Sales Manager: Barney Bernhard  
38 West 32nd Street, Suite 1512 - NEW YORK N.Y. 10001 - Tel.: (212) 967.76.00 - Fax: (212) 967.76.07 - Télex: 4979122 PERAD UI

World Radio History

# Television's most



World Radio History



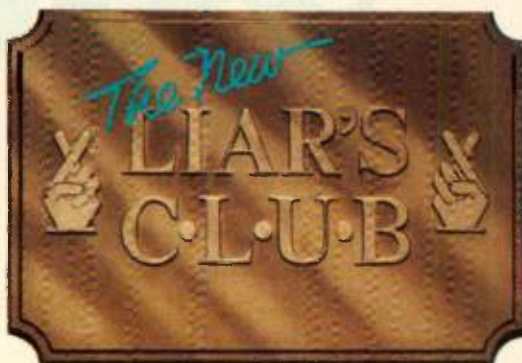
# popular put-on.

AVAILABLE  
FOR BARTER!  
52 Markets Cleared!



That's the truth! It's "The New Liar's Club" — the TV game show programmers are putting on across the country!

- Celebrity-studded comedy!
- Proven track record!
- Works in every daypart!
- Strong counterprogramming!
- Game show block builder!
- Hosted by Eric Boardman!



# Battle over Media General shifts to courts

By DIANE MERMIGAS  
Senior reporter

Hollywood producer Burt Sugarman, undaunted by a lawsuit filed against him last week, has launched a shareholders proxy fight for board seats and filed legal action of his own against Media General.

The fight over the Bryan family-controlled company, which is based in Richmond, Va., shifted to the courts last week.

On March 15, Media General filed a suit in federal court accusing Mr. Sugarman of making "incomplete and inaccurate filings" with the Securities and Exchange Commission in his recent proposals to buy the company for \$1.7 billion in cash.

Media General's officers and board, both dominated by Bryan family members, have twice rejected Mr. Sugarman's \$61.50 per share offer for the company.

The Bryans control about 70 percent of the company's Class B voting stock, while Mr. Su-

garman owns about 10.1 percent of its Class A stock.

Media General contends in its suit that Mr. Sugarman's statements to the SEC and the press "appear to be designed to create speculation concerning (the company's) stock and to help him in a possible proxy contest for the three board seats" to be elected by Class A stockholders this spring.

Indeed, in a March 17 SEC filing, Mr. Sugarman said he will solicit proxies from Class A common stockholders of Media General to elect himself, Dallas investor Harold Simmons and a yet-unnamed third nominee to the company's board at an annual meeting scheduled for May.

Also last week, Mr. Sugarman and his Beverly Hills-based companies, Barris Industries and the Giant Group, filed a suit in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia against Media General and its board.

The suit seeks a declaratory judgment on whether Media General's own articles of in-

corporation require the company to put Mr. Sugarman's buyout proposal to a vote by both Class A and B shareholders.

Mr. Sugarman and his attorneys argue that a simple majority vote by both classes combined would approve his offer.

Media General officials have called that interpretation "incorrect" and say Virginia law requires a two-thirds vote by each of the stock classes in the case of a merger proposal.

Mr. Sugarman's lawsuit against Media General also seeks an injunction ordering that his merger proposal be voted upon solely by Class A directors and essentially stripping the Bryans of special provisions and protections afforded them in a 1987 trust agreement.

The lawsuit also asks that the court prevent the Bryans from voting their Class B shares in the matter because they have shirked financial responsibilities to other shareholders.

Media General had no official comment on Mr. Sugarman's latest actions at press time.

However, several company executives, who

asked not to be identified, said they believed the lawsuit filed by Media General against Mr. Sugarman earlier in the week would be a sufficient deterrent to his efforts.

In an interview with ELECTRONIC MEDIA, Mr. Sugarman called Media General's suit "a smokescreen" that indicates "how serious a matter" the Bryans consider his unsolicited advances to be.

Media General's lawsuit contends that Mr. Sugarman's violation of federal law and "manipulative activities" have "deprived" Media General shareholders and potential investors of the ability to make "informed" decisions concerning "the buying, selling, holding and voting of Media General's securities."

The lawsuit accuses Mr. Sugarman of putting the company "in play" for short-term "greenmail" gain, and extensively cites his past investment history.

Mr. Sugarman, who claims to have growing support from Class A shareholders, denied the charges. #



Forming the team for the pro wrestling sitcom "Learning the Ropes" are (from l.) executive producer Robert Halmi Jr.; stars "Hawk," Lyle Alzado and "Animal"; and The Wrestling Network's David Crockett.

## Latest twist in first-run sitcoms: show with pro wrestling theme

By RICHARD TEDESCO  
Staff reporter

NEW YORK—In a marriage of two of the most popular contemporary TV formats, the first professional wrestling situation comedy is headed for its initial round of national syndication this fall.

While some observers might argue that pro wrestling is already a running sitcom of high farce, the collaboration of The Wrestling Network with the Robert Halmi Co., the producer of the new entry, puts a distinctly new entertainment twist into the marketplace.

In addition to real-life TWN wrestlers, "Learning the Ropes" features former pro football player Lyle Alzado as a mild-mannered school teacher by day. But by night, he's the "Masked Maniac," a pro wrestler.

In the show, Mr. Alzado, who cultivated a maniacal reputation during his 15 years with the National Football League's Denver Broncos, Cleveland Browns and Los Angeles Raiders, must conceal his wrestling identity to keep his teaching job.

It's natural to attempt to capitalize on the current successes both sitcoms and pro wrestling shows are enjoying, according to David Crockett, TWN's senior vice president. But he doesn't see the series as a thinly veiled promotional vehicle for his entertainment/sport.

"I'm sure both of us are looking for it to help each other," he said.

Four half-hour segments, originally intended for a test of the series to be aired this summer, have been produced to date.

TWN is looking for strong support for the series from its 193-station lineup, which clears 92 percent of the country, Mr. Crockett said. Those stations are getting

first option on the series, and TWN and Action Media Group have already hit the 50 percent clearance level in barter syndication.

The producers are seeking prime-access or late-night time slots in all markets, with expectations of hitting the 90 percent clearance level soon, according to Lawrence Scott, Action Media vice president.

He said "Learning the Ropes" has more than one willing taker in many markets—an advantage the companies will use in negotiating the barter deals.

"If they don't give us our time slots and heavy promotion, we'll go to the next player," Mr. Scott said.

Wrestling isn't the show's only selling point, according to Mr. Crockett. He says Mr. Alzado's presence and the complexity of his character lend dimension to the show.

"Lyle brings it all together with the character of the wrestler. He's not just a wrestler. He's a teacher and a father," Mr. Crockett said.

Several minutes of wrestling bouts will take place during each segment and will be staged specifically for each show.

Mr. Crockett said he feels that wrestling and comedy are mutually consistent forms.

Pro wrestlers have already become TV personalities with acting careers beyond their ring performances. For instance, two of the World Wrestling Federation's stars will be seen on network series soon. Big John Studd will appear in a segment of CBS's "Beauty and the Beast," and King Kong Bundy will show up on Fox Television's "Married... With Children."

"Our guys are in demand because they are good athletes and they're used to being on camera," said Myrna Gardner, manager of marketing and personal appearances for Titan Sports, WWF's parent company. #

## Big 3 commission people-meter study

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

The big three TV networks have commissioned an "extensive" study of people-meter systems to find out why ratings vary widely between this season and last season.

Described by CBS Marketing Vice President David Poltrack as an "A-to-Z analysis," the study will take a close look at the metered systems of A.C. Nielsen Co. and AGB Television Research.

"There are strange things happening in some dayparts that seem to defy explanation," said Alan Wurtzel, senior vice president of marketing and research services for Capital Cities/ABC.

Among the elements that have been targeted for analysis are the way in which the people-meter companies recruit the households in their samples, said Mr. Wurtzel.

The people-meter study, which will be conducted by Westfield, N.J.-based Statistical Research Inc., has been commissioned by the Committee on National TV Audience Measurement, an ad hoc industry committee comprising the research chiefs of the three networks and the National Associa-

tion of Broadcasters.

One source estimated that the study could take about a year to complete, at a cost of "several hundred thousand dollars" to each of the three networks.

Mr. Poltrack was quick to point out that the proposed study, which is being conducted with the cooperation of the ratings companies, "is not a destructive process; it is constructive."

Besides looking for reasons why people-meter ratings are generally lower than those produced last season by the old diary- and meter-based Nielsen Television Index, the study will try to explain the people meters' low "cooperation level" among users, Mr. Poltrack said.

He said the people-meter systems have achieved an average cooperation level of about 55 percent of the individuals in households who said they would participate. With 100 percent cooperation as the system's goal, the study will try to find ways to raise existing cooperation levels.

Recently, network representatives held talks with Nielsen officials in an attempt to resolve some of their concerns over people meters. #

## AGB studies VCR use

By MARIANNE PASKOWSKI  
New York bureau chief

NEW YORK—Videocassette recorders are used an average of seven hours a week, according to a new study by AGB Television Research.

That breaks down to 4.7 hours a week for playing back prerecorded and home-recorded tapes and 2.4 hours of recording TV programs off the air.

AGB last week released its first analysis of VCR usage in its 2,000 people-meter households. The report covers the three weeks ended Jan. 24. Other findings include:

- More than half (53.3 percent) of the television homes in the United States now have VCRs.

- VCR activity varies significantly between cable and non-cable households. Pay-cable homes spend more time recording, but less time playing back tapes than non-cable homes.

- Most home recording is done during daytime and prime-time hours, but playback occurs mostly in early fringe, weekend daytime, late night and early morning.

AGB plans further analysis of VCR activity this spring, said Debra Krayson, the company's vice president of product marketing and sales support.

