



PROGRAMMING

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New goals for Cartoon Net

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Slim slots sedate launches

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JESSELL

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Every medium has its day

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# BROADCASTING & CABLE

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August 18, 2003

### GUBERNATORIAL DREAMIN'

## Calif. TV Loves a Recall: Great Story, Great CPMs

BY DAN TRIGOBUFF

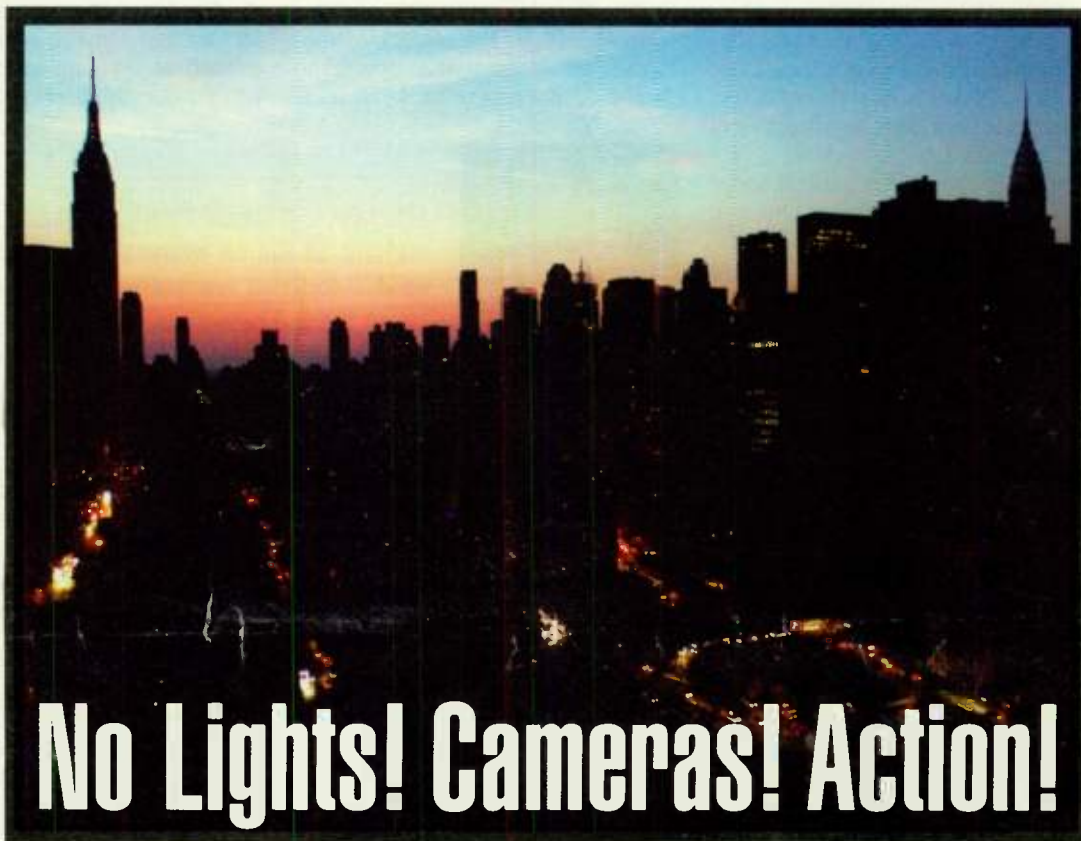
**S**uddenly California news-casts are awash in politics, and stations will soon be awash in ads. Since Arnold Schwarzenegger announced his gubernatorial candidacy on *The Tonight Show* two weeks ago, the star has been given more California airtime than he could get in a TNT *Terminator* marathon. But Schwarzenegger and some of the other 135-odd candidates soon will be paying for time, too.

Estimates of the coming political advertising blitz range from \$50 million to \$100 million, concentrated in the two largest population centers, Los Angeles and the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose market, where a 30-sec-  
*Continued on page 8*



Gov. Gray Davis is expected to buy lots of TV time in the effort to save his job.

AP PHOTO / BEN MARGOT, STAFF



## No Lights! Cameras! Action!

AP PHOTO / FRANK FRANKLIN II, STAFF

### TV news struggles to illuminate blackout, but was anybody watching?

BY DAN TRIGOBUFF AND JOHN EGGERTON

**F**orget digital cameras. Last Thursday, the hot commodities in newsrooms were backup generators, charged-up cell phones and good old fashioned shoe-leather. Newsrooms across

a region ranging from Ottawa, Canada, to New York City, became campgrounds for TV and radio journalists who couldn't, and probably wouldn't, go home.

Indeed, as NBC's Brian Williams was broadcasting the bulletin that the Northeast had been hit with a massive blackout, in the background the emergency alarm at 30 Rockefeller Center

was clearly audible.

The biggest frustration, said Randal Stanley, news director at Cleveland's WKYC-TV, was not within the newsroom, but outside of it. "We wondered who we were talking to besides ourselves," he said.

Without electricity, only a handful of viewers with battery  
*Continued on page 26*

### MADISON AVE.

### SIN TAX

# -19%

Viewers 19% less likely to recall ads in sexy/violent shows.

TV BUYER, PAGE 18



#BXNPNRT \*\*\*\*\*3-DIGIT 462  
#RC7537812# JAN04 REG 113



Fox News Channel managed to keep Homeland Defense Correspondent Catherine Herridge (left) and the rest of its New York news crews rolling.

## Generating Fox News

BY JOHN HIGGINS

**N**eil Cavuto knew something was wrong even before any voice came in his earpiece. The Fox News Channel business news anchor was on the air with his daily 4 p.m. ET show *Your World* Thursday when the lights briefly flickered.

*Continued on page 23*

# Sinclair Wants To Get Into Direct Mail

Broadcaster thinks advertisers will augment campaigns with TV spots

By STEVE MCCLELLAN

**W**hen TV operators get together at conferences there's usually a panel about grabbing market share away from competing media like newspapers, radio or cable TV. Now Sinclair Broadcast Group is going after direct mail advertising.

In fact, it has already jumped into that business, in a modest way. The company expects to generate close to \$20 million in incremental revenue this year from its direct mail sales efforts.

But there's nothing modest about the direct mail advertising base in the 39 markets where Sinclair operates its 63 television stations. Sinclair estimates that about \$1 billion in direct mail business is done in those markets each year.

Here's Sinclair's game plan: The broadcaster will enter into partnerships with direct mail outfits in cities where Sinclair owns stations. Sinclair's sales force then sells local advertisers on the idea of a mailer, and tries to convince them to supplement the direct mail effort with daytime TV spots on Sinclair stations. The Sinclair partners physically produce and distribute the mailer.

Using that model, the company says it wants to roll the new business out to every one of its broadcast markets, over the next three years. By the time the business is up and fully running, Sinclair believes it can generate

between \$80 million and \$100 million in direct mail advertising annually.

The company is in the process of hiring as many as 600 new sales personnel to mine for direct advertising gold across its markets.

Analysts are intrigued by the Sinclair initiative and believe that if it pans out, other broadcasters may follow its lead.

"If it works for [Sinclair CEO] David Smith, it would presumably catch on with others," says Lee Westerfield, media and entertainment analyst at the New York investment bank Jeffries &

campaigns with daytime TV spots, many of which go unsold. That's an issue for many TV broadcasters, especially those that don't carry soap operas, says Westerfield. "They wouldn't be doing it otherwise and it should amount to entirely incremental advertising revenue," he says.

Through the first half of 2003, where Sinclair has experimented with the direct mail effort, it has brought in \$9.4 million. On a recent conference call with analysts and investors, Smith was practically drooling over the ex-



**Sinclair CEO David Smith, enthusiastic after making \$9.4M on initial direct mail efforts, said, 'We think we haven't even touched the tip of the iceberg.'**

Co. "What you like about him can unnerve you too—he'll try anything. A lot of other TV operators are watching skeptically right now, but by this time next year, they may very well be asking 'How did he do that?'"

Westerfield also says he wouldn't be surprised to see Advo Inc., a leading direct mail company in the U.S. counter attack with a TV partnership of its own if the Sinclair project really takes off. Last week, an Advo spokeswoman declined comment.

Sinclair hopes to convince direct mail advertisers to supplement their

expectations. "We have made just a fortune at it," he said, about initial efforts, and "we think we haven't even touched the tip of the iceberg."

Just a few months ago, Sinclair started putting together a direct mail sales unit in Baltimore that will operate separately from the TV sales staff there. Similar efforts are underway in five other cities, including Pittsburgh and Columbus, Ohio. Those efforts should be operational by year's end, says Smith. "If we like what we see, we will roll it out every place else as fast we can." ■

## BREAKING...

### Comcast Hems and Haws on Vivendi

**NEW YORK**—When bids for Vivendi Universal Entertainment come in this week, they won't include Comcast but may well include Liberty Media. Comcast declared that it won't bid on Vivendi Universal Entertainment, then abruptly—and confusingly—backtracked by then announcing discussion to combine its cable networks with VUE's. Liberty Media President Dobb Bennett then told analysts that Liberty will "continue to be involved" in the VUE process, though wouldn't actually acknowledge that he's putting in a bid. Comcast started nosing around the U.S. entertainment assets of Vivendi three weeks ago, armed with a \$3 billion or so in expected after-tax proceeds from the sale of its half of QVC to Liberty Media.

General Electric is seen as the front runner, proposing more of merger than the cash purchase Vivendi seeks. GE wants to combine VUE with its NBC network and stations, giving Vivendi a minority stake, but putting in very little cash and leaving all VUE's debt in the venture.

The remaining cash bidder an investor group led by Edgar Bronfman Jr. is also balking at the price, but insiders said he will be submitting an offer Monday.

### NBC Finds Grass Greener

**NEW YORK**—NBC has purchased \$5 million worth of Thomson grass Valley production equipment for use at a number of its owned-and-operated stations. The stations include WMAQ-TV Chicago, Ill., KXAS-TV Dallas, KNSD-TV San Diego and, KNBC-TV Los Angeles.

NBC properties like CNBC and other stations are already using multiple networked Profile XP Media Platform servers, NewsEdit XT nonlinear editing systems and a multi-channel Grass Valley Open SAN shared storage digital infrastructure that connects various NBC facilities throughout the country.

## BROADCASTING & CABLE

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Programming



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# Shop & Style Is No Sale in NBC Test

By Steve McClellan

If you'd been meaning to check out the new home shopping show, *Shop & Style*, airing on select NBC owned stations and ShopNBC, forget about it. NBC pulled the plug after just two weeks on the air.

The program was produced by *Today* producer Diane Masciale and hosted by Lynne Koplitz (you might remember her from syndication's *Change of Heart* and Food Network's *How to Boil Water*) and Kerry McNally, who previously worked at WFLA-TV Tampa, Fla. It had better production values than your average home shopping show. But it lacked viewers who wanted to buy stuff.

NBC positioned the show as a trial that would air in daytime throughout August on its TV stations in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and San Francisco, with a simulcast on ShopNBC, the home shopping cable channel in which NBC has a 40% stake. But when the plug was pulled, a spokeswoman insisted that executives always envisioned it as a two-to-four week test and not necessarily one that would continue throughout August.

NBC issued a short statement confirming the cancellation, adding that it "provided ShopNBC with increased on-line traffic, new customers and additional vendors. Our next step is to evaluate the results and determine where to go with the concept."

One issue to be evaluated: why viewers



NBC's *Shop & Style* experiment failed to perform better than *The Other Half* in most markets.

would buy fewer mesh rings and cooking products from an over-the-air show than they would from a cable show.

The show's ratings tell part of the story—it averaged a 1.0 rating/3 share in Chicago, down from a 2.2/7 for *The Other Half*, which had been airing in the 10 a.m.-11 a.m. slot. Philadelphia was the only market where the home shopping show did a little better in the ratings than the show it replaced (also *The Other Half*).