AGB plans to examine the commercial zapping issue, how many times programs are played back, how much time elapses between recording and playback and other aspects of VCR usage. #

# ON APRIL 26 GIVE YOUR CLIENTS A GOOD LAUGH.



## ADVERTISING AGE AWARDS DINNER

Hosted by Jay Leno

Benefitting the Museum of Broadcast Communications  
Tuesday April 26—Chicago Hilton and Towers

My guests and I wish to attend the special VIP reception with Jay Leno, dinner and the awards show. Please reserve

\_\_\_ table(s) of ten at \$2250, or  
\_\_\_ ticket(s) at \$225.

My guests and I do not wish to attend the special VIP reception with Jay Leno. Instead we wish to attend the general cocktail party, dinner and the awards show. Please reserve

\_\_\_ table(s) of ten at \$1750, or  
\_\_\_ ticket(s) at \$175.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Agency or Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check out to Advertising Age Awards Dinner and mail to: Advertising Age Awards Dinner, Attn: Reservations, 740 N. Rush St., Chicago, Illinois 60611

Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Reservations Deadline: Thursday April 21, 1988. Reservations received after Thursday April 14 will be held at the door.

In this business, you've got to keep your sense of humor. And when you invite your clients to join you at the Advertising Age Awards Dinner, you'll share a lot of laughs together.

Because host Jay Leno will be giving the business to our business. As only he can.

And that's not all.

In the midst of the hilarity, Advertising Age will announce the best advertising of 1987. Television, print, radio and sales promotion. From all across the country. From agencies large and small.

So go ahead. Give your clients a good laugh. As you treat them to the best in the business.

The Advertising Age Awards Dinner. Benefitting the Museum of Broadcast Communications. April 26 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. Reception 5:30. Dinner and Awards Show 6:30. Evening will conclude by 10:00. Black tie optional. For information on 40% airline discounts and special hotel rates, call 1-800-524-4442.

**Advertising Age**  
*Awards Dinner*

Transportation provided by American Airlines.



# International programing venture formed

By **RICHARD MAHLER**  
Los Angeles bureau chief



**LARRY GERSHMAN**  
To head programing consortium

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.—Former Hollywood studio executive Larry Gershman has put together an international joint venture to produce and distribute first-run programs to foreign broadcasters.

World International Network plans to offer "world-class, first-run TV programing" to broadcasters in 27 countries, as well as networks and syndicators in the United States, Mr. Gershman said.

WIN plans to create shows within a structure that it claims will eliminate deficit financing.

Mr. Gershman, who is president of Larry Gershman Entertainment, conceived WIN and will serve as its first chairman and chief executive officer.

"We believe that with the development of WIN, the international broadcasting community has taken its most important step to date in formulating the landscape of global TV production and distribution," added Michael Lepiner, president of Telecom Entertainment.

Telecom will produce the ven-

tral Independent Television and France's Revcom.

Other broadcasters that will be given a "first look" at WIN programs include Canada's Global Television Network, Germany's NDR, Italy's RAI, Brazil's Rede Globo, Australia's Seven Network, Mexico's Univisa and Japan's Toho-kushinsha.

The tentatively titled "FBI Murders" is a two-hour docudrama about a 1986 confrontation in Miami between the FBI and two bank robbers.

New York-based Telecom said the movie is budgeted at about \$3.3 million and will be shot in English on location in Florida.

Mr. Gershman, speaking at a news conference at the Four Seasons Hotel here on March 15, claimed WIN will be unique in that license fees from American and overseas buyers, lined up in advance, will "not only cover the costs of production, but also put the projects into profit before production commences."

Members of the consortium will share the profits of WIN projects in which they are involved. They also

will provide production facilities and other support when appropriate.

Leslie Hill, managing director of Central Independent Television, labeled WIN "a concept whose time has come," explaining that the arrangement should allow his program service to obtain appropriate high-quality programing at an affordable cost.

"We have great expectations for this venture," Mr. Hill said. He said his network serves 9 million British viewers and generates \$500 million in annual revenues.

Mr. Hill echoed the sentiments of Lee Polk, U.S. representative of Paris-based Revcom, who termed WIN "the first worldwide network of leading TV broadcasters."

Mr. Gershman wouldn't specify how much money is available for the development of future projects, but suggested it's at least several million dollars.

He said he has pitched six long-form projects to WIN's partners, although he declined to discuss them in detail.

"All our board members will be meeting together for the first time at

the MIP-TV exposition in Cannes (next month)," Mr. Gershman told ELECTRONIC MEDIA. "We'll be looking at the new ground we want to cover, including the possibility of attempting a barter-supported project."

Mr. Gershman said there are no plans to bring in a permanent U.S. partner other than his own newly formed company.

"We want to be free to make deals with Fox or Tribune or the networks or whomever we want, on a case-by-case basis," he explained.

Mr. Gershman is credited with launching the first major international first-run TV series, "Fame," several years ago while president of the MGM/UA Television Group. He also initiated the creation and marketing of the MGM/UA Premiere Film Network before departing the studio in 1987.

Joining Mr. Gershman at World International Network, which will have its headquarters at the Warner-Hollywood Studios, is Executive Vice President Anita Van Petten, former senior vice president of business and legal affairs for the MGM/UA TV Group. #

## WHO'S NEWS

### Broadcast TV

**Robert Rose** to vice president of strategic marketing for the products group, Children's Television Workshop, New York, from senior manager of affiliate relations, USA Network, New York.

**Bill Fox** to executive vice president for corporate affairs, Gillett Communications, San Diego, Calif., from president and general manager, KCST-TV, San Diego. Also, **Neil Derrough** to president and general manager, KCST-TV, San Diego, from general manager, KSBY-TV, San Luis Obispo, Calif. He continues as vice president for the West Coast, Gillett Communications.

**Richard Post** to director of network news technical services, operations and technical services, NBC, New York, from director of convention engineering.

**David Billingsley** to manager of technical operations, KNBC-TV, Los Angeles, from crew chief/studio supervisor, WRC-TV, Washington.

### Cable TV

**Kevin Leddy** to vice president of marketing, Warner Cable Communications, Dublin, Ohio, from director of marketing. Also, **Terry O'Connell** to vice president of field sales and marketing from director of sales and marketing.

**Joseph Abrams** to vice president of pay television, MGM/UA Telecommunications, Culver City, Calif., from vice president of cable, pay television and home video, Coca-Cola Telecommunications, Burbank, Calif.

**David Zonker** to chief executive officer, Jones International Securities, Englewood, Colo., from president of administration. Also, **Richard Swanson** to vice chairman and president from vice president of sales.

**Marge Sandwick** to vice president of communications, Lifetime, New York, from vice president of public affairs.

**Daniel Davids** to vice president

of affiliate sales, Arts & Entertainment Network, New York, from director of affiliate sales for the company.

Besides Mr. Gershman's company, the principal financial partners in the project are Great Britain's Cen-

of affiliate sales, Arts & Entertainment Network, New York, from director of affiliate sales for the company.

### Radio

**Debbie Golden** to senior vice president, IGC/Strategic Communications, Kenilworth, N.J., from

director, ABC Information Radio Network, New York.

**Kirk Combs** to vice president and regional manager, Hillier Newmark Wechsler & Howard, Atlanta, from co-regional manager, New York. Also at the company, **Marcia Herman** to vice president and regional manager, Hillier Newmark Wechsler & Howard, New York,

from co-regional manager, New York.

**Steven Sloane** to director of promotions, WFAN-AM, New York, from vice president, Seena Hamilton & Associates, New York.

**Thomas Reeve** to director of youth sales, CBS Radio Networks, New York. He continues as Eastern

sales manager.

### Journalism

**Heather Allen** to bureau chief, NBC News, Burbank, Calif., from bureau chief, NBC News, Johannesburg, South Africa. Also, **Robert Eaton** to director of news coverage, 1988 Summer Olympics, Seoul, South Korea, from bureau chief, NBC News, Burbank, Calif.

**Betsy Aaron** to correspondent, CBS News, New York, from correspondent, ABC News, New York.

### Syndication

**Alan Cole-Ford** to senior vice president of business development for the television group, Gulf & Western's Paramount Pictures Corp., Hollywood, from vice president of video distribution for the video division.

**Glenda Grant** to vice president of television, ITC Productions, New York, from vice president of development. Also, **Deborah Service** to director of television development from manager of television development.

### Other

**Peter Keegan** to senior vice president of finance, CBS Inc., New York, from vice president and controller. Also, **Andrew Siegel** to broadcast counsel, CBS Law Department, from associate, Fly Shuebruk Gaguine Boros & Braun.

**Philip Corvo** to president and chief operating officer, NATPE International, Los Angeles, from executive director. Also, **Joseph Weber** to chairman of the board and chief executive officer, while continuing as associate director of programing, MMT Sales, New York; and **Vivien Wallace** to international representative, while continuing as chief executive, Granada Television International, Manchester, England.

**Elizabeth Hinds**, director of personnel at Capital Cities/ABC, was named a Black Achiever in Industry for 1988 by the Harlem branch of the Young Men's Christian Association of Greater New York. #

## Robert Mulholland leaving TIO

By **DIANE MERMIGAS**  
Senior reporter

Robert Mulholland will resign as director of the New York-based Television Information Office this summer to become a professor at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

Mr. Mulholland, formerly president and chief operating officer of NBC, said the post of broadcast journalism professor was left vacant by the death last fall of Gary Cummings, former vice president and general manager of CBS-owned WBBM-TV in Chicago, who had taught at Northwestern for a year.

Northwestern University is located in Evanston, Ill., just outside of Chicago.

"This is something I have always wanted to do," Mr. Mulholland said last week. "The opportunity came along sooner than I expected. I am sorry to leave TIO because of the progress we've made, but I am very excited about the potential of this new job."