But observers note that the show couldn't have been moving much prod-

uct off the shelves to be dropped so quickly (although it would have come off the air at the end of August in any event). A source familiar with the situation confirmed that executives involved didn't feel sales were strong enough to justify the show's commercial-free format. The show did have promotional breaks that teased upcoming episodes of *Today* and new season shows such as *Miss Match* as well as *Shop & Style* itself.

NBC executives declined comment beyond the statement. ■

# FCC Thaws Station Sales Freeze

But chance to clear backlog of radio deals may be short lived

By Bill McConnell

FCC Media Bureau staffers are working to clear a backlog of roughly 300 requests to sell radio stations and another 30 for TV stations, after removing a freeze on license transfers last week.

They also will have to tackle the hundreds of additional transfer requests that owners put on hold since the FCC declared a moratorium on applications June 2.

The agency suspended sales of commercial broadcast stations more than two months ago because it needed to draw up new application forms reflecting revamped local and national ownership limits. It also had to obtain approval of the new documents from the Office of Management and Budget.

Several Washington regulatory attorneys complained the moratorium needlessly stalled many deals when the FCC broke with tradition and refused to approve transfers that complied with the new rules.

And they may not be out of the woods yet. Complicating the picture are the

court challenges to the FCC's new ownership rules. Public advocates have asked the courts to stay the new rules. If the court complies, the FCC could again put the just thawed deals into the deep freeze.

The freeze policy affected radio in particular, because the industry typically

**Several regulatory attorneys complained that the moratorium stalled many deals when the FCC broke with tradition and refused to approve transfers that complied with the new rules.**

has a steady stream of deals—about 2,500 a year. Also, many of the pending radio deals will require amended applications because new rules altered the way local market size is measured, a change that will reduce the number of stations one company may own in many small markets.

"This really hurt radio," said Gary Smithwick, a Washington regulatory at-

torney. "Many, many, many deals were ready to go but could not be filed." Lauren Colby, another attorney representing radio clients, predicted that more than 200 transfer applications would be filed in the next few weeks.

Television was affected less because the deal flow is much smaller and because the limits were generally relaxed, eliminating any need for pending deals to be reworked to comply with new restrictions.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that OMB approve federal government applications and other documents that individuals and business must file to prevent undue paperwork burdens. The mandate sometimes can stop normal government business during the lag between re-creating forms, winning OMB approval, and publishing them in the *Federal Register*.

The application forms affected were FCC Forms 314 and 315, which cover radio and TV transfers of control, and Form 301, which covers license modifications such as changes to power levels and coverage areas. The freeze did not apply to noncommercial stations. ■

WEEK OF AUG. 8-14

## B&C INDICES

THE B&C 10

WEEK YTD

3.5%

12.6%

BROADCAST TV GROUPS

WEEK YTD

3.3%

10.0%

CABLE TV MSO'S

WEEK YTD

5.1%

18.3%

RADIO

WEEK YTD

4.2%

3.5%

CLOSE WEEK YTD

Dow Jones	9310.56	2.0%	11.6%
Nasdaq	1700.31	2.9%	27.3%

## The B&C 10

CLOSE WEEK YTD

Aol Time Warner	\$15.46	2.9%	18.0%
Clear Channel	\$39.96	4.5%	7.2%
Comcast Corp.	\$28.50	0.9%	26.2%
Cox Comm.	\$33.02	3.3%	16.3%
Disney	\$22.56	4.2%	38.3%
EchoStar	\$35.59	0.7%	59.9%
Fox Ent.	\$29.94	5.3%	15.5%
Hearst-Argyle	\$24.38	5.1%	1.1%
Tribune	\$46.00	-0.9%	1.2%
Viacom Cl. A	\$43.01	2.8%	-2.8%

## GOOD WEEK

XM Satellite	\$13.00	23.6%	383.2%
Univision	\$35.05	20.6%	43.1%
Hispanic Bcst.	\$29.64	20.5%	44.2%
New Frontier	\$3.61	15.7%	261.0%
Young Bcst.	\$24.28	13.5%	84.4%

## BAD WEEK

Pegasus	\$20.94	-41.8%	58.6%
Paxson	\$3.95	-7.5%	91.7%
Charter	\$3.60	-6.3%	205.1%
Mediacom	\$7.00	-5.3%	-20.5%
Granite	\$2.63	-3.3%	28.3%

## FLYING LOW

-42%

Pegasus was blindsided by the NRTC, its partner in a lawsuit against DirecTV. The NRTC and DirecTV inked a deal that said in eight years DirecTV may pay as little as \$150 per subscriber to their rural dealers. Pegasus had been trading at \$1,200 per subscriber, which anticipates a value of \$3,600 per sub in 2011.

Source: CNET Investor (investor.cnet.com). This information is based on sources believed to be reliable, and while extensive efforts are made to assure its accuracy, no guarantees can be made. CNET Investor assumes no liability for any inaccuracies. For information regarding CNET Investor's customized financial research services, please call 415-344-2836.

## FAST TRACK

## The Art of the Deal

NBC has struck a deal to buy time on CLEAR CHANNEL radio, outdoor and live event properties to promote the next five Olympic games. The companies have done business in the past, but this deal represents the first time NBC has used Clear Channel to promote the Olympics. No details yet on the marketing strategy, but it will begin with next summer's Olympics in Athens, which starts Aug. 13. ...

DISCOVERY NETWORKS diginet DISCOVERY HOME & LEISURE is partnering with JOHN DEERE on a new lifestyle series, *Backyard Brigade*, where homeowners dream up and create their new backyard designs. John Deere products will be integrated into the show and *Backyard Brigade* will be promoted in John Deere retail outlets. The deal, which runs through 2004, also includes John Deere advertising on other Discovery channels, including the SCIENCE CHANNEL, DISCOVERY CHANNEL and DISCOVERY TIMES CHANNEL.

## ABC Pull Back on 45%?

Is ABC owner DISNEY pulling back on its efforts to make sure the new 45% cap stays? Responding to a report, the company's top lobbyist, PRESTON PADDEN, says "Disney/ABC continues to support deregulation of broadcast ownership. But because we're at 24%, the impact on our company of a rollback to 35% would not be as severe or immediate as it would be to other networks."

back for more



## Hard Laughs

Comedy Central is bringing *Tough Crowd with Colin Quinn* back for an encore. The net is ordering up 104 new episodes of *Tough Crowd*, which features former *Saturday Night Live* Weekend Update anchor Quinn and other comics dishing on topics ranging from pop culture to politics.

The order extends *Tough Crowd* through the end of 2004. The show, which airs weeknights after *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, averages about 500,000 viewers.

The statement appears not so much a change of position as a recognition of political reality and the increasing likelihood that a cap rollback is coming. Disney was the last of the networks to pull out of the NAB over that group's decision to push for a rollback to the previous 35% cap—at only 24% coverage, it still has plenty of room to maneuver under the cap.

## Fun with numbers

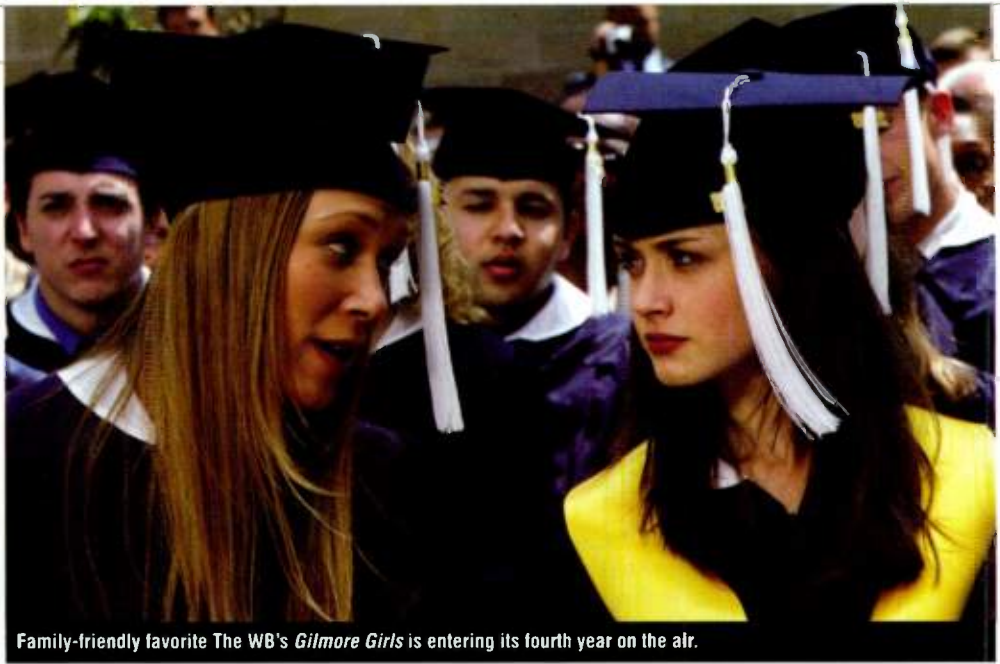
Revenues for the big three networks were essentially flat in the second quarter at \$2.7 billion, according to numbers compiled by ERNST & YOUNG and released by the BROADCAST CABLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION last week. Prime time, by contrast, was up 8% to \$1.7 billion, while the late night, morning, and daytime dayparts all showed double-digit gains. Sports was down 46% to \$238 million. For the first six months, combined Big Three revenues are down 6% to \$5.4 billion, due in large part to 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic spending.

Separately, ad spending of all sorts in the first half of 2003 rose 2.8% to almost \$47 billion, according to Nielsen's Monitor-Plus ad tracking service.

The biggest gainer, on a percent basis, was Hispanic TV, up 19% to \$1.2 billion. Biggest gainers in terms of dollar volume for the half were national magazines, up \$800 million, or 14%, to \$7 billion. Spot TV was up 4% to \$10 billion, while network TV was down 4% to \$10.4 billion, due in part to lack of Olympic money. Barter syndication was down 4% to \$1.4 billion while cable dropped 5% to \$6.4 billion, according to the Nielsen numbers.

## NABET, ABC accord tentative

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCAST EMPLOYEES AND TECHNICIANS has reached a tentative agreement with ABC on a new contract for 10 bargaining units covering newswriters, desk assistants, talent coordinators, technicians and daily hires. The old contracts had expired May 12. The new contracts extend through March 31, 2007, and are expected to be voted up or down by Sept. 26.

Family-friendly favorite The WB's *Gilmore Girls* is entering its fourth year on the air.

## Fall in the Family

Four new shows boost slates of ad-friendly fare

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

Five years ago, a group of advertisers sat down to discuss the lack of family shows on the broadcast networks between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. But they did more than talk. This season, those family-friendly fans boast seven such shows, including four new ones for fall.

Today, the 10 founding members have grown to 45 national advertisers representing \$13 billion in TV ads, according to Dawn Jacobs, vice president of advertising for Johnson & Johnson. And it is spreading the word. The group held its first-ever Family Friendly Programming Forum Symposium in Los Angeles last week.

FFPF-backed shows that have stuck to network schedules are The WB's *Gilmore Girls*, ABC's *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter* and NBC's *American Dreams*. The fund last year also backed ABC's *Veritas: The Quest* and The WB's *Family Affair*, both of which were cancelled. The four new offerings are The WB's *All About the Andersons*, *Like Family* and Steve Harvey's *Big Time*, and NBC's midseason *The Tracy Morgan Show*.

What advertisers are banking on—and particularly blue-chippers like AT&T, Ford, Coke, General Mills, Kellogg, Kraft, McDonald's, Wal-Mart and Wendy's—is that, in a family-friendly environment, viewers will adopt their products into the family as well.

"Brand advertising, in a family television environment, has a positive impact on that brand's success," said Andy Jung, senior director of advertising and media services for Kellogg.

Out of the 45 advertisers who are part of the FFPE, about 18 or so contribute money to a script development fund. On average, a script costs a network between \$50,000 and \$80,000 to develop. The networks submit scripts to the fund, which picks its family-friendly favorites for financial support. The fund reimburses networks for scripts turned into pilots that don't make it on the to schedule.