The TIO has appointed an executive search com-



**ROBERT MULHOLLAND**  
Headed for Northwestern

mittee to find a successor to Mr. Mulholland, 54, who begins his new teaching job in September.

Mr. Mulholland became director of TIO in July 1986.

He began his broadcasting career as a news writer at independent WGN-TV in Chicago in the mid-1950s while a student at Northwestern.

In 1961, he joined NBC-owned WMAQ-TV in Chicago, then he went on to serve as a producer for NBC's "Huntley-Brinkley Report" and as news director for NBC-owned KNBC-TV in Los Angeles.

In the early 1970s, he worked as an executive producer of the network's evening news, vice president of news-gathering and executive vice president of NBC News.

Mr. Mulholland became president of the NBC Television Network in 1976.

In 1981 he was named president and chief operating officer of NBC Inc., which was a position he held until 1984.

Mr. Mulholland holds bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from Northwestern. #

# Wall Street: We can predict Gannett profits

Question: Did Gannett Co. report increased profits in the fourth quarter?

Answer: Did today's USA Today report celebrity gossip and use the word "We" in a headline?

While the newspaper industry seems to be in a state of boredom, and broadcasters struggle to maintain profits, Gannett's earnings statements remain more predictable than its pet newspaper, USA Today.



**FOCUS ON FINANCE**

M. Howard Gelfand

Yes, Gannett reported increased earnings in the fourth quarter—the 81st consecutive earnings increase since Gannett went public in 1967. For the year, Gannett reported earnings of \$1.98 per share, compared to \$1.71 per share for 1986. Most analysts expect Gannett to earn about \$2.40 a share in 1988.

Gannett's increased earnings are, however, old news—and no news moves the stock market less than old news.

With Wall Street looking on newspaper stocks without much enthusiasm these days, Gannett stock has been trading on the New York Stock Exchange for about \$37 a share lately, not much change since the stock market nose-dived in October.

Not even the financial recovery of USA Today has meant much to Wall Street. After all, Gannett and Wall Street have been expecting the national newspaper to turn a profit for years.

USA Today finally did enjoy its first profitable month in May, and while the paper lost money in 1987, it did turn a small profit in the fourth quarter. Most analysts expect the newspaper to make something like \$5 million to \$10 million in 1988.

Wall Street, however, likes a new story before it gets behind a stock, and so USA Today's improving fortunes were built into the price of Gannett's shares long ago. Still, many analysts think Gannett remains a good long-term buy.

The market, unfortunately, doesn't think in very long terms, which may explain Gannett's sluggishness this year.

But Kenneth Berents, who follows Gannett for Butcher & Singer, says: "If you're an investor and you're looking two or three years down the road, now's the time to buy. Newspaper stocks in general have been trading at less than 50 percent of breakup value, and if we don't have a recession, people will look back and say, 'I'm glad I got it at this price.'"

It's a pretty big "if," of course, but in fact Gannett has a few things going for it besides USA Today.

It's ironic that the stock market has been mesmerized by USA Today since even before its inception more than five years ago. Even now, with the newspaper starting to show a profit, it may be quite some time before USA Today is a significant factor in the bottom line.

While attention has been focused on USA Today, Gannett's broadcast properties haven't received much attention on Wall Street. That's understandable, because broadcasting accounts for less than 20 percent of overall income.

Gannett operates TV stations in Phoenix; Denver; Washington; Atlanta; Boston; Minneapolis; Oklahoma City; Austin, Texas; Greensboro, N.C.; and Jacksonville, Fla.

But the broadcast segment may be taking on increased significance. The first effort from GTG Entertainment—a partnership between Gannett and Grant Tinker—is due to hit the air this fall. The show, a nightly version of USA Today, has already received commitments from just about every major market. What's more, GTG is busy developing an assortment of other shows for network and syndication.

Peter Falco, media analyst for Merrill Lynch, thinks GTG Entertainment has the potential to be a significant contributor to Gannett income.

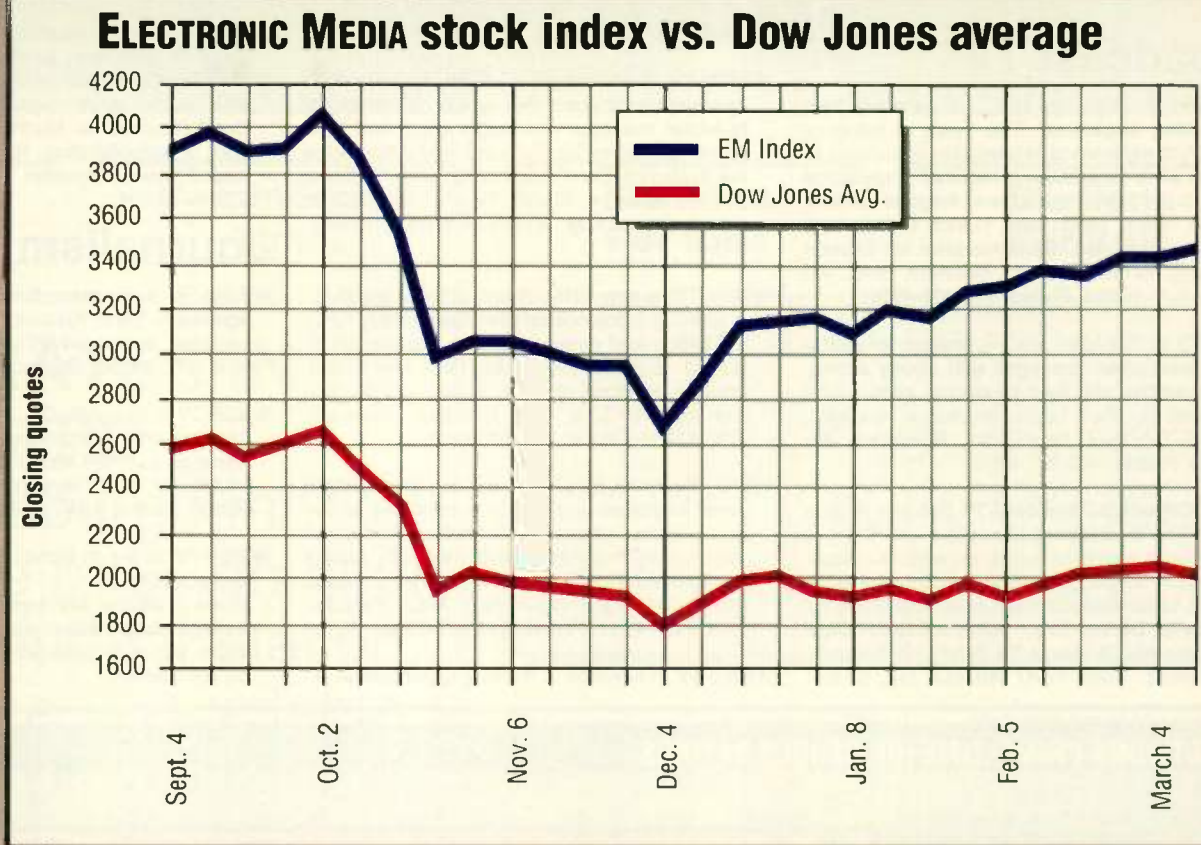
"They've got the clout going in because of (Grant) Tinker," says Mr. Falco. "You can see that in the commitments that Tinker has received already."

Mr. Falco is among those who aren't overly excited by the newspaper industry these days, though he believes Gannett's management is among the best in the industry. But he says it will be difficult for the company to outperform competitors, because so much of its income comes from traditional monopoly newspapers that are already operating near peak levels.

Mr. Falco and others do, however, see the potential for improvement in Detroit.

Gannett's Detroit News has been involved in a costly war with Knight-Ridder's Free Press for several years. The companies are now seeking to cut expenses under a joint operating agreement, which is awaiting federal approval.

Charles Crane, media analyst for Prudential-Bache, calls the agreement request a win-win situation. The agreement would probably allow both papers to operate profitably, but the real windfall would come if the agreement is denied and Knight-Ridder closes the Free-Press. #



### ELECTRONIC MEDIA stock index results for the week ended March 11

	March 4	March 11	Change
<b>WINNERS</b>			
Lorimar Telepictures	\$12.50	\$15.75	26.00%
United Cable	\$29.00	\$32.75	12.93%
Turner Broadcasting	\$9.00	\$10.00	11.11%
TCI	\$25.00	\$26.25	5.00%
King World	\$20.25	\$20.75	2.47%
Tribune Co.	\$41.13	\$42.13	2.43%
Disney	\$60.75	\$61.75	1.65%
Cablevision	\$30.25	\$30.63	1.26%
Multimedia	\$60.25	\$61.00	1.24%
Time Inc.	\$90.00	\$91.00	1.11%
Gannett	\$37.00	\$37.38	1.03%
Viacom	\$23.38	\$23.50	0.51%
Coca-Cola	\$38.00	\$38.13	0.34%
<b>UNCHANGED</b>			
Home Shopping	\$6.13		
Jones Intercable	\$12.50		
<b>LOSERS</b>			
A.H. Belo	\$47.63	\$47.38	-0.52%
MCA	\$44.75	\$44.38	-0.83%
General Electric	\$44.13	\$43.63	-1.13%
Gulf & Western	\$81.00	\$80.00	-1.23%
Comcast	\$25.88	\$25.50	-1.47%
Cap Cities/ABC	\$348.75	\$343.00	-1.65%
CBS	\$164.88	\$162.00	-1.75%
Scripps Howard	\$81.00	\$78.00	-3.70%

Source: Nordby International

# E.W. Scripps plans stock sale

E.W. Scripps Co., the privately held Cincinnati-based corporate parent of **Scripps Howard Media Group**, said it will sell some of its limited-voting common stock to the company. Control of the newspaper publishing and broadcast company will remain with the Scripps family. Proceeds of the stock sale will pay off debt incurred as the result of an acquisition program that began in 1986 and will be used for future expansion. Analysts estimate that the private company has about \$1 billion in annual revenues and operating profit margins of about 15 percent. Scripps' market value is estimated at \$2.5 billion. The Edward W. Scripps Trust controls about 73 percent of the company's full-voting stock and 90 percent of its limited-voting Class A stock.

Atlanta-based **Act III Broadcasting** reached an agreement in principal with Multimedia to acquire the stock of Reel Broadcasting Co., which owns independent WZTV-TV in Nashville, Tenn. Act

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

III also will acquire the stock of Multimedia Entertainment Co. of Tennessee, which has produced country and western TV specials, and the company's library of about 4,000 programs and a music publishing division. The value of the deal, subject to FCC approval, was not disclosed.

Gilford, N.H.-based **Sconnix Broadcasting Co.** has agreed to sell news/talk WFLA-AM and adult contemporary WFLZ-FM in Tampa, Fla., to Cincinnati-based Jacor Communications for \$20 million, pending FCC approval. The agreement is the first deal arranged by broker Gary Stevens since he launched Gary Stevens & Co. earlier this year.

**Columbia Pictures Entertainment** said it will have limited profits for the next three years. The company, formed in January with Tri-Star Pictures after

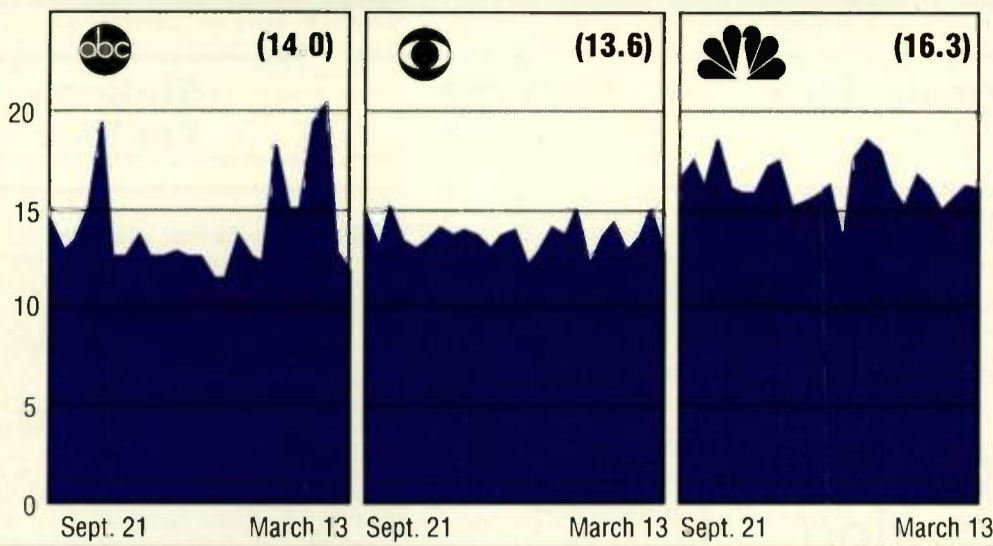
Columbia was spun off from the Coca-Cola Co., is suffering from enormous film and TV inventories and poorly performing theatrical releases on which it will take a \$105 million loss this year. Columbia, which has a net worth of \$1 billion and \$3.5 billion in assets, also has \$1 billion in outstanding debt. On March 15, Coke announced a \$51 million non-cash equity loss from the write-down and a \$25 million pretax gain on the sale of its stake in E-II Holdings, a spinoff of BCI Holdings.

New York-based **Osborn Communications Corp.** reported a \$1.6 million net loss for the fourth quarter of 1986, compared to a \$300,000 loss for the same period a year earlier. Revenues for the quarter were \$5.4 million, up from \$2.1 million a year earlier. For the year, Osborn had a net loss of \$3.4 million, compared to a loss of \$700,000 in 1986, and revenues grew 200 percent to \$17.8 million. Osborn owns 12 radio stations and other entertainment properties. #

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

**WEEKS 1-25: SEPT. 21 THROUGH MARCH 13**

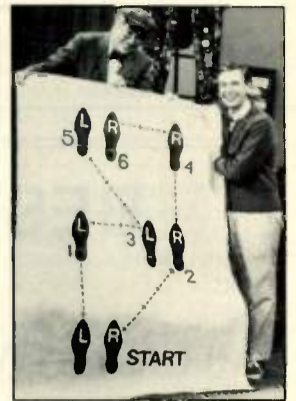
**NETWORK PRIME TIME**



**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**Longest-running public television series**

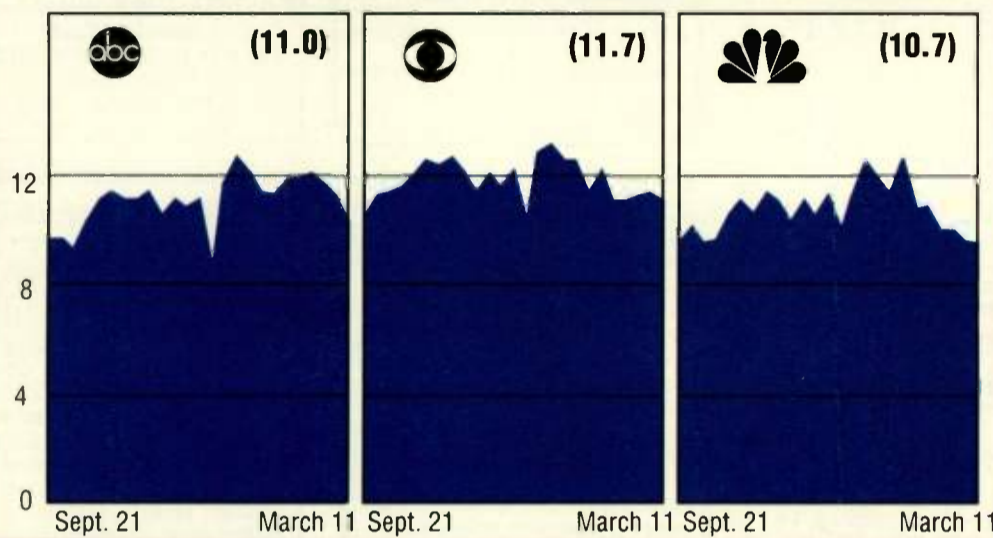
Series	Premiere date
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood	2/19/68
Tony Brown's Journal	6/12/68
Washington Week in Review	1/9/69
Sesame Street	11/10/69
Masterpiece Theatre	1/10/71
Firing Line	5/26/71
Wall Street Week	11/10/71
Nova	3/3/74
Great Performances	10/16/74
Austin City Limits	3/12/75



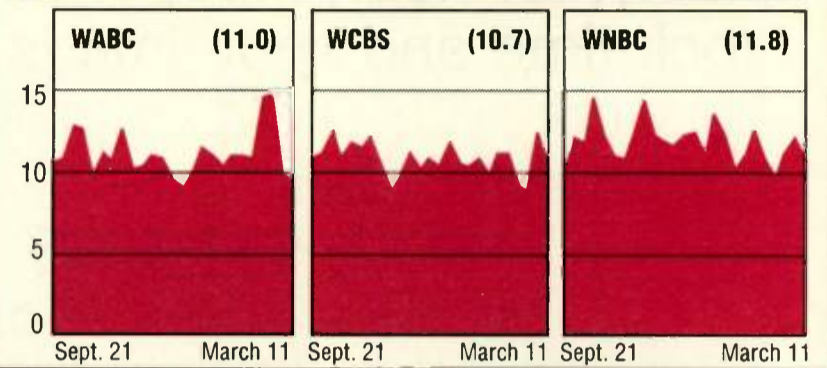
"Mister Rogers' Neighborhood"

Source: PBS

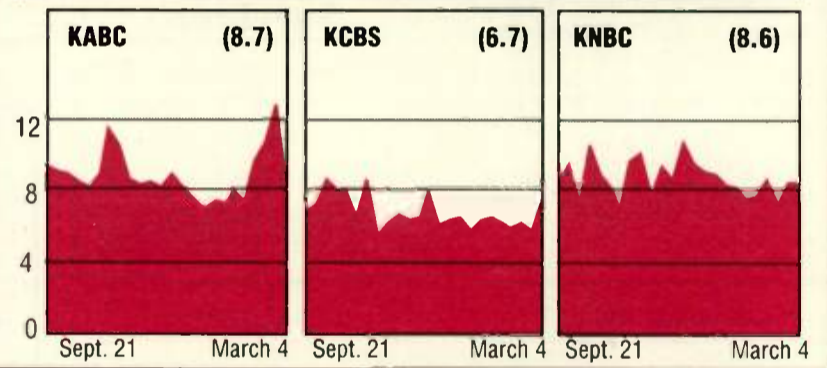
**NETWORK EVENING NEWS**



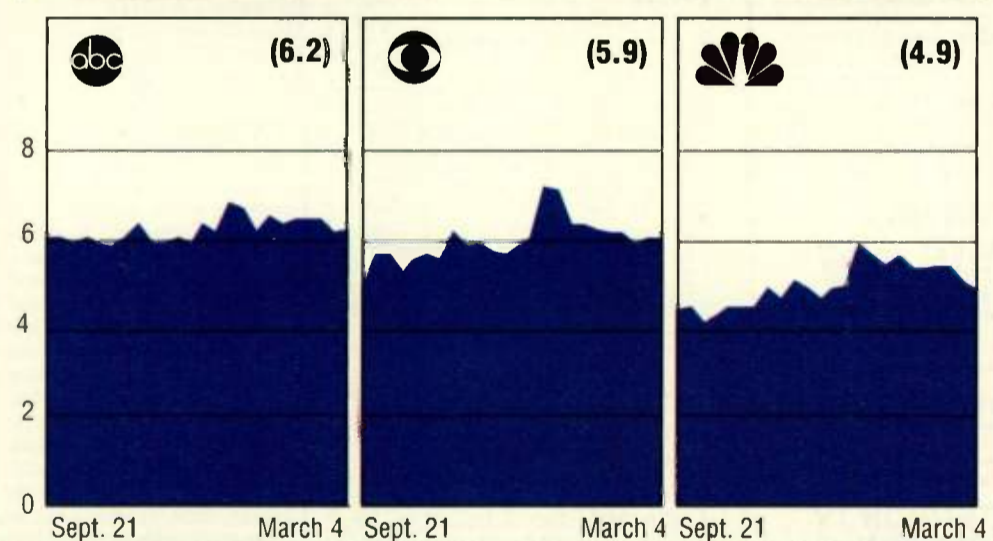
**NEW YORK 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS**