While the networks appreciate the outside financial support some executives say the fo-

cus should be more on developing hits that can also make it to syndication than on getting more hours of family-friendly shows on network prime time. They would also like to see the forum kick in some down-line help.

"The next natural progression for this group's efforts is to put their promotional support behind the shows that their funds have helped create," says Jed Petrick, president and COO of The WB, which has more of the forum's show's on than any other net. "Building hits means long-term access in first-run and a syndication afterlife for the family-friendly environment they dearly want their brands to be associated with."

Syndication is a "more efficient" advertising medium anyway, Petrick says, because ads in syndication are less expensive than in prime time. It should be to an advertisers' advantage to have popular, family-oriented shows running in cheaper time periods, he says. The WB's *Gilmore Girls* is entering its fourth year on the air, and will be syndicated on ABC Family next fall.

Executives from syndicators and cable networks privately say they would like advertisers to help fund family-friendly shows for them as well, although that's unlikely. Syndication doesn't generally deliver the massive numbers of high-income viewers advertisers crave, and cable networks, such as Discovery, Animal Planet, TLC, Hallmark and A&E, have already made family fare part of their programming strategy and don't need advertiser incentives to develop such shows. But many advertisers are interested in sponsoring more original family-friendly fare on cable, as Johnson & Johnson did with TNT's award-winning *Door to Door*.

Besides being interested in running traditional ads in family-friendly shows, advertisers such as Kellogg also work to get product placement deals in shows. For example, Kellogg's has an arrangement with The WB and *The Gilmore Girls* to occasionally pop a toaster pastry into the script. Both the *Gilmore Girls* regularly mention Pop-Tarts in their banter, and Kellogg feels this helps convince moms that Pop-Tarts are a wholesome snack for their kids. ■

**'Brand advertising, in a family television environment, has a positive impact on the brand's success.'**

ANDY JUNG,  
Kellogg

**imagine** anything

**High Definition**

Eric Duke / Richard Duke / Lenny Laxer

**AMV / Unitel**

Barry Katz

**Chelsea Post**

Richard Duke / Paula Pevzner / Barry Katz

**Mobile Division**

Eric Duke / Lenny Laxer

**Chelsea Television Studios**

Barry Katz / Kate Miller

**AMV Broadcast Sales**

Milton Brinkley

**Rentals**

Tom D'Angelo

**Satellite**

Lenny Laxer

**Duplication**

Paula Pevzner



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St. Petersburg, FL 33702  
(p) 800.783.7744  
(f) 727.579.8922

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World Radio History

## EXPOSURE

## Cajoling Cojocarú

Paramount Domestic Television has enlisted talent from no fewer than three of its shows to promote the arrival of style maven Steven Cojocarú as an *Entertainment Tonight* correspondent. The promos will run during *ET*, *ET on MTV*, *ET on VH-1* and *ET Weekend* starting Aug. 18, with eight separate spots airing until Cojocarú appears on his first show Aug. 27. According to the plot line, *ET* anchors Jann Carl, Mark Steines and Maria Menounos each try to coax Cojocarú from his dressing room to appear on the entertainment newsmagazine. Their pleas fall on deaf ears and Cojocarú remains holed up, attended by hairdressers, stylists and make-up artists. Finally, Paramount sends *Judge Judy* and *Dr. Phil* to take a crack at persuading him to appear. Paramount won't say who succeeds, but our money is on the doctor.—P.A.

BEHIND THE SCENES | BEFORE THE FACT

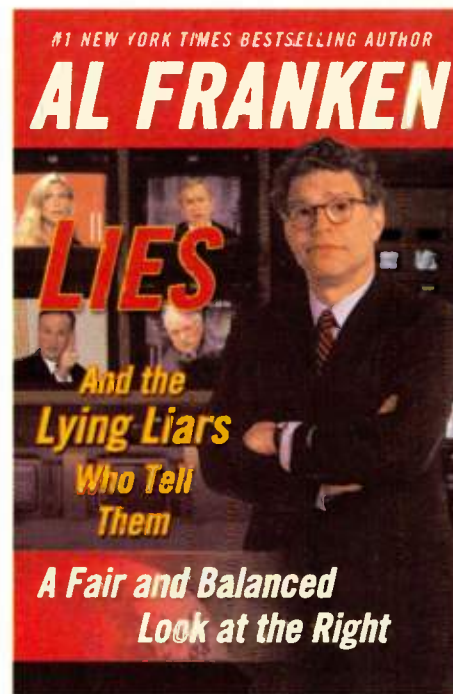
## IN THE LOOP

## SUE YOU

## Of Franken, Fox And Phrases

By now everybody must know Fox News Channel has filed a complaint against Al Franken in the New York State Supreme Court concerning the phrase "fair and balanced." The network has a trademark on the phrase and believes the use of it in the title of Al Franken's new book, *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*, will "blur and tarnish" it.

But wait; there's more. Fox also has a trademark on the phrase "Bulls & Bears," the title of a Saturday business news show. It's also a phrase dropped daily on Wall Street and in the titles of many books including one we liked, *Don't Be a Bozo Dealing With the Bulls and the Bears*. Other Fox News trademarks include "Fair. Balanced. Unafraid." and, of course, "We Report. You Decide."—J.E.



## POLITICS



## What Are You Talkin' About?

It looks like Gary Coleman's career could prove problematic for broadcasters now that the former *Diff'rent Strokes* co-star has put his oar in the water for the California governorship. Any Coleman appearance outside a news broadcast would give any of the other candidates the right to demand free time equal to Coleman's. KTVU(TV) San Francisco's program director checked and found Gary Coleman appearances on the following programs: *Cheers*, *The Wayans Brothers*, *Married With Children*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, *The Parent Hood* and the *Jamie Foxx Show*.

What about *Diff'rent Strokes*, where Coleman played Arnold Jackson for six years on both NBC and ABC? Nickelodeon has the rights, but it isn't running it, and wouldn't have to worry anyway since the free time rule effectively excludes cable.—J.E., D.T.

## PROMOTION

## Hawk Like an Egyptian



Discovery Channel reportedly took to the streets in New York, Los Angeles and Washington last week to promote its *Nefertiti Resurrected* special, which was scheduled to air Aug. 17. In Washington, noontime strollers were greeted by the sight of shirtless "slaves" bearing Nefertiti (actually shirtless temporary employees of a promotion company bearing a regally attired temporary hire), preceded by maidens handing out Nefertiti masks with day-and-date information and show descriptions on the back. "Nefertiti's mummy had malicious blows to the mouth and one arm torn off," read some of the upbeat promo copy. Verisimilitude did not extend that far. The faux queen appeared to have all her appendages and an appropriately engaging smile.—J.E.

## Closed-Circuit ABC

While ABC was broadcasting nationally out of D.C. and New York during the blackout last Thursday, it was also doing some in-house broadcasting in New York.

The network formed a crisis committee after 9/11 that convened immediately. Speaking from a "too dark to dial" office, committee member Julie Hoover said that, without inter-office e-mail, ABC broadcast messages via loudspeaker, installed in case of fire, to keep New York staffers informed about the latest news. Those included top stories, like the fact that terrorism wasn't suspected, and "news you can use," i.e. cafeteria hours had been extended.—J.E.

## Univision Gets Backing From Hispanic Democrats

BY JOHN EGGERTON

A pair of prominent Hispanic lawmakers, including the chairman of The Congressional Hispanic Caucus, last week encouraged the FCC to approve the proposed merger of Univision and Hispanic Broadcasting.

In separate letters to FCC Chairman Michael Powell, Democrats Ciro Rodriguez of Texas and Jose Serrano of New York, also a caucus member, argued that the merger of the nation's largest Hispanic radio and TV companies would benefit the Hispanic audience by expanding service and at-

tracting more mainstream advertisers.

Serrano went so far as to suggest that treating the Spanish-language market as a separate entity for regulatory purposes would be a form of segregation. The seven-term congressman representing The Bronx, told Powell that isolating the market will create a "separate but unequal" category of Spanish stations that should be "offensive to all Americans." He said he is "alarmed by the efforts of some to segregate by regulation those broadcast stations that choose to serve Hispanic audiences."

Rodriguez, who was speaking for himself and not the caucus, which has taken no official position on the issue, wrote

that Hispanic broadcasters "should not be penalized because of their choice of programming format or the ethnicity of their audience."

House Democratic Caucus Chairman Bob Menendez and at least one member of the House Hispanic Caucus have criticized the merger. Menendez wrote to the FCC back in March urging that Spanish-language media should be considered a separate market.

If commissioners decide that the Spanish-language market is separate, the merger would likely be conditioned on divestitures. Justice approval already requires Univision to sell most of its interest in

Spanish-language broadcaster Entravision.

Serrano said the FCC should review the merger applying the same rules that it uses with other mergers. Univision and HBC, he says, should be allowed to create a Hispanic company on a scale to compete with ABC/Disney, NBC/Telemundo and Viacom/Infinity. "Ultimately," he said, "I am confident that the merged company will continue to expand opportunities for Hispanic viewers and listeners."

The FCC's Republican majority is expected to approve the \$3.5 billion deal (Justice has already signed off), perhaps as early as this week.—Bill McConnell contributed to this story.

# CCTA Hopes for a Western Show Grand Finale

Confab a victim of consolidation, slow economy

BY ALLISON ROMANO

**A**fter a 36-year run, the Western Cable Show will make its curtain call this December, citing consolidation in the cable industry and economic pressure.

The show's organizer, California Cable Telecommunications Association, is looking to make this last Western Show a big one. Top MSO executives, including Time Warner Cable chief Glenn Britt, Cox Cable head Jim Robbins, Bresnan Communications' Bill Bresnan and Insight Communications Chairman Michael Willner have pledged to attend, the CCTA said. The show is slated for Dec. 2-5 at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, Calif.

And, with cable operators pledging to turn out, "Programmers and suppliers will follow," predicted CCTA Vice President of Federal Affairs Jerry Yanowitz.

The Western Show's death follows a quick but apparently incurable ailment. In recent years, programmers have defected en masse off the floor and attendance has declined. Last December's show attracted nearly 10,000, off from about 17,000 in 2001 and a massive 33,000 in 2000.

For years, the cable industry supported two major shows—the Western Show and The National Cable & Telecommunication Association's annual spring National Show. But, faced with increased financial pressure and consolidation, programmers and distributors have questioned the need for two big gatherings.

To its credit, the CCTA conjured up tactics to make its show more desirable and easy on corporate pocketbooks. In 2001, the association footed the bill for top MSO execs to attend the show. And, for exhibitors, it introduced cheaper, prefabricated booths and hotel suites for meetings as alternatives for expensive booths, which can run upwards of \$100,000 to assemble and staff.

At last year's confab, the Hallmark Channel was one of a handful of programmers on the floor. The year before, the network went with a hotel suite.

Now, with one more Western Show to go, Hallmark execs are evaluating the options. "The CCTA made a business decision," Hallmark Channel's distribution chief Ron Garfield said of this final show. "Our decision will be based on a business decision."

Without the Western Show, says Fox



The Western Cable Show has been plagued by declining attendance in recent years.

Cable's Executive Vice President of Affiliate Sales Lindsay Gardner, "people in the industry will have to find other ways to come together," like increased support for industry events like the Kaitz Foundation's annual dinner and Cable Positive.

The CCTA, which generated about 30% of its revenue from last year's show, also slashed its staff 40% last year. The organization says it will continue on with its lobbying efforts in California.

Before sealing the show's fate, the association had to get out of its commitments with the city of Anaheim, Calif. and the convention center there, which

were to run through 2006.

One element of the Western Show, the CableLabs' CableNet exhibit of new technology, will be incorporated into the National Show.

For Bresnan Communications' chief, the end is bittersweet. He recalls attending his first California cable show in 1965 in San Diego, a few years before it was even called the Western Show.

"The show has had a tremendous impact on the growth of the industry," Bresnan said. "A lot of people enjoyed going, profited from it, and learned a lot. Businesses were helped by it." ■



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# California, Here They Come—All 135 of Them

Continued from page 1

ond spot in a newscast can cost up to \$5,000.

TV executives predict significant buying by Gov. Gray Davis, in his defense against the recall, and top challengers, notably Schwarzenegger, investor Bill Simon Jr., former baseball commissioner and Olympics guru Peter Ueberroth, political commentator Ariana Huffington, Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante and, possibly, State Sen. Tom McClintock.

As for the coverage, Paul Taylor, the former journalist who founded the Alliance for Better Campaigns and is now with the Pew Charitable Trusts, estimates that there was more coverage of this recall race in the past week than there had been in the previous two gubernatorial races in total.

## 'TRAIN WRECK'

"All it takes is a movie star," says Taylor. "It reminds me a little of the 2000 presidential campaign, where the real interest and the real coverage began the night of the election." Both the 2000 election dispute and the current California recall have "a train-wreck quality," Taylor says. "The recall has that quality even without Arnold, but then Arnold comes along and takes it to the next level."

Marty Kaplan doesn't quite know what that level is. "I'm not sure I'd call it political," says Kaplan, associate dean of the USC Annenberg School for Commu-

nication, and director of the Norman Lear Center for the study of entertainment and society. "But there's certainly more coverage."

Kaplan's group monitored the final eleven weeks of Gray Davis' winning 1998 campaign and found that local news devoted a half of a percent of its programming on gubernatorial campaign coverage, or a total of about 37 hours in the state's top four markets, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Sacramento, and No. 8 market Bakersfield.

There's probably more interest in politics in Northern California than in Southern California."

## 'HEAVY WITH TV' ADS

But he defended the prominence of the Schwarzenegger story. "I can't remember the last charismatic candidate we've had running for governor. ... We've had Pat Brown, Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown. That's three in the last 50 years."

Elliott Troshinsky, general manager of Sacramento's KCRA-

money will have to go heavy with TV. They won't have the time to go heavy in any other way. The message has to be just right."

Station executives say they were receiving inquiries as to rates and availability of spots, and expected some spending to begin this week. They predict that spending would likely come from a handful of candidates and increase as it gets closer to the election.

Some sales executives in California's major markets say that by now, a station's September inventory is largely sold, filled with seasonal advertising like "back-to-school" sales and new cars. A significant amount of political advertising, they say, may preempt regular advertisers and force political ads on programming other than news.

## DEBATE COMING

"Of course, I doubt that any station will end up with less," says KABC-TV General Sales Manager Spencer McCoy. "But I don't see it as a big windfall either. Inventory was already extremely tight. If we had the opportunity to create inventory and put more minutes in the day, we probably would. But that's not reality."

Cathy Jacquemin, vice president of sales at NBC-owned KNBC(TV) Los Angeles, says, "It's hard to say right now how much anybody's going to be spending. Who knows how much they can

raise in that short a time? The agencies haven't given any indication of what they're going to spend. Certainly, some inventory's going to be displaced."

The California Broadcasters Association last week announced a gubernatorial debate for Sept. 17 at California State University at Sacramento. The 90-minute debate will be open to six candidates.

Numerous federal courts have upheld a forum's right to exclude fringe candidates, and the CBA debate will be open to six candidates who show 10% of voter support in the statewide Field poll prior to Sept. 5. If six candidates fail to qualify under that criteria, CSU will survey undecided voters to determine which of those polling more than 4% are preferred.

CBA will also distribute a half-hour program on the recall election, including a statement from Gov. Gray Davis. Davis will not participate in CBA's debate.

Oakland's Cox-owned Fox affiliate KTVU(TV) Oakland-San Francisco also plans a debate, and more invitations are expected down the road. The Tribune-owned *Los Angeles Times* and KTLA have sponsored debates in past statewide campaigns.

Will the ads and campaign get ugly? It's already ugly. "Recall," notes Stan Statham, head of the CBA, and a former Republican legislator, "is a synonym for mud." ■

**'Look at Chicago. Politics is a much bigger story in Chicago. People seem to care less here than in Chicago. There's probably more interest in politics in Northern California than in Southern California.'**

JEFF WALD, KTLA Los Angeles

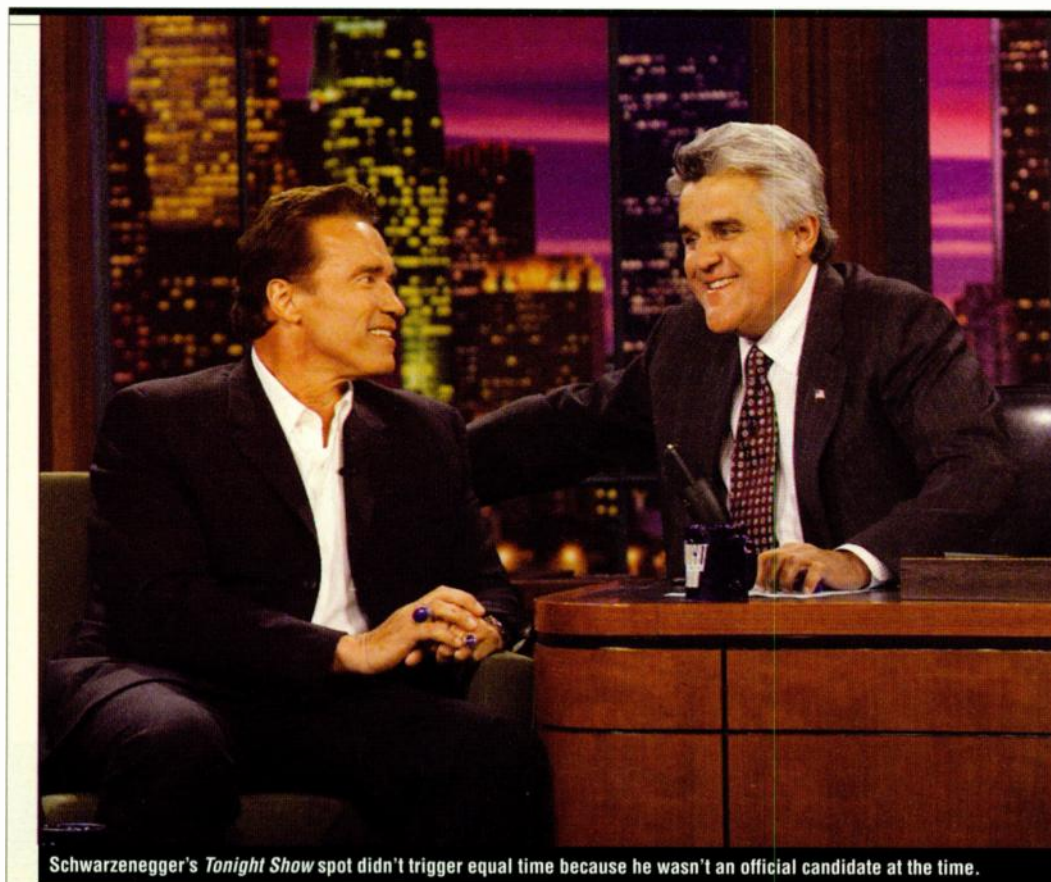
More volume, certainly, says Kaplan, but so far it's been a content-free zone. Some other candidates are struggling to get substantive messages out there, but the majority of attention is going to Arnold. "It's the same kind of attention that would be paid to a freeway chase," he says.

Los Angeles's longest-tenured news director, KTLA(TV)'s Jeff Wald, was making no apologies. Newscasts are tailored to their audiences. "Look at Chicago," he says. "Politics is a much bigger story in Chicago. People seem to care less here than in Chicago.

TV, which has been lauded by public interest groups for its political coverage, agrees. "It's been a historic occurrence to say the least," he says. "That in itself has precipitated a lot of the coverage. As we move forward, we have to press the candidates."

And what about the recall haul?

The campaign strategies are "like wet clay right now, not yet massaged into a full sculpture" says Phyllis Schwartz, general manager at NBC's KNSD(TV) San Diego. "Everybody's waiting, even the pundits. The candidates with



Schwarzenegger's *Tonight Show* spot didn't trigger equal time because he wasn't an official candidate at the time.

## Broadcasters Wary of Equal Time

Old movies, TV appearances may pose a problem in California

An on-air "Hasta la vista" from Arnold could mean broadcasters will be saying "hola" to a bunch of free-time obligations. According to the equal opportunities clause of the FCC's political broadcasting rules, a broadcast appearance (voice or picture) by any legally qualified candidate triggers a broadcaster's legal obligation to provide free time to all other candidates in that race. Only four categories of bona fide news programming are exempted from the so-called equal time provision.

### regulation

The Bonzo rule, which got its nickname from the FCC decision in 1976 affirming that old Ronald Reagan movies like *Bedtime for Bonzo* triggered free time obligations, was behind the flurry of concern among California broadcasters over the current gubernatorial race. With Arnold Schwarzenegger and other performers in the running, an airing of one of their old movies or TV shows would require the broadcaster to give any of the 130-plus other candidates equal time. The rule effectively excludes cable. Only cable-operator originated non-news programming carries the equal time burden. That leaves cable networks free to air *Terminator* marathons or Gallagher stand-up specials to its collective heart's content.

Candidates hoping to take advantage of the equal-time provision need to file within seven days of an appearance, and they will need their stopwatches. A two-hour *Terminator* movie does not trigger a two-hour obligation. The FCC only counts the time that the candidate is actually seen or heard. The obligation is also limited to broadcasts that reach a measurable portion of the voting audience, which means stations in or broadcasting to California.

*Equal time fun fact:* President Ford in 1976 waived his equal time rights gained by airings of Ronald Reagan's *Cattle Queen of Montana*.—John Eggerton



# SYNDICATION 2003

## FILLING IN THE HOLES



### With Time Slots Rare, Syndie Seems Sedate

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

**S**yndicators are bracing for a light fall season this year with only four major new first-run strips being launched this year—Warner Bros.' *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, Warner Bros.' *The Sharon Osbourne Show*, NBC Enterprises' *Starting Over*, and King World's *Living It Up! With Ali & Jack*. The slow fall is being attributed to vertical integration and the relative success of last year's crop of shows, led by King World's *Dr. Phil*.

"In any year there are a limited number of slots available, and this year there were in essence three slots that were not available because of success. That's part of it," says Bill Carroll, vice president of programming at Katz

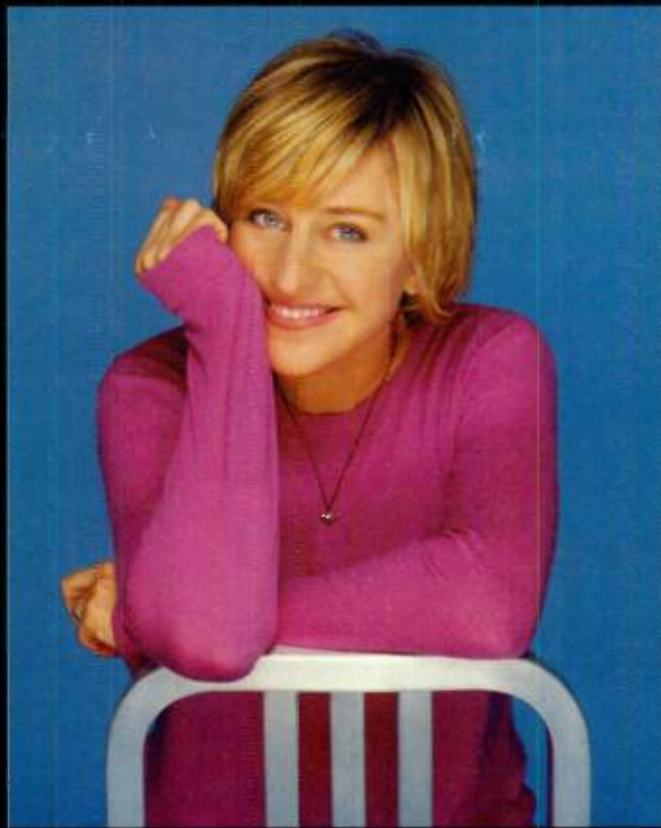
#### Special Report

Media. "And with fewer companies, there are going to be fewer shows launched."