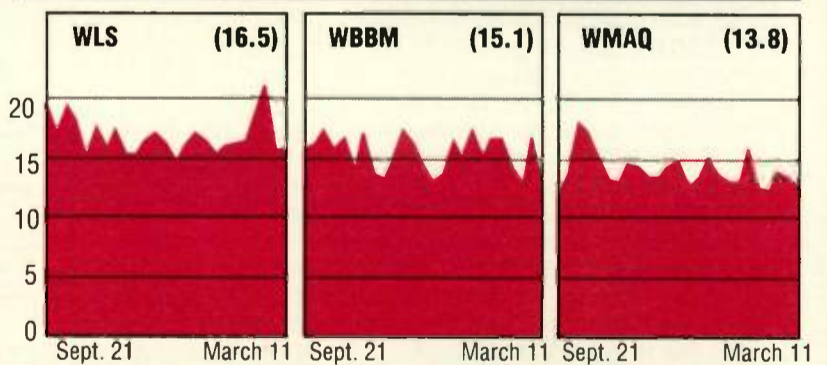
**LOS ANGELES 11 P.M. LOCAL NEWS—THROUGH MARCH 4**



**NETWORK DAYTIME—SEPT. 21 TO MARCH 4**



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



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

1. The Cosby Show	NBC 28.2/44	(t) 227	NBC 16.6/29	(t) Beauty & the Beast	CBS 13.2/23	(t) Oldest Rookie	CBS 10.3/17
2. A Different World	NBC 25.0/39	25. Hunter	NBC 16.5/28	48. 'Slap' Maxwell	ABC 12.9/21	71. Law & Harry McGraw	CBS 10.2/17
3. Cheers	NBC 23.9/38	(t) My Two Dads	NBC 16.4/24	(t) MacGyver	ABC 12.9/20	72. Houston Knights	CBS 9.6/15
4. Night Court	NBC 22.9/36	27. Day by Day	NBC 15.9/23	50. 20/20	ABC 12.7/23	(t) 48 Hours	CBS 9.6/14
5. Growing Pains	ABC 22.7/34	28. Perfect Strangers	ABC 15.8/26	(t) Simon & Simon	CBS 12.7/19	(t) Rags to Riches	NBC 9.6/17
6. Golden Girls	NBC 22.2/38	29. Knots Landing	CBS 15.7/26	52. Equalizer	CBS 12.6/22	75. Hotel	ABC 9.2/17
7. Who's the Boss?	ABC 21.3/33	30. ABC Sunday Night Movie	ABC 15.6/24	53. Frank's Place	CBS 12.5/19	(t) ABC Thursday Night Movie	ABC 9.2/15
8. 60 Minutes	CBS 21.0/33	(t) Designing Women	CBS 15.6/23	54. Highwayman	NBC 12.4/21	77. Pursuit of Happiness	ABC 9.1/16
9. Murder, She Wrote	CBS 20.4/30	32. Hoopman	ABC 15.5/24	55. Jake & the Fatman	CBS 12.2/19	78. Thoms	ABC 8.9/15
10. Moonlighting	ABC 19.1/30	33. ABC Monday Night Movie	ABC 15.0/23	56. A Year in the Life	NBC 12.1/19	(t) Dhara	ABC 8.9/15
11. ALF	NBC 18.9/28	34. Kate & Allie	CBS 14.9/22	57. Crime Story	NBC 12.0/21	80. CBS Saturday Movie	CBS 8.3/15
12. L.A. Law	NBC 18.7/32	35. Facts of Life	NBC 14.8/26	58. High Mountain Rangers	CBS 11.8/20	81. Probe	ABC 8.2/13
13. Family Ties	NBC 18.1/27	36. Highway to Heaven	NBC 14.6/23	59. Sonny Spoon	NBC 11.7/21	82. Sledge Hammer!	ABC 7.9/12
14. Amen	NBC 17.7/34	37. Falcon Crest	CBS 14.4/26	60. Mr. Belvedere	ABC 11.6/19	83. West 57th	CBS 7.5/14
(t) Matlock	NBC 17.7/27	(t) Magnum, P.I.	CBS 14.4/25	(t) Wiseguy	CBS 11.6/19	84. Charmings	ABC 7.5/12
16. CBS Sunday Movie	CBS 17.5/27	39. Dynasty	ABC 14.3/25	62. Our House	NBC 11.5/18	85. Sable	ABC 7.4/13
17. NFL Monday Night Football	ABC 17.4/31	40. Supercarrier	ABC 13.8/21	63. Disney Sunday Movie	ABC 11.2/18	86. My Sister Sam	CBS 7.3/14
18. NBC Monday Night Movies	NBC 17.1/27	(t) Miami Vice	NBC 13.8/23	64. Spenser: For Hire	ABC 11.1/18	87. Max Headroom	ABC 6.6/12
19. Dallas	CBS 17.0/28	42. thirtysomething	ABC 13.6/24	(t) Tour of Duty	CBS 11.1/17	88. Everything's Relative	CBS 6.5/11
(t) Valerie's Family	NBC 17.0/25	43. J.J. Starbuck	NBC 13.3/22	66. Buck James	ABC 10.7/18	89. Log Work	CBS 6.2/11
21. Head of the Class	ABC 16.8/26	(t) St. Elsewhere	NBC 13.3/22	67. Full House	ABC 10.6/19	90. Once a Hero	ABC 4.1/8
22. NBC Sunday Night Movie	NBC 16.7/26	45. Dolly	ABC 13.2/21	68. Private Eye	NBC 10.4/19		
23. Newhart	CBS 16.6/25	(t) Cagney & Lacey	CBS 13.2/22	69. I Married Dora	ABC 10.3/18		

Source: A.C. Nielsen Co.

# CBS takes college basketball ratings title

(Continued from Page 3)

"We believe we have now proved to the world our ability to program college basketball," says Robert Iger, ABC Sports vice president of programming. "We were basically sitting back and seeing NBC and CBS grab advertising dollars that weren't otherwise available to us."

Mr. Iger said ABC plans to increase its college basketball schedule to 17 telecasts next year. "If we're truly going to be competitive in this sport, we have to increase our exposures," he said.

ABC tied its fortunes this season to Big Ten basketball and high production values, in preparation for its next run at post-season rights.

"It's a money-maker for all of us because the rights fees have come back in line," says NBC Sports President Arthur Watson.

He cites competition from ABC's recent Winter Olympic Games coverage as a prime factor that put a dent in NBC's college bas-

ketball ratings this season.

NBC's strategy has centered on a three-year agreement to carry Atlantic Coast Conference contests, along with year-to-year deals with major independents, including Notre Dame and DePaul.

NBC reduced its schedule from last year, going to strictly national telecasts, and Mr. Watson indicated that the current conditions could prompt further refinement.

"All college basketball is a concern to me because of the overexposure of the sport," he said.

ESPN increased its college hoops schedule to 156 regular-season games this year, and its average prime-time cable ratings increased slightly, to 1.9 from 1.7.

In its "Big Monday" package, Big East games drew an average 2.1 cable rating, representing 968,000 households, compared to a 1.9 rating (781,000 households) last year. The second half of the evening produced a 2.7 rating, up from 2.6.

Counter-programing on weeknights and Saturdays, along with focusing on what it sees as the top four conferences, including the ACC and the Southeastern Conference, have been the keys for ESPN.

"All college conferences are not equal," observes Loren Matthews, ESPN vice president of programming. "And this is the first year that we've been able to get the top four conferences at one time."

Raycom Inc., the Charlotte, N.C.-based sports syndicator, had six regional conference packages going this season and drew its strongest advertiser support ever, according to Rick Ray, Raycom chief executive officer.

Raycom added several major advertisers, including General Motors and AT&T, and added inventory to the games on its schedule—both of which Mr. Ray says are signs that the demand for the sport hasn't abated with the number of games telecast.

"I don't think a glut exists," Mr. Ray says. "There are maybe 100 more times as many

entertainment shows than there are college basketball games. And in most of our markets, we'll do three or four times the ratings that the networks will do."

College basketball's marketplace value is indicated by the \$166 million CBS is paying for its three-year NCAA tournament deal. CBS shelled out \$96 million for its previous three-year pact.

In 1981, NBC paid \$9.9 million for the tournament rights.

With rights to the tournament, CBS doesn't have to guarantee college basketball ratings to many advertisers, according to Jerry Dominus, CBS senior vice president of sales.

And this season, the NCAA championship contest will produce ad rates of \$300,000 to \$375,000 for 30-second spots in the semifinals and the championship.

Last year's Indiana-Syracuse final was the sixth most-watched college basketball game ever, drawing a 19.6 rating, representing a TV audience of 17 million viewers. #

## Cable TV beginning to attract a variety of first-run programming

(Continued from Page 1)

syndication. It at least gives a show some exposure, some income and time for fine-tuning.

Henry Schleiff, chairman and chief executive of Viacom International's entertainment and broadcast groups, says his company is currently negotiating with Lifetime about "Personal and Confidential."