The top-two rookie shows last season, *Dr. Phil* and Buena Vista game show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, maintained their slots and Sony's *Pyramid* performed well enough to hold on to its time periods as well. NBC Enterprises' *The John Walsh Show* also was renewed for a second season, although the show's ratings are low. Walsh, cleared in daytime slots, has hovered around a 1.3 for the past several months, making it the 83rd-ranked program in syndicated television.

"I think the marketplace has tightened up because of long-term renewals and because of double runs of off-net sitcoms," says John Nogawski, president of Paramount Domestic Television. "It used to be that shows were renewed annually so they flipped more often. But now with shows like *Oprah*, *Phil*, *Judge Judy*, *Judge Joe Brown*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy*, that explains it. As the list gets longer, there is less available real estate each year."

What space is left, Nogawski says, is divided up by the major station launch groups—ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox and Tribune—and all those companies are fed shows by their own syndication companies. It's only when one of those syndica-



#### Talking Heads

Clockwise from top: *The Sharon Osbourne Show*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *Living It Up! With Ali and Jack* and *The Wayne Brady Show*



ON THE HORIZON

#### Wait 'Til Next Year

Ryan Seacrest gets a shot in '04

Page 10



Q&A

#### Reality Syndie?

Is daytime ready for it

Page 12

OFF-NET

#### Time to Restock

Choices are getting thinner

Page 10





### The Off-Nets

Clockwise from top: Sitcoms *King of Queens*, *Becker*, and hourlong dramas *The West Wing* and *Angel*.

## The Reality Is Off-Net Is Thinning

Only a handful of scripted shows are available for syndication

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

**W**ith it getting harder and harder to launch a bona fide scripted hit on network prime time because of time taken by reality shows, the off-net business is getting tougher. There's not much material in the pipeline for the future.

Syndicators are launching six off-net shows in 2003: sitcoms *King of Queens* from Sony and Paramount's *Becker* and *The Parkers*, as well as Twentieth's *Angel* and Warner Bros.' *The West Wing*, also premiering on NBC-owned Bravo, the only one-hour off-net launches. Sony also is launching *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, a half-hour strip, off of its run on cable network TBS.

While hit sitcoms are always a hot property, particularly for non-traditional station affiliates that love to fill their access time slots with ever-repeating comedies to lead into their prime times, weekly hours have become less attractive. They don't repeat well, and much of TV stations' weekend business has gone over to cable.

*King of Queens*, starring comedian Kevin James, is the biggest sitcom launch this year. The show has performed solidly as CBS's Monday night anchor.

"This show has great time periods, great stations and a great spread of broadcasters who have bought it across the board, including the Fox, Tribune and Viacom stations," says John Weiser, executive vice president of Sony Pictures Television.

Sony also has been successful marketing promotional tie-ins with *King of Queens*, something the syndicator hasn't done with any of its other shows, Weiser says. *King* is involved with spots for Pastry Swirls, Days Inn and Hungry Man Dinners.

Separate of syndication, this fall CBS is moving *King of Queens* to Wednesdays at 9 p.m., a move that many see as risky, and could affect the syndication platform if the show's originals fall out of favor with viewers. *King of Queens* will lead out of the very old-skewing *60 Minutes* and into *Becker*, a show that has a loyal, but small

following. In syndication, *King of Queens* is cleared in 98% of the country, while *Becker* is cleared in 91%.

*Becker* barely made it back on CBS's schedule this fall, with the network picking up only 13 episodes of the Ted Danson comedy instead of the usual 22.

*The Parkers*, cleared in 85%-90% of the U.S., also will get a cable run on Viacom-owned BET, one of Paramount's sister companies. *Angel* is cleared in 96% of the U.S. and *The West Wing* in 95%. *Ripley's* is cleared in nearly 92% of the U.S., and is getting double-runs on many stations.

With fewer scripted hits on the networks, the flow from network to syndication is little more than a trickle. But each studio has its set of shows headed to syndication in the next few years. Twentieth has Fox's *Malcolm in the Middle* and CBS's *Yes, Dear* in 2004 and Fox's *Bernie Mac* and The WB's *Reba* in 2005. Coming off-net hours from Twentieth include Fox's *Boston Public* in 2004 and Fox's *24* in 2005.

Buena Vista is launching ABC's *My Wife and Kids*, starring Damon Wayans, in 2005, with 85% of the country already sold. Buena Vista also is selling ABC's *Alias* for 2005, but sales on that show just started. Buena Vista has scheduled ABC's *According to Jim* and NBC's *Scrubs*, produced by Disney-owned Touchstone, for 2006, and ABC's *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter* for 2007.

Warner Bros. is hoping to bring HBO's *Sex and the City* to syndication in 2004, although no deal has yet been done. The studio also has The WB's *Smallville* and ABC's *George Lopez* in 2005. The WB's *Everwood*, CBS's *Without a Trace*, NBC's *Good Morning, Miami*, The WB's *Jamie Kennedy* and The WB's *What I Like About You* are slated for 2006, assuming all those shows stay on their networks long enough to get to syndication.

King World is launching CBS's mega-hit *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* next September and the show already is cleared in 91% of the country. Many of those clearances are on CBS-owned stations and affiliates, where it will run at 11:30 p.m. and challenge NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. ■

## It's Never Too Early To Start Thinking About Syndie '04

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

**W**hile there are few syndicated launches slated for fall 2003, 2004 already is hopping. Coming next year is Twentieth's still untitled show with *American Idol* star Ryan Seacrest, NBC Enterprises' *The Jane Pauley Show* and Paramount's *The Insider*. Sony still plans to go ahead with *eBayTV*, and last week the syndicator announced that veteran sportscaster Ahmad Rashad would join Molly Pesce to host the program.

"It's rare you see shows being set so early for the next year," says one syndication executive. "That implies that this fall's casualty rate is expected to be higher than usual when you have stations agreeing to clear new shows and buy replacement shows before this fall's shows have even gotten to air."

Of course, there's a lot that's being talked about, too. As for development, King World is talking about doing a pop culture/variety strip that would be executive produced by pop star Britney Spears. Sources say the market appears hungry for that kind of young, hip show,

especially now that the off-net sitcom pipeline has slowed to a trickle. Universal is talking with Linda Lopez, sister of J. Lo, about a show, and Sony is developing a younger, edgier version of ABC's *The View* with E! Entertainment hostess Jules Asner and other personalities.

Back to reality.

While *Pauley's* clearances are just getting going—NBC has New York, Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle and Washington signed on so far—*The Insider* already is cleared in 78% of the country and Ryan Seacrest is cleared in 80%.



Ahmad Rashad will cohost *eBayTV*.

When Paramount was considering launching *The Insider*, a spin-off of *Entertainment Tonight*, it saw that CBS stations in fall 2004 would have a need in access because King World's *Hollywood Squares* wasn't performing as well as the station group would have liked. Paramount announced the show early this year with seven CBS owned-and-operated stations already signed on.

Sony's *eBayTV* is cleared on stations from the Viacom, Gannett, Belo, Raycom, Clear Channel, Pegasus, Media General, Cox, Capitol Broadcasting, White Knight, Emmis, Evening Post, Quorum, Grant and GoCom Media station groups. So far, Sony still has not secured one major launch group for the show.

As for Ryan Seacrest, stations have snapped up the show quickly, with some markets seeing bidding wars for the strip.

"There's demand from the station community for Ryan," says Paul Franklin, executive vice president and general sales manager for Twentieth Television. "If they had their druthers they would love to have the show right now. The guy is a hot commodity and TV stations have been all over this."

And NBC Enterprises hopes it will have a show to rival King World's *Oprah* and *Dr. Phil* in *Jane Pauley*.

"The first rule in daytime is that you want the viewer to connect with your host and I think there is a tremendous connection with Jane Pauley," says Linda Finnell, senior vice president of programming for NBC Enterprises. ■

Continued from page 9

tors doesn't have a developed program ready to fill a slot that outside syndicators—Sony, Universal and Warner Bros., in particular—get the chance to launch a show.

Still, Warner Bros. this fall is premiering two major shows—*Ellen* and *Sharon*—even though the company doesn't own and isn't affiliated with a major station group.

"We have launched an unprecedented co-op [advertising] campaign with our stations," says Dick Robertson, president of Warner Bros., "and we have bought a massive amount of advertising on cable television." Moving into cable, he said, is a new strategy for a major syndicator.

"We felt that having looked at this closely and looked at the viewers, cable is a far better place to reach them. We want to fish where the fish are," he says.

Robertson argues that when outside producers like Warner Bros. produce syndicated fare, it

**'I think the marketplace has tightened up because of long-term renewals and double runs of off-net sitcoms. It used to be that shows were renewed annually so they flipped more often.'**

**JOHN NOGAWSKI,**  
Paramount Domestic Television

relieves networks of the risk of the start up costs. Warner Bros. also will repurpose *Ellen* on cable network Oxygen the week after each episode airs on TV stations.

Meanwhile, NBC is preoccupied with the launch of its own show, *Starting Over*, in which six women live together while trying to straighten out their lives. The syndicator hopes the daytime reality show works, though an earlier reality show *Life Moments* failed in the daytime.

"*Starting Over* is truly different and really believe that to break out in daytime you have to be different," says Linda Finnell, senior vice president of programming for NBC Enterprises. "It combines a reality show with a talk show and a soap opera and we are doing it with the people who know how to do reality best," meaning long-time reality producers Mary-Ellis Bunim and Jonathan Murray (See Q&A, page 12).

"If there is a trend with the potential to begin this season it would be *Starting Over*," says Katz' Carroll. "It's taking advan-

tage of the success of unscripted filmed shows on network television. If *Starting Over* succeeds, we can be assured there will be many more such shows."

King World seems confident but it faces a challenge with the launch of *Living It Up! with Ali & Jack*, which will go head-to-head with Buena Vista's *Live With Regis & Kelly* in many markets.

But don't call them copy cats.

"This show is not a carbon copy of *Regis and Kelly*. It is completely different," says Roger King, CEO of CBS Enterprises and King World Productions. "The best thing to do is produce the best show possible and then make sure there is only one place to watch it so it develops into a franchise for the station."

While those four shows prepare to premiere, Buena Vista's *The Wayne Brady Show* will launch

nationally on Sept. 1, after getting a limited roll-out last year. And Twentieth's *Classmates* and *Ambush Makeover* will continue on Fox-owned stations, with Twentieth eyeing a national launch for both shows sometime in 2004.

Paramount also is launching this fall's only first-run weekend hour from a major syndicator with *Unexplained Mysteries*, which is cleared in 94% of the country.

Other weekend shows are coming from smaller syndicators, with that daypart getting less and less busy. Telco Productions has weekly half-hour *Missing* for fall, cleared in 85% of the country, joining Telco's other weekly show, *Animal Rescue*. Byron Allen's CF Entertainment has three weekly half-hours: *Automotivevision.TV*, *Urban Style* and *Latin Lifestyles*. ■

# NATPE 2004

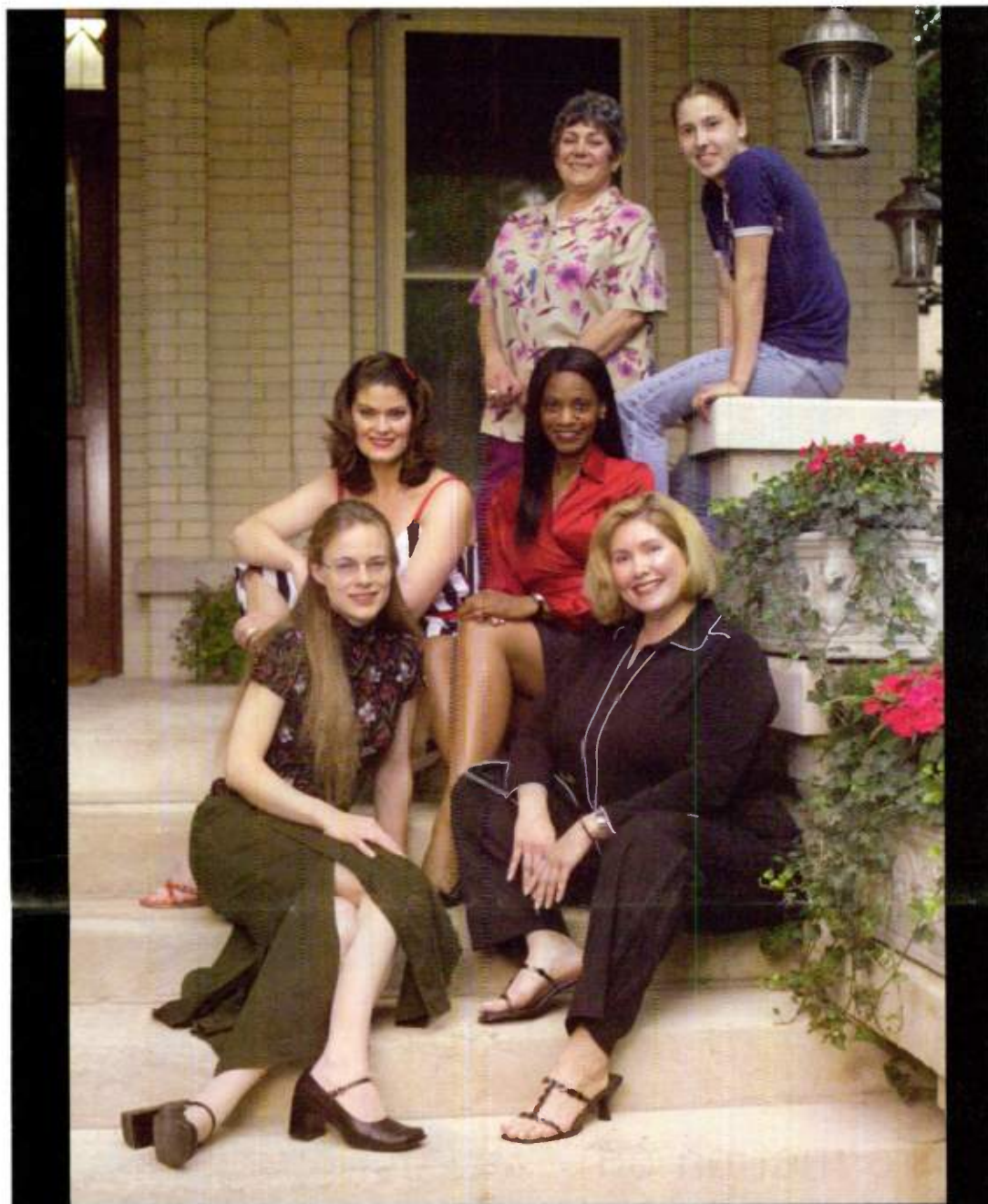
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# Reality TV? These Two Producers Wrote the Book



## Reality Bytes

Bunim and Murray produce NBC Enterprises' *Starting Over* (top) and MTV's *Real World Paris* (bottom) and *Road Rules*.



A question-and-answer session with the producers of daytime's *Starting Over*

**J**onathan Murray and Mary-Ellis Bunim should probably be called the grandparents of reality TV.

After all, they launched the trend with MTV's *Real World* and *Road Rules* in the early 1990s, but when reality finally made the leap to prime time in 2000 it skipped a generation. Blockbuster shows emerged such as Mark Burnett's *Survivor*, Fremantle's *American Idol* and Mike Fleiss's *The Bachelor*, but Bunim and Murray had no big network prime time hit.

Now the two think they have found their way into prime time's big time this fall with Fox's *The Simple Life*. The show features "celebutantes" Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie living on an Alabama farm and doing things the impossibly rich girls have never even imagined, like getting real jobs, punching a time clock, and hanging out at the local gas station. Fox liked the show so much they moved it out of the summer reality glut to a fall launch, where Bunim, Murray and Fox executives expect it to flourish.

But Bunim and Murray's biggest challenge—and biggest risk—this fall is NBC Enterprises' *Starting Over*, the first new-generation reality show to hit daytime syndication. A group of women, each in the throes of a personal or professional crisis, are housed together and try to work out new lives for themselves.

*Starting Over*, which includes elements daytime audiences find appealing, is poised either to become a trend-setting hit or an expensive flop, but NBC Enterprises has faith in the two experienced producers. Recently, Murray and Bunim (pronounced to rhyme with you-nim) talked with Los Angeles Bureau Chief Paige Albinak about their two new shows and how reality TV has changed prime time television forever. The interview has been edited for space.

**How did you come up with the concept for *Real World* and *Road Rules*?**

**JM:** *Real World* was an outgrowth of Mary-Ellis Bunim's and my backgrounds. She had spent many years as an executive producer of daytime dramas and I spent many years in documentary and news programming.

When you mix the documentary and soap world, you get this reality thing, this real-life soap.

**MEB:** When you start with writers, sets, directors and actors, it is enormously expensive. We thought if you trained cameras on people who were really interesting, and edited that in an interesting way and cut it to music, what do you have? We did a pilot that was fascinating. We knew within 20 minutes of shooting that we had a series.

**You came up with that idea, pitched it around and MTV picked it up?**

**JM:** We didn't pitch it all around. We had been in development working with MTV on a scripted soap, and when that didn't go forward for various economic reasons we said what if we did something like it but did it unscripted and edited it like a drama. We felt that would be cutting edge for MTV because it hadn't been done.

That became *Real World*. In

## The Fact File



**M**ary Ellis Bunim produced soap operas, including 2,500 hours-worth of *Search For Tomorrow*, *As The World Turns* and *Santa Barbara*. And her partner, Jonathan Murray, worked local news and station management in Atlanta, Cleveland and Rochester, N.Y., before the duo combined in 1992 to produce MTV's *The Real World*, what many consider the first true reality series.

The series has received multiple nominations for Emmys, People's Choice and Teens Choice Awards, and is the recipient of a TV Guide Award, among many others. Since then, they have produced *Road Rules* and *Making the Band*, among other shows.

The pair also creates reality-based prime time network specials and made-for-television movies.

the second season, we sent two cast members in a Winnebago to pick up a third cast member. Just watching the three of them in that Winnebago together was so entertaining and interesting. A couple of years later when MTV asked us to do a spin-off, we said what about a road show? And *Road Rules* became the first game reality show. Later, there was *Survivor* and *Fear Factor*, but *Road Rules* was really the first.

**Why did it take so long for reality to hit prime time?**

JM: Because the networks kept saying, "Oh, that's a cable thing, the prime time audience wants scripted television whether its comedy or whether its drama. They won't go for this stuff." Finally, they did *Survivor* and *Big Brother* in Europe and they were both huge hits. Those shows became very successful over in Europe and suddenly the networks were willing to take a chance.

**What elements make a good reality cast?**

JM: Each person has a unique story and you have to care about them. You care about all of these women in *Starting Over*. They have humor and passion. They each have a distinctive and interesting look and they are not afraid of conflict. That's the great thing about having a show with women. Women are generally less afraid of conflict than men. They are direct with each other about what they are feeling and that comes up clearly in this show from day one.

MEB: After all these years, I guess we are good at it. We have an instinct about what makes a good cast member. What makes a person compelling television is that they are telegenic, articulate, funny and colorful. We cast for diversity, cast for conflict, all sorts of ways.

**What about managing the process when you are doing a strip?**

JM: We approached this with the idea that every day in the house had to equal a television show. We've been disciplined in sticking to that.

In *Real World* we do an outline first, then we actually write a 13-page almost-script from the raw material.

In this show, we're going immediately to what we call "string out," when the two story people assigned to the show are looking at the material and creating an edit, a first rough-cut. That's approved with notes from the producers and then it goes to the editing team, which has a week to take it from the editing room to a show. It takes about two

weeks from the day something happens to the day it becomes a show.

**Is that the dirty little secret about reality TV—it's not that real?**

JM: The difference between a documentary and a reality show is that the producer thinks through a reality show before he does it from the standpoint of "how is this show going to be en-

tertaining?" "How am I going to get viewers to tune back before each commercial break?" "How is the network going to be able to promote this?" You are thinking about all those things when you are making a reality show.

**How different is putting together a reality show than putting together a scripted show?**

JM: The difference is that with a

scripted show a lot of the work happens in the script. If you can get a great script, then you go shoot it. In a reality show, you cast it first and then come up with the show's architecture. Then you shoot it and go through this long process, similar to the script process, where you make an outline and go through multiple rough cuts to massage and fine-tune the show

into being as good as hopefully that great script was.

**Do you think this summer diluted the affect of reality shows?**

JM: I think this summer showed that unless you come up with something fresh, unless there's a unique quality to it, it's only going to do okay. The ones that are going to be hits are the ones that are truly unique. ■

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## PROGRAMMING

## Cartoon Is for Kids Again

Network ramps up original programming, sets higher goals



New originals like *Duck Dodgers* is helping Cartoon Network compete with Nick and Disney.

BY ALLISON ROMANO

**T**he Cartoon Network is a force on the playground again. After some ratings blips last year, the Turner Broadcasting-owned kids network looks back on track.

Cartoon's newest original *Duck Dodgers*, with Daffy Duck and friends playing futuristic characters, premieres Aug. 23. *Teen Titans*, another original about a crew of teen superheroes guarding a West Coast city, came on in July and is earning stellar ratings. Plans now call for

four new original shows per year.

General Manager Jim Samples said Cartoon needs to do "more, better, faster," to attract kids and tweens and keep them. That means more original series, more acquisitions and more new episodes. According to Kagan World Media, Cartoon will spend close to \$70 million on programming this year.

At Cartoon's upfront presentation last spring, Samples said it would need to boost its output to turn ratings around. He is beginning to deliver. In July, Cartoon notched a 1.6 rating in prime with 1.8 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Re-

search, even with July 2002, a sign of stabilization. And the kids numbers are good too. In July, Cartoon was neck and neck with Nickelodeon and Disney Channel in the key demos like kids 2-11 and 6-11.

"Kids ratings are volatile and often snap back quickly," explained John Rash, senior vice president for media buyer Campbell Mithun.

One area where Cartoon has enjoyed success is with its young adult-targeted *Adult Swim* block. The late-night block, airs Sundays through Thursdays, averaged a hearty 1.6 million viewers in July thanks to originals like *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* and acquired adult cartoons *Family Guy* and *Futurama*.

Cartoon's return is important to stay competitive with powerhouse Nick and a surging Disney Channel. It needs to command its share of kid eyeballs and ad dollars (particularly since Disney confines its advertising to limited corporate "sponsorships").

"Cartoon is still a viable alternative to Nick," said Rash. And strengthening the programming should only help Cartoon's fortunes.

Just as important as new shows, Samples said, is increasing episode orders. The goal is to have enough episodes to strip a show. By next year, hit original *Codename: Kids Next Door*, which debuted in December, will be ready. ■



ESPN's *Playmakers* follows the on- and off-field exploits of the fictional football team, the Cougars.

## ESPN Ready To Kick Off Its First Dramatic Series

BY ALLISON ROMANO

**E**SPN is ready for a different breed of football with *Playmakers*, its first original scripted series, bowing Aug 26 at 9 p.m. ET.

The 11-part drama chronicles a fictional pro football team on and off the field, and is a bold programming departure for ESPN, a channel better known for its playcalling and highlight shows. But after two original movies, the sports net's entertainment unit is ready to make its move.