Viacom sources say that while "Personal" was originally earmarked for a NATPE unveiling last month, the show was never offered to stations because Lifetime expressed an interest two weeks before the program market took place.

"I figured, there's a ton of programming" being offered at NATPE, said Mr. Schleiff, so he felt it would be better to wait and see if Lifetime cut a deal on the series.

The program features Cyndy Garvey and psychologist Melvin Kinder giving advice after vignettes re-enacting real-life problems are televised.

A second option, Mr. Schleiff said, is to bring "Personal" out as a midseason replacement.

"Personal" is just one of several first-run shows Lifetime is likely to make a decision on in the next month. The network is looking for game show or talk show/realty-based programs, says Mr. Burchill.

"Whose Baby?" and "The Rita Davenport Show" both match that description, and both are making the cable rounds after failing to attract significant station clearances.

Rick Levy, Taffner's president of syndication sales and marketing, says "Whose Baby?" is still looking into broadcast syndication, but possible deals have been discussed with "three or four" cable networks, including Lifetime.

And Harmony Gold officials report the "feel-good" talk show "Rita Davenport" is also in exploratory discussions with cable networks.

Another potential cable series that skipped NATPE due to cable network interest is "Scandals," from TeleVentures. That company's president and chief executive, Patrick Kenney, says that in addition to "a larger source," two cable networks have expressed an interest in the magazine show.

Mr. Kenney says the program focuses on "gossip, embezzlement, fraud... what Oliver North is really



A talk show starring Rita Davenport (l) is one of the first-run programs being offered to cable.

doing, whether Jerry Lee Lewis is taking a fifth child bride."

One service looking for a different sort of product is CBN Cable Network.

Tim Kassick, CBN Cable's director of programming, says the network is in negotiations for first-run action shows or sitcom genres.

While he does not give specifics, one sitcom being marketed to cablecasters is "Throb."

It's about to complete its second season in syndication with 48 episodes, and Worldvision Enterprises is looking for a way to produce enough episodes for strip syndication sales in future years.

That approach has already been tried at USA Network, which added new productions of "Airwolf" to a short stack of episodes aired on CBS.

Now, USA co-owner MCA is offering "Airwolf" in broadcast syndication. #

## Broadcasters, cable discuss 1992 Olympics

(Continued from Page 3)

traditional, separate way, he said.

One network executive, however, reacted negatively and said he doubted that a combined Olympics rights package would fly.

Mr. Pound anticipates a 25 percent reduction for the Albertville Winter Games from the \$309 million ABC paid for the 1988 Winter Games.

But he expects that the rights fee for Barcelona could be comparable to the \$300 million NBC negotiated for the Summer Games in

the Winter Games and Summer Games in 1992 will have events scheduled in early morning and afternoon broadcast hours for the United States, rather than prime time.

The ability to carry events in prime time defines approximately half the value in Olympics bidding, according to industry sources.

That consideration, along with the costs of production in foreign—and in the case of Albertville, problematic—locales, could elevate the costs involved considerably.

"You may need a cable partner because of the money involved," Mr. Watson said.

Ross Greenburg, HBO Sports vice president and executive producer, said, "The numbers are going to force cable into the picture."

"It's going to happen. There's no way around it."

CBS Sports President Neal Pilson said he doesn't feel that a cable partner is either necessary or desirable.

"I am not convinced that a cable partner is in the cards as far as the Winter Games is concerned," he said.

Mr. Greenburg projects rights fees in the range of \$100 million to \$200 million for each set of games in 1992, and he figures cable will help the IOC to hit the numbers it wants to reach.

"They need American TV revenue to stay in the black," he said. "They have to bring cable in."

Mr. Pound expects that the U.S. broadcast networks may simply want to purchase the cable rights as they did in 1988—an option the IOC would factor into the striking price.

"The networks would like to be in a position to control it," Mr. Pound said.

While the IOC will define the bidding process, he made it clear that the committee would consider input from the U.S. networks on its approach.

"When all is said and done, you kind of rely on the competitive system in the United States," Mr. Pound said.

"The amounts are so big, you have to sit down and talk." #



ART WATSON  
NBC way of site problems

Seoul, South Korea, later this year, because it doesn't include the political and production problems Seoul presented.

Network executives are predicting the rights fees could fall by as much as 50 percent for both European venues.

NBC Sports President Arthur Watson recently completed a tour of the Albertville site.

He foresees more potential problems with the location than ABC encountered in its coverage of the troublesome venues at Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, in the 1984 Winter Games four years ago.

Albertville includes event sites as far as 50 miles apart.

Mr. Watson also said that both

## Syndicators oppose retroactive rules

(Continued from Page 3)

"The day the cable industry is forced to produce its own programming is the day they will begin to surpass the broadcasting industry in importance," Mr. Back contends. "I need cable (as a market) because TV stations have shut down so many time periods I used to have access to."

The New York-based syndicator says his mouth waters when he contemplates the future buying potential of cable networks and multiple system operators: "Cable is to the program distributor what Red China has been to the American manufacturer—a huge untapped market."

The growing respect for cable among syndicators is reflected by the recent sale of off-network shows to cable services.

Officials of Turner Broadcasting System, owner of WTBS, have said they prefer a gradual five-year phase-in

of new rules.

"It's in the best interests of both stations and syndicators for the rules to be returned in some form," says Pat Kenney, president and chief executive officer of TeleVentures. "I don't think broadcasters are losing as much audience to the superstations as they would have you believe, but nevertheless I feel they should be able to buy programs based on the assumption that they have an exclusive geographical franchise."

The Association of Independent Television Stations and the National Association of Broadcasters favor a return to protection as soon as possible. Those groups say claims to exclusivity should be imposed immediately, regardless of when contracts were imposed.

Any new rules are going to have to withstand an anticipated challenge from the cable industry, which says that blackouts will go against the public interest. #

# 'Music of Your Life' to be satellite delivered

By ADAM BUCKMAN  
Staff reporter

Al Ham's "Music of Your Life" radio format will become the eighth satellite-delivered radio format for Transtar Radio Networks, under an agreement reached last week.

The 10-year-old "Music of Your Life," the nation's best-known syndicated radio format of big band music, has traditionally been distributed as a non-automated format package that includes reel-to-reel music tapes, pre-produced promotional spots and other elements.

Now, "Music of Your Life," which currently airs on about 150 radio stations in the United States, will become a 24-hour, satellite-delivered radio format with live air personalities originating from Transtar's studios in Hollywood.

"We plan to offer our affiliates major-market entertainment, plus the opportunity to dramatically reduce local operating costs," said Al Ham, the former big band leader and record producer whose Al Ham Productions is the parent company of "Music of Your Life."

The format's current affiliates will be the

first stations to be offered the new satellite-delivered version.

According to Steve Rall, station manager of WECK-AM in Buffalo, N.Y., affiliates are permitted to continue programming "Music of Your Life" with their own air personalities or they can agree to take all or part of the new 24-hour version of the format.

"It's going to give stations a choice," said Mr. Rall, who added that his station has not yet decided how it will respond to Transtar's offer.

Besides joining Transtar, Huntington, Conn.-based Al Ham Productions also announced last week that it is merging with Fairwest Satellite Programming, which is an Indianapolis-based radio programming consulting firm.

The new company, as yet unnamed, will be involved in developing "live full-time radio formats for distribution via satellite," according to an announcement from Al Ham Productions.

Although its headquarters is in Indianapolis, Fairwest's programming operations are in La Jolla, Calif., where Fairwest's programming consultants, George and Reg Johns, are located. #

# IBM data processor helps Cable Value Network grow

(Continued from Page 22)

create a file on the person to speed up future transactions.

If the inventory the customer wants is still available (the CVN operator's screen blocks the request when an item is sold out), an order is created.

"The host watches a monitor screen which literally tells him or her how much inventory is left," says Mr. Axelson.

The talent can then relay that number over the air to let viewers know how fast the item might be moving.

Then the customer's credit is checked. Because 90 percent of the orders are charged on credit cards, the computer system is linked directly to Visa and MasterCard authorization centers.

At the same time, the computer creates a shipping-address label and a packaging slip for the warehouse.

"The customer should be in and out of here in 24 to 36 hours," says Mr. Keikel of the 1 million CVN customers who have made purchases since the program's inception in mid-1986.

The company now has \$100 million in

merchandise inventory stacked up in its enormous warehouse.

"Selling on TV looks easy, and that's why there have been several companies get out of the market as fast as they came into it," says Mr. Deikel.

"It really takes having a buying network in place (CVN has 150 buyers out constantly searching for merchandise) and an integrated computer system that will handle processing and customer service."

CVN has gone from a company with \$26 million in sales and a staff of 600 in 1986, when it posted a loss of \$2.8 million, to a company with \$100 million in sales and a staff of 3,600 in 1987.

The cable network expects the sales figure to reach \$300 million in 1988.

"We're on the fast track, so it's not unreasonable to expect our growth to increase 50 percent a year for the next couple of years," says Mr. Deikel.

CVN is already talking to IBM about buying an even larger system to keep pace with its expected growth.

However, that expansion is about two years away. #

## BRIEFLY NOTED

### Broadcast TV

NBC recently made several schedule changes. "The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd," which premiered last summer, returns this Thursday in the 9:30 p.m. (ET) time slot, bumping "Night Court" to 9 p.m. Fridays beginning this week. "Beverly Hills Buntz" has also been added to follow "Night Court" at 9:30 p.m. beginning this Friday. "Sonny Spoon," which had run at 9 p.m. on Fridays, has been put on hiatus. "The Bronx Zoo" will land in a regular time period at 10 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30; "In the Heat of the Night" began regular telecasts in the 9 p.m. Tuesday slot on March 15; and the first regular airing of "Aaron's Way" was Wednesday, March 16, in the 8 p.m. spot.