"Our viewers always say get us closer [to the athletes]," said executive vice president of programming Mark Shapiro. "We had to go fictional to get you there."

The goal is to draw in casual viewers who may not automatically flip on *SportsCenter* every night, like all good ESPN junkies do.

Early buzz on *Playmakers* has been good. The show is an ESPN in-house production executive produced by Orly Adelson, Michael Angeli and *Alias* creator John Eisendrath. "It is edgy, it is provocative, it is gritty, it takes chances," said Shapiro.

To that end, earlier this summer, the net screened *Playmakers* for focus groups in New York and Philadelphia, but didn't tell them what network would air the show. "They said—unprompted—HBO did it again," Shapiro said.

*Playmakers* doesn't go quite as far as an HBO show though. The language and content will be milder than ESPN's original movie on Bobby Knight, which had a cleaned-up version simulcast on ESPN2.

ESPN is trying to maximize the show's exposure airing it Tuesdays at 9 p.m. ET, 10 p.m. and then again at midnight after *SportsCenter*. That way, Shapiro notes, it plays at 9 p.m. in every time zone except Mountain. ESPN HD will also simulcast the show in high definition.

Work is already underway for a second ESPN original though. Filmmaker Spike Lee is producing a pilot for a series on pro basketball. ■

## What's In A Name? Court TV May Want to Investigate That

BY ALLISON ROMANO

**F**irst, the Odyssey Channel morphed into family-friendly Hallmark. Then TNN dumped the National Network name for Spike TV, the network for guys. Now, Court TV has a new slogan, the "Investigation Channel." But don't add Court TV to any list of cable networks with an identity crisis, said CEO Henry Schleiff.

"They were networks whose programming wasn't working," he said of Odyssey and TNN. At Court TV, "we have programming that is clearly working and growing."

Court's ratings are on the rise, nudging past a 1.0 in prime time in recent weeks, and the channel is increasingly drawing younger viewers.

Still, Schleiff said, the Court TV name doesn't quite say enough anymore. "We have evolved to an emphasis on in-

vestigation," he explained. Court's current slogan, "Join the Investigation," pointed viewers there, but the new "Investigation Channel" catchphrase spells it out more clearly.

When Court TV showed a Kobe Bryant special recently, the network scored a 1.2 Nielsen rating—and of course, Court TV will want to Kobe Bryant's trial, if there is one.

But when Schleiff took over in 1997, Court was a low-rated net showing all trials, all the time. He added acquired series like *Homicide* to pump up prime and, more recently, moved to all original series in prime time.

The net will introduce the new slogan during its "Forensic Week" stunt Aug. 25.

The next step, Schleiff said, could be trading the Court TV name for the Investigation Channel, a move that could happen in the next year or so. But he plans to keep Court TV alive, preferring a name like "The Investigation Channel, the home of Court TV." ■



The Investigation Channel

# SYNDICATION WATCH

RATINGS | Sept. 22-28

Nielsen Media Research

| daytime talk |

Top 25 Shows  
Adults 18-34

RANK	PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1	Friends	5.0	5.8
2	Seinfeld	4.2	4.9
3	Seinfeld (wknd)	4.1	5.4
4	Everybody Loves Raymond	2.9	3.2
4	That '70s Show	2.9	3.4
6	King of the Hill	2.7	3.0
7	Will & Grace	2.6	2.8
8	Home Improvement	2.2	2.6
8	Fox Hollywood Theater IV	2.2	2.3
10	Buena Vista Movie IV	2.1	2.2
11	Oprah Winfrey Show	2.0	2.1
11	Maury	2.0	2.2
11	Friends (wknd)	2.0	2.0
14	Frasier	1.9	2.1
15	WW Police Videos	1.8	1.8
16	Entertainment Tonight	1.7	1.8
16	Dharma & Greg	1.7	1.9
18	Stargate SG-1	1.6	1.7
18	Buena Vista Movie III	1.6	1.5
18	That '70s Show (wknd)	1.6	1.6
21	Jerry Springer	1.5	1.7
21	ER	1.5	1.8
21	Buffy the Vampire Slayer	1.5	1.5
24	Wheel of Fortune	1.4	NA
24	Judge Judy	1.4	1.8
24	Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	1.4	1.5
24	Divorce Court	1.4	1.8
24	The X-Files	1.4	1.5
24	Just Shoot Me (wknd)	1.4	1.7

Top Talk Shows  
Adults 18-34

RANK	PROGRAM	AA	GAA
1	Oprah Winfrey Show	2.0	2.1
1	Maury	2.0	2.2
3	Jerry Springer	1.5	1.7
4	Dr. Phil	1.3	1.4
5	Live With Regis and Kelly	1.1	NA
5	Montel Williams Show	1.1	1.1

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report July 28-Aug. 3, 2003  
AA = Average Audience Rating  
GAA = Gross Aggregate Average  
ONE NIELSEN RATING = 1,067,000 households, which represents 1% of the 106.7 million TV Households in the United States  
NA = not available

## Pauley 'Leaps' Ahead

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

**N**BC Enterprises has been busy this summer, adding nine major markets to its list of clearances for *The Jane Pauley Show*, which premieres in fall 2004.

Besides WNBC-TV New York, KNBC-TV Los Angeles and KNSD(TV) San Diego—all NBC-owned stations—NBC Enterprises has added six ABC affiliates, two NBC affiliates and one more NBC-owned station to its roster.

The ABC affiliates include Fisher's KOMO-TV Seattle and KATU(TV) Portland, Ore.; Allbritton's WJLA-TV Washington, and KTUL(TV) Tulsa, Okla.; and Scripps Howard's KNXV-TV Phoenix and WEWS(TV) Cleveland. The two NBC affiliates are Scripps Howard's KSHB-TV Kansas City, Mo., and Cordillera's WLEX-TV Lexington, Ky. And KXAS-TV Dallas is the other NBC-owned station.

NBC would not confirm any time periods. Company executives have said they are shooting for early fringe time slots, although some stations will air the show in the morning. NBC Enterprises executives also have been positioning the show as a rival for King World's *Oprah*, but several ABC affiliates, including WJLA and WEWS, already carry *Oprah*. King World has extended *Oprah's* contract through 2008.

Linda Finnell, senior vice president of programming for NBC Enterprises, also has been looking for an executive producer for the show. Finnell has begun interviewing candidates in New York City, where the show will be taped. Finnell hopes to have an executive producer in place by fall, to give NBC plenty of time to develop the show before next year's launch.

*The Jane Pauley Show* will tape at 30 Rockefeller Center in studio 8G, where *The Today Show* was shot when Pauley began hosting the show in 1976 at age 26.

Now, half a life later, Pauley is reinventing herself at 52 as the host of her own daytime talk show. During a rambling speech last week to advertisers at the Family Friendly Programming Forum Symposium in Los Angeles, Pauley promised: "I will not exploit unhappy people. I will not crowd the margins of decency."

She also reported that upon hearing about her new endeavor, husband Garry Trudeau, who writes the political cartoon *Doonesbury*, said: "My wife is entering a new chapter of her life. After 26 years at NBC, she made the courageous leap to an entirely different division of NBC." ■



*The Jane Pauley Show* debuts fall 2004.

## Syndie

### Insider

#### DIC Is There for The Kids

DIC Entertainment Corp. Sept. 1 is launching its block of kids' programs with advertisers such as Hasbro, McDonald's, Kellogg, Mars, Nestlé, Chuck E. Cheese's and Bandai on board. The programmer is also providing a Spanish-language feed of its programs for stations' second-audio-program channels.

DIC has cleared its three-hour kids' programming blocks on 450 TV stations and, in some cases, on more than one TV station in a market.

With three separate blocks available, Fox, The WB and UPN affiliates get their own exclusive kids' programming in a cost-effective manner. National advertisers get more than 100% clearance on DIC programs because the same national advertisements run in all three blocks, even though the programs in the blocks are different. DIC's shows also help stations meet their FCC requirements for educational children's programming.

#### A Pleasant Break for Syndie

A relatively nice spell amid the bad summer weather that has been plaguing the East Coast gave syndication a case of the summer blahs, making ratings generally stagnant in the week-ending Aug. 3. Still, talk shows managed to see some gains. Of the top dozen talk shows, eight were up, two were down and two were unchanged from the prior week.

Universal's *Crossing Over with John Edward*, which may have seen this coming, had the largest rating increase among talkers, jumping 20% to a 1.2 rating. King World's *Oprah* had the biggest decline in the group, losing 10% to 5.3. In second place, King World's rookie *Dr. Phil* was up 2% to 4.3. Universal's *Maury* took third for the sixth time in the past seven weeks with a 3.6, unchanged from the prior week. Right behind was Buena Vista's *Live with Regis & Kelly* up 3% to 3.5. Universal's *The Jerry Springer Show* gained 7% to 2.9, followed by Paramount's *Montel Williams* up 4% to 2.5. Warner Bros.' *Jenny Jones* in its final weeks picked up 5% to 2.1. Sony's *Ricki Lake* slipped 6% to 1.7. NBC Enterprises' rookie *The John Walsh Show* rebounded from last week's slide with a 17% surge to 1.4. *Martha Stewart Living* cooked up an 8% increase to 1.3, while Twentieth's *Good Day Live* was flat at 1.0.

## REBA SHINES ON FRIDAY NIGHT

**8:00pm**

Improves On *Sabrina's* Year Ago Time Period

**9:00pm**

Improves On Its Own Year Ago Time Period

Source: NTL, Galaxy Explorer, 8pm = Reba July '03 vs. Sabrina July '02 % Growth, 9pm = Reba July '03 vs. Reba July '02 % Growth, HH, A18-49 & A25-54 Rtg.





## MARKET | Harrisburg | FOCUS

## AT A GLANCE

## The Market

DMA rank	47
Population	1,658,000
TV homes	627,000
Income per capita	\$17,683
TV revenue rank	52
TV revenue	\$91,600,000

## Commercial TV Stations

RANK*	CH.	AFFIL.	OWNER
1	WGAL(TV)	8	NBC Hearst-Argyle
2	WHTM-TV	27	ABC Allbritton
3	WHP-TV	21	CBS Clear Channel TV
4	WPMT(TV)	43	Fox Tribune
5	WLYH-TV	15	UPN SJL Broadcasting

\*May 2003, total households, 6 a.m.-2 a.m., Sun.-Sat.

## Cable/DBS

Cable subscribers (HH)	501,600
Cable penetration	80%
ADS subscribers (HH)	57,684
ADS penetration	9.2%
DBS carriage of local TV?	Yes

\*\*Alternative Delivery Systems, includes DBS and other non-cable services, according to Nielsen Media Research

## What's No. 1

Syndicated Show	RATING/SHARE***
Jeopardy (WHP)	9/19
Network Show	
Friends (WGAL)	14/33
Evening Newscast	
WGAL	14/33
Late Newscast	
WGAL	10/33

\*\*\*May 2003, total households

SOURCES: Nielsen Media Research, BIA Research

## A Healthy Hyphenate

The No. 47 DMA has three hyphens in its name and covers four cities. Spread across central Pennsylvania, the Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon-York market takes advantage of its geographic proximity to the great population centers of the Northeast: Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and New York, and the major highways that converge within its borders.

"It's a manufacturing center and a transportation center," notes John Riggle, general manager at Tribune-owned York-based Fox affiliate WPMT(TV). The manufacturers here range from a leading weight and barbell maker to an infamous motorcycle maker to several well-known snack food producers.

The market has been growing at about a half-percent annually, less than in some other markets and the market rank has dropped among DMAs in recent years.

The area leads Pennsylvania in all economic indicators," said WGAL(TV) general manager Paul Quinn. "It's a relatively healthy market. We're not losing people like some other markets. But there are other markets growing faster."

WGAL, the only VHF station in the market, has been the top dog since its 1949 launch. The Hearst-Argyle station wins in local news and supplies as well numerous locally produced educational, political and entertainment programs.