ABC has canceled the half-hour sitcom "The Thorns" and replaced it with "The Family Man," a family comedy from Universal Television. "The Thorns," which was produced by Reeves Entertainment, had its last telecast on March 11. "Family Man" replaced it in the 9:30 p.m. (ET) Friday time slot last week.

ABC News' "Nightline" won the 15-market A.C. Nielsen Co. overnight ratings for its half-hour live late-night coverage of the March 15 Illinois primary. "Nightline" averaged a 7.6/22, while half-hour primary specials on NBC and CBS, also beginning at 11:30 p.m. (ET), averaged a 5.8/17 and a 5.1/15, respectively.

Richard Cohen has been replaced as CBS News' producer in charge of campaign coverage by Brian Healy, a Washington-based producer for the network. Mr. Cohen, who declined reassignment, apparently was dismissed because of his outspokenness against CBS News policies, both verbally and in opinion pieces appearing in newspapers. Mr. Cohen recently clashed on the job with such colleagues as anchor Dan Rather.

News staffs at many TV stations in the top 50 markets were cut back last year, according to a survey released by the Radio-Television News Directors Association. The survey, conducted by University of Missouri journalism professor Ver-

non Stone, found that TV news staffs at network affiliates in the 25 largest markets averaged 64 full-time employees, about five fewer than the year before. In markets 26 through 50, the average news staff numbered 40, two fewer than in 1986.

Sudbrink Broadcasting of West Palm Beach, Fla., has agreed to sell WNAC-TV, the only independent in Providence, R.I., to New York-based Price Communications for \$11.5 million in cash, pending FCC approval.

WDIV-TV, NBC's Detroit affiliate, became the first network affiliate added to the station lineup for the mid-April premiere of "The Street," a half-hour police drama produced by Quantum Media, a subsidiary of MCA TV.

### Cable TV

Times Mirror, United Artists Communications and Tele-Communications Inc. have completed their agreement on a previously announced cable-system swap. A partnership formed by TCI and United Artists, called Rio Salado Cable Partners, is receiving systems in the Phoenix area. In exchange, Times Mirror is picking up operations in Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Ohio and California. There will be an even exchange of subscribers: About 195,000 are going each way. In a separate deal, TCI sold Times Mirror a 15,500-subscriber system in Rock Island, Ill., for an undisclosed price.

The planned TNT network from Turner Broadcasting system got a 1 million subscriber boost last week with the conclusion of three agreements. Jones Intercable, TNT's first MSO affiliate, will offer the service to its 950,000 subscribers. Also, TNT inked deals with Galaxy Cablevision of Sikeston, Mo., with 44,000 subscribers, and Cardinal Communications of Crawfordsville, Ind., which has committed to 85 percent of its subscriber base, representing 58,000 homes.

Poland is about to become the first official user of CNN in Eastern Europe. Turner Broadcasting System President Ted Turner signed

## NATIONAL SYNDICATION STANDINGS

### For the week ended March 6

	Rating	Stations	Coverage
1. Wheel of Fortune	18.0	223	99%
2. Jeopardy!	14.9	217	98%
3. Oprah Winfrey Show	11.5	204	99%
4. WWF Wrestling	10.6*	253	96%
5. Star Trek: Next Generation	9.0*	212	94%
6. Wrestling Network	8.4*	180	92%
7. People's Court	7.7*	196	96%
8. Donahue	7.4	211	99%
9. Entertainment Tonight	7.0*	162	92%
Mama's Family	7.0*	156	91%
11. Win, Lose or Draw	6.9	157	86%
12. All-Star Wrestling	6.8*	163	85%
13. All American Theatre	6.2*	113	82%
Hollywood Squares	6.2	138	89%
15. She's the Sheriff	5.6*	170	91%

\*Includes multiple airings. (b) Show broken out for individual plays due to pre-emptions.

Source: Nielsen Fast Weekly Syndication and Occasional Network Report. Includes only subscribers to the service and only barter or cash/barter shows.

an agreement on March 14 with Janusz Roszkowski, chairman of the Polish State Committee for Radio and Television, allowing Polish TV to use CNN's international feed for domestic broadcast in the country.

Garrison Keillor will return to his imaginary Lake Wobegone in "A Prairie Home Companion: The Second Annual Farewell Performance" performed at Radio City Music Hall on June 3 and 4 and broadcast live nationally by the American Public Radio Network and telecast on The Disney Channel.

### Radio

The Broadcast Group, a Washington-based radio program producer and syndicator, has scheduled "Worldtalk," which the producer claims is the first live radio call-in show linking the United States and the Soviet Union. The show will air live in both countries. The two-hour broadcast set for April 24 has been cleared on WOR-AM in New York, KFI-AM in Los Angeles and WGN-AM in Chicago, among others. The barter special, which will feature U.S. and Soviet celebrities, is being

co-produced with the Stoner Broadcasting System, in cooperation with Gosteleradio, the official Soviet broadcast arm.

### Sports

SportsChannel New York plans to carry 100 New York Yankees games this season, although a spokesman for the regional cable sports network said the schedule is subject to change. SportsChannel has been engaged in a protracted legal battle with the Yankees over rights to the games. WPIX-TV, which also airs Yankees games, contends that it currently has rights to more than the 40 games it has scheduled this season. In addition, SportsChannel will carry 75 New York Mets games this season.

### Syndication

"Color Image," the colorized movie package offered by Republic Pictures Domestic Television, has been sold in seven additional markets, including KTLA-TV, Los Angeles; WPWR-TV, Chicago; WFXT-TV, Boston; and WXTH-TV,

Houston. Total coverage for the nine-title package is now 67 percent of U.S. TV homes.

New York-based ITC Entertainment is evaluating whether to move forward with "Tiko: Pride of the Rockies," its proposed first-run weekly half-hour series. The show has cleared 26 markets.

Access Syndication has cleared its "Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever" and "Motown Returns to the Apollo" on the Fox-owned stations, plus WPLG-TV in Miami, KTVU-TV in San Francisco, WXON-TV in Detroit and WBAL-TV in Baltimore, among others. The specials, originally aired on NBC, are being offered on a barter basis.

Columbia Pictures Television has sold its off-network comedy series "The Jeffersons" in 13 more markets, bringing the number of stations buying the half-hour program to 151. Among the new purchasers are WPIX-TV, New York; KTVU-TV, San Francisco; KTVI-TV, St. Louis; and KRBK-TV, Sacramento, Calif.

Key creative positions have been filled for "War of the Worlds," the new science-fiction drama being introduced this fall by Paramount Pictures Domestic Television. Jonathan Hackett has been named producer of the hour-long first-run show, and Tom Lazarus will be executive consultant. Herbert Wright has been named senior creative consultant and will also write and direct episodes of the new program, inspired by Paramount's 1953 film.

### Other

Atlanta's news/talk WGST-AM helped independent WATL-TV provide "Super Tuesday" coverage on March 8. WATL, which has no news staff, wanted to air movies during prime time, when all the other TV stations in town were preempting their evening programs for continuous primary coverage. Every hour that evening, WATL cut away from its movie to air primary updates being provided by WGST's news staff. WATL set up videocameras in the WGST studios, and viewers saw WGST news anchors reading their news copy. #



# Re-regulation of cable threatened at hearing

(Continued from Page 1)

He also said he was concerned about cable's ability to drop local broadcast TV stations, now that a federal appeals court has thrown out the FCC's must-carry rules. He said he wanted to ensure the future of "free TV."

At one point, Sen. Metzenbaum also took aim at the "vertical integration"—that is, the practice of cable companies buying interests in the programming they carry—that's been occurring recently.

Much of the focus in that area has been on Tele-Communications Inc., the nation's largest cable-system owner.

In response, Robert Thomson, a TCI vice president, testified: "We're not ashamed of the fact that we've taken our subscribers' money and improved the quality of their programming."

Mr. Thomson said TCI had interests in a number of the programming services, including Turner Broadcasting System.

But he said the company didn't have a controlling interest, and that Turner would have "disappeared from the airwaves" without investment from cable operators.

Jim Mooney, president of the National Cable Television Association, also came to the defense of the industry.

If cable were prohibited from taking interests in cable programming, Mr. Mooney said, "there wouldn't be half as much cable programming as there is."

"We think we're putting something good on the table," he added.

Sen. Metzenbaum took issue with Mr. Mooney's contention, based on



**ROBERT THOMSON**  
Says TCI has improved programs

Photo by Jim Hubbard

Francisco, testified that five of the six TCI systems in the Bay area, contrary to the desires of viewers, moved his station to higher channel positions and replaced it with The Discovery Channel, a cable service partly owned by TCI.

When Mr. Siegel said he feared that TCI might retaliate for his having testified, Sen. Metzenbaum said, "If you hear of a scintilla of retribution, don't call my staff, call me."

Among other witnesses, HBO President Joseph Collins said his company had no corporate policy against selling its programming to so-called "wireless cable" operators—entrepreneurs who are trying to offer multichannel video service over the air.

But he said he was concerned about the "security" of HBO's signal on those systems and the wireless operators' financial accountability.

Mr. Collins also said HBO is considering selling its service to wireless cable. But, though pressed by Sen. Metzenbaum, he declined to specify when the company expected to make that decision.

Sen. Metzenbaum said the subcommittee would wait to see how the programmer handled the issue over the next few months, but that if nothing happened, "my guess is there will be a legislative proposal."

He said, "I believe it's truly an antitrust issue."

Preston Padden, president of the Association of Independent Television Stations, said he didn't know if the Senate antitrust subcommittee would end up taking charge of all issues being raised against cable on Capitol Hill. "But I thought it was a terrific kickoff," he said. #

an NCTA study, that cable systems had only been raising their rates modestly since they were deregulated.

The senator said he had a list of 93 cable systems that had raised their rates by 50 percent or more during their first year of new-found freedom.

Sen. Metzenbaum, the only senator present during much of the hearing, said the subcommittee would take "another look" at the cable TV industry within 60 days and then decide whether legislation is needed.

One of the broadcasters present at the hearing, John Siegel, president of independent KBHK-TV in San

## AT PRESS TIME CONTINUED

ording to John Draper, TCI vice president and general counsel.

● **NEW YORK**—CBS Inc. is considering several plans that could eliminate upwards of 700 jobs, by one source's estimate. Through a new early-retirement plan for employees age 55 and over, attrition and the streamlining of CBS's corporate staff of 800 by more than half (in the wake of the recent CBS Records sale), CBS's overall 6,919-person full-time ranks could be cut by 15 percent by year's end. CBS/Broadcast Group last week instituted a hiring freeze in an attempt to offset a revenue shortfall caused by a soft marketplace.

● **NEW YORK**—Spokesmen for the three commercial networks Friday said they were not troubled by the use of a broadcast and print press media pool assigned to U.S. Army battalions on emergency readiness exercises in Honduras. The pool arrangement was set up following the restriction of press coverage of the invasion of Grenada.

● **WASHINGTON**—The PBS executive committee recommended Thursday that the board approve changes in its national underwriting guidelines in order to tone down the emphasis on products in underwriting credits. The committee proposed reducing from four to one the number of products that can be shown in national underwriting credits. The PBS board will vote on the matter on April 13.

● **BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.**—A Delaware court Friday refused to take action on a proposed \$250 million offer by Hollywood producer Merv Griffin to gain control of Resorts International, which operates hotels and casinos in New Jersey and the Bahamas. Resorts Chairman Donald Trump late Thursday rejected Mr. Griffin's \$35-per-share bid for controlling stock in the firm and urged directors to approve his \$22-per-share plan to take Resorts International private.

● **NEW YORK**—CBS admitted last week that it expects to finish the current prime-time season in third place for the first time in its history. Even before last week, it looked as if CBS would finish third, but CBS officials held off on admitting the situation until last week.

● **NEW YORK**—Thirty-year ABC veteran Mark Cohen, 56, will step down July 1 as executive vice president of the ABC TV Network and vice president of Capital Cities/ABC. Sources say his responsibility for business affairs, contracts and marketing services likely will be divided among different executives now reporting to Mr. Cohen.

● **NEW YORK**—Travel Channel President Peter McHugh left the cable network Friday. Bahir Browsh, senior vice president of operations, will serve as acting president until a replacement is named.

● **NEW YORK**—Group W Productions, MGM/UA and D.L. Taffner announced last week that the three companies have formed a joint barter sales arm, which will be headed up by Dan Cosgrove, Group W vice president of media sales. Together the three companies' barter units are valued at about \$60 million. #

# 3 networks unveil lists of series pilots

(Continued from Page 1)

Aaron Spelling, in the open running for pilots for the first time since breaking his 18-year exclusive deal with ABC, has one pilot submitted at each of the three networks in addition to his hour-long "Angels '88" already ordered by Fox Broadcasting Co.

Besides the usual number of detective shows and sitcoms, here are some of the more popular genres that are emerging for 1988-89:

● **Journalism:** No less than eight pilots, spread evenly among the networks, deal with some aspect of journalism, with many apparently hoping to cash in on the success of "Broadcast News." The main characters range from anchors to magazine editors, photojournalists and reporters.

● **Science-fiction:** At least six pilots are either set in the future or feature superhumans, aliens or some combination of the two.

● **Spinoffs:** NBC dominates that category with three proposed spinoffs, one from "Facts of Life," one from "My Two Dads" and a revival of "The Incredible Hulk."

ABC is considering a "Hooperman" spinoff called "Nick Derringer, P.I." under the guidance of Steven Bochco.

Among the stars featured in pilots are Jamie Lee Curtis, Morris Day, Robert Guillaume, John Denver, Richard Mulligan, Judd Hirsch, Marilu Henner, Kate Capshaw and Dick Butkus.

NBC plans to stick to its May 18 date for unveiling its fall-season plans, despite the WGA strike.

CBS says it expects to wait until June to announce its slate because its affiliates meeting is being held later this year. ABC is also expected to wait until June. #

## Series in development

The following is a list of many of the projects, both series commitments and pilots, that are in development by the major broadcast networks. (The shows that the networks are already committed to are marked by an asterisk.)

### ABC

#### COMEDIES

**Anything But Love**—Adams Productions with Twentieth Century Fox Television.  
**Cadets**—Viacom.  
**Coach**—Universal.  
**Heart and Soul**—Phoenix Entertainment with New World.  
**Livin' Large**—Stephen J. Cannell Productions.  
**The Robert Guillaume Show**—New World.  
**Nick Derringer, P.I. (Hooperman spinoff)**—Twentieth Century Fox Television.  
**Primetime**—Viacom.

#### DRAMAS

**Badlands 2005**—Columbia Pictures Television.  
**Chain Letter**—Indie Productions with Phoenix Entertainment.  
**Cyberforce**—Warner Bros. Television.  
**Dakota's Way**—Phoenix Entertainment.  
**A Fine Romance**—Indie Productions with Phoenix Entertainment.  
**Gang of Four**—MGM.  
**Half 'N' Half**—Lorimar.  
**Kenya**—Robert Halmi Productions with Disney Television.  
**The Loner**—Aaron Spelling Productions.  
**Men**—Universal Television.  
**Murphy's Law**—New World.  
**On the Streets**—MGM.  
**Three of a Kind**—MTM.  
**Studio 5B**—Lorimar.  
**Why on Earth**—GTG Entertainment.

### CBS

#### COMEDIES

**Baby on Board**—Hart/Thomas/Berlin Productions.  
**The Dictator\***—Lobell-Bergman with Touchstone Television.  
**Dirty Dancing**—Steve Tisch Co. with Vestron.  
**Dr. Paradise**—Universal Television.  
**Heartland**—Witt/Thomas.  
**House and Home**—Warner Bros. Television.  
**The Johnsons Are Home**—GTG.  
**Limited Partners**—Viacom Television.  
**Mars: Base One**—no production company.  
**Mary Tyler Moore\***—MTM.  
**Miss Pendleton's Point of View**—Paramount Television.  
**Murphy Brown**—Warner Bros. Television.  
**My Life Story**—GTG.  
**Never Go to Sea**—Paramount Television.  
**Old Money**—Ogiens/Kane with MGM/UA.  
**Real Life**—20th Century Fox Television.  
**Some Kinda Woman**—Columbia Television.  
**Tickets Please**—Disney Television.  
**Time Out for Jake**—Witzend Productions.  
**The Van Dyke Show\***—GTG.  
**Whately by the Bay**—Orion.

#### DRAMAS

**Elysian Fields**—MGM/UA.  
**Fort Figueroa**—Warner Bros. Television.  
**Further Adventures**—Paramount Television.  
**Hard Time**—Disney Television.  
**Higher Ground**—Tri-Star Television.  
**Intrigue**—Columbia Television.  
**Lame Duck**—Stephen J. Cannell Productions.  
**Law and Order**—Universal Pictures Television.  
**Mad Avenue**—Orion Television.  
**micRONAUTS**—MGM/UA.  
**Off Duty**—Lorimar.  
**Paradise**—Lorimar.  
**Sniff**—Von Zerneck/Samuels.  
**Sterling**—Aaron Spelling.  
**TV 101**—GTG.  
**Two Worlds**—Rosemont Productions.

### NBC

#### COMEDIES

**Baby Boom\***—MGM/UA.  
**The Big Five**—Weintraub Entertainment.  
**Channel 99\***—Imagine Entertainment.  
**The Cheech Show\***—MGM/UA.  
**Dear John\***—Paramount Television.  
**Empty Nest\***—Witt/Thomas/Harris with Touchstone.  
**Facts of Life spinoff**—Columbia/Embassy Television.  
**Flipside**—Don Johnson Co. with Universal.  
**A Ghost Story**—Lorimar.  
**Homecoming Queen**—Viacom.  
**The Morris Day Project**—Castle Rock Entertainment.  
**My Two Dads spinoff**—No production company.  
**Nurse Bob**—NBC Productions.  
**Outrageous\***—Eddie Murphy Productions.  
**Smart Guys**—Imagine Entertainment.  
**When in Rome**—Paramount Television.

#### DRAMAS

**Desert Rats**—Universal.  
**Desperado**—Universal.  
**The Disney Hour\***—Disney Television.  
**Down Delaware Road**—Weintraub Entertainment Group.  
**Dream Street**—MGM.  
**Favorite Son**—NBC Productions.  
**Home Free**—MTM.  
**The Incredible Hulk Returns**—New World.  
**Invader**—Tri-Star.  
**The Jim Henson Hour\***—Henson Associates.  
**Midnight Caller**—Lorimar.  
**Nightingales**—Aaron Spelling Productions.  
**Oakmont**—NBC Productions.  
**Out of Time**—Tri-Star.  
**Satin's Touch**—Scherick Associates with NBC Productions.  
**Shooter**—Paramount Television with UBU Productions.  
**Tattingers\***—MTM.

# BIG BAD WOLF



**THE BIGGEST, BADDEST, TOUGHEST AIRWOLF  
IS READY TO DELIVER THE MALE...**

**AND WOMEN, KIDS AND TEENS, TOO.**

Airwolf'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.

Monday-Friday, 5 to 8 pm, Airwolf will not only deliver women, kids and teens, it will also begin to build the male audience you need to move into prime time.

And its balanced demos are just what the weekend ordered.

## AIRWOLF

80 big, bold, beautiful high-tech adventures from

## MCA TV

©1988 MCA TV. All rights reserved. Source: Nielsen.