In television, local executives talk about the market's strength and consistency. "This is a odd television market," says Rob Saylor, general sales manager for Allbritton-owned ABC affiliate WHTM-TV, noting an extraordinary commitment to community. Although TV revenue took a typical mid-teen dip in 2001 from its record-setting previous year, the market, aided

by political money from a highly competitive congressional race, bounced back in 2002 and set new records in the process. BIA Financial predicts additional growth for 2003 and a tremendous politics-aided 2004; smashing through the \$100 million mark by nearly \$5 million. —Dan Trigoboff



## WHAT THEY DO

**500K** people attend the Corvettes at Carlisle, a three-day event including seminars and celebrities.

**3,500** artifacts from the Civil War are held at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg.

**3,000** employees work at the 1 million-square-foot Harley-Davidson plant.

SOURCE: pacapitalregions.com, national-civilwarmuseum.org, laugerman.com

## After a Wait, EBay Is a Go

BY PAIGE ALBINIAK

Sony Pictures Television is preparing *eBayTV* for a fall 2004 launch, hiring veteran sportscaster Ahmad Rashad to co-host the strip with Molly Pesce.

"In exploring this show, we looked at the brand we want the show to have," said Russ Krasnoff, president of programming and production for Sony. "We love Molly Pesce but we felt she needed somebody to bounce off of. While she is fun and upbeat, we also wanted someone who could anchor a little more. When we looked at our choices, we fell in love with Ahmad."

Over the past two weeks, Sony shot a pilot with Rashad and Pesce in an empty store that overlooks the courtyard of The Grove, a large upscale Los Angeles shopping mall.

Considering the show's content—covering stories generated by eBay's on-line auction community—Sony decided it would be interesting to shoot the show at a real-life marketplace.

The syndicator is seriously considering The Grove for *eBayTV*'s permanent home.

*eBayTV* has been under development for a long time. So far, Sony's launch group includes stations from the Viacom, Gannett, Belo, Raycom, Clear Channel, Pegasus, Media General, Cox, Capitol, Emmis, Evening Post and Quorum. But Sony is not giving out a clearance number. Along with the show, stations also will get software from eBay and Sony to run their own branded auction sites. ■



Molly Pesce (above) will co-host Sony's new shopping show with veteran sportscaster Ahmad Rashad.

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Source: NSI, M-F, (8/4/03-8/8/03), 10:30A-11:00A.  
Prior prog= Rob Nelsen in Nov '02 Sweep, debut in tp = (3/31/03 - 4/04/03)

## TV BUYER

## What? Sex and Violence *Don't* Sell?

Ad recall down in viewers of shows with sexual or violent content

BY STEVE MCCLELLAN

If it bleeds it leads," is said to be the mantra of many a TV news director when putting together the story roster for the evening news. But Brad Bushman has a different take: "If the TV program bleeds, memory for the brand recedes."

And when it comes to brand recall in TV ads, "sex doesn't sell," he adds.

Bushman, a psychologist at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, and Iowa State University's Angelica Bonacci recently completed a study that they say demonstrates that viewers don't remember ads as well when they are featured in programs with high levels of sexual and violent content.

The study was based on a group of 324 viewers who watched tapes of 18 TV shows, including the headbanging wrestling, the sexually charged USA cable's *Strip Poker* and the more sedate *Miracle Pets* on Pax. After 40 to 45 minutes, participants were asked to recall the brand names of the advertised products.

The researchers found that people are less likely—by an average of 19%—to remember a TV ad when it is inserted in a violent or sexually explicit program.

Brand recall was 17% higher for participants who watched a "neutral" program than for those who saw a vi-



Do viewers remember ads in sexy shows like Fox's *Paradise Hotel*? A new study says no.

olent show. And recall was 21% higher for viewers watching neutral shows versus a highly sexual program.

What if you juice up the ads with sex and violence? Well, Bushman and Bonacci thought of that and found that it didn't seem to change the results. The violent ads were 20% less memorable and the sexy ones 18% less memorable than the neutral ads.

"The bottom line is that matching ad type to program type doesn't change the basic fact that people are less likely to remember brands advertised in violent and sexually explicit programs," Bushman says.

The results of course beg the question, why? That question wasn't addressed in the current study. However, in a study done last year by the same two researchers, they suggested that viewers focus so hard on the sex and violence that they take a mental rest during the commercial breaks. "Individuals have a limited amount of attention to direct toward TV programs," they wrote in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. "The more attentive individuals are toward a TV program, the less attentive capacity they have for the commercials embedded in the program." ■

## Home Depot 'Trades Spaces' With Lowe's

BY ALLISON ROMANO

Home Depot is the latest remodeler going for a new look courtesy of *Trading Spaces* and TLC. The Atlanta-based home improvement giant signed on last week to be the exclusive category sponsor for *Trading Spaces*, replacing its archrival Lowe's.

Home Depot's deal, which kicks off in the fall and runs through third quarter next year, also extends its current relationship with another TLC redecorating show, *While You Were Out*. The deal calls for Home Depot to advertise on other Discovery Networks channels including the Discovery Channel and BBC America as well.

The home improvement company will provide the budgets, projects and material for remodeling projects on both *While You Were Out* and *Trading Spaces*, one of cable's hottest original shows. And Home Depot will get marketing opportunities on spin-off *Trading Spaces: Family*.

Home Depot is getting increasingly aggressive in



Home Depot now has a *Trading Spaces* tie-in.

its TV dealings. In May 2002, the company struck a three-year, \$100 million deal with Walt Disney Co. As part of the deal, Home Depot agreed to advertise across Disney-owned networks ABC, Lifetime and the Disney Channel.

The *Trading Spaces* deal with TLC is well timed. The home improvement chain has been looking for ways to recharge its image. Sales have sagged, although recent reports show improvement and have boosted the stock price. Bob Nardelli, Home Depot CEO, is a former NBC executive who was considered a potential successor to Jack Welch to become chairman of GE before Jeff Immelt got the nod.

Lowe's same-store sales have surpassed Home Depot for the last eight quarters. And Lowe's isn't getting out of the TV show business. The company is teaming with TBS Superstation on an upcoming redecorating show *House Rules*. That show, which debuts in October, will pit teams of amateur remodelers against each other for a chance to win the home they've worked on. Lowe's will provide the supplies and be featured heavily in product placement. ■

## EBB & FLOW

### Strong Syndie Scatter Seen

Syndication is benefiting from strong demand for broadcast TV ad time and its third quarter scatter market is almost finished with price hikes in the mid-teens (or higher) above upfront rates.

"Syndication in third quarter is pretty much sold out," said Jason Kanefsky, VP, national broadcast, MPG, "with increases between 15% and 20%."

Kanefsky added that August is

### 3Q Pricing +15% - 20%

usually tight for syndication because that's when sellers tend to fulfill their make good obligations for the first and second quarters.

Ed Gentner, senior VP/group director, MediaVest, said that "There are some pockets of avails in September but it's relatively tight. New syndicated programs are starting earlier in September and syndicators will see how the shows track. If they under-deliver they will take inventory out of sale for make goods."

Bob Flood, executive vice president, director of national electronic media, Optimedia, agreed, but added those numbers reflect only the "good stuff such as *Friends* and *Seinfeld*."

Some shows received scatter price hikes in high single digits, Flood said. "We did a lot of stuff well in advance of the upfront."

"Third quarter pacing slowed down because buyers are taking a break and there's not a ton to buy out there," noted Andy Donchin, senior VP director of national broadcast, Carat. "Syndication had a good year last year and is having a better year this year."

"We are way ahead of last year," said Bob Cesa, executive VP advertising sales, Twentieth Television. "I have a miniscule amount of inventory left." Hot categories: back to school, movie companies, electronics, pharmaceuticals, automotive and video games.

—Jean Bergantini-Grillo

### NEXT WEEK:

## Radio

# DIVERSITY REPORT

The marketplace for diversity television is growing by leaps and bounds. *Broadcasting & Cable* will focus two in-depth special reports on all aspects of this lucrative market. We will cover the effect of diversity programming on broadcast and cable networks, who's leading the pack and what does the future hold for this growth market.

Make sure you're part of this important coverage which will be seen by top industry decision-makers. Call your *Broadcasting & Cable* representative today.

## DIVERSITY REPORT PART I FOCUS ON HISPANIC TELEVISION

ISSUE DATE	SPACE CLOSE	MATERIALS CLOSE
SEPT. 8, 2003	AUG. 29, 2003	SEPT. 2, 2003

## DIVERSITY REPORT PART II FOCUS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN TELEVISION

ISSUE DATE	SPACE CLOSE	MATERIALS CLOSE
SEPT. 15, 2003	SEPT. 5, 2003	SEPT. 9, 2003

**BROADCASTING & CABLE**

## WASHINGTON

# Re-Reg Guns of August

Activist groups take aim at cable ownership rules

BY JOHN EGGERTON

**C**able consolidation opponents clearly lacked a kitchen sink or they would have tossed that in along with everything else they threw at the industry in a scathing report labeled "The Failure of Cable Deregulation."

Maybe it was the wisdom of scheduling their news conference for the slow news days of August, or maybe it was a heightened sensitivity to media-ownership issues, but there seemed to be more than the usual contingent of press in

of America and Andy Schwartzman of Media Access Project.

For its part, the National Cable & Telecommunications Association responded that the charges were shopworn and baseless.

The FCC is currently reviewing cable-ownership rules and considering whether cable and telephone broadband service should be subject to regulations to prevent content discrimination by carriers.

The report, written by public interest lawyer Jay Halfon and gleaned from various sources, dates the laundry list of cable offenses from the restructuring and rate deregulation of the 1996

Telecommunications Act. It alleges that rates have skyrocketed, service is "some of the worst in America," consumer access to programming and a choice of broadband Internet providers is effectively denied, DBS provides no real competition, and overbuilders, which do provide competition, are few and far between because companies won't compete against each other.

U.S. PIRG's proposed solution was rolling back cable deregulation, saying it would take its report to Congress and hope to catch the attention of frequent cable critic, Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee.

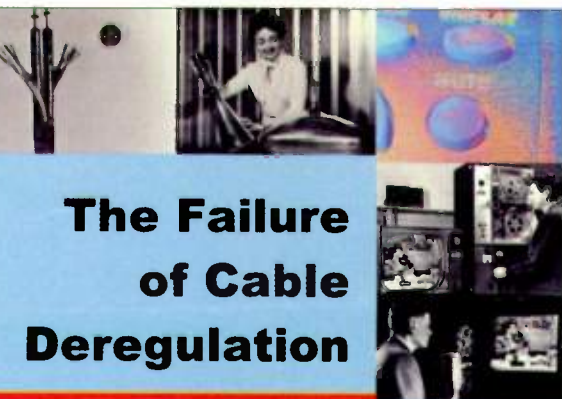
Responding to the attack, Rob Stoddard, senior vice president of communications and public affairs, for NCTA said: "The wild and unfounded claims of these Washington-based advocacy groups are recycled arguments that fell out of favor a decade ago. The regulatory environment envisioned by Congress in 1996 and maintained by the FCC has fostered the most robust telecommunications marketplace in the world. It's providing a better deal for consumers, who are getting

far more for their dollar. How odd that so-called consumer groups would prefer to take all that away."

U.S. PIRG's blueprint for taking all that away: 1) Return oversight of the industry to state public utility commissioners and local franchising authorities; 2) impose conditions for competition, including a la carte tiers so that consumers can get "access to channels they want at prices they can afford;" and 3) mandate nondiscriminatory access to competitive Internet service providers.

The Internet access issue could be a key one for activists.

The Internet was a powerful tool for anti-consolidation forces, which used it to help flood the FCC with comments opposing broadcast deregulation after concluding the major media were deliberately spending little time covering the issue. ■



## The Failure of Cable Deregulation

### A Blueprint For Creating A Competitive, Pro-Consumer Cable Television Marketplace

U.S. Public Interest Research Group  
August 2003

U.S. PIRG slammed the cable industry with this report.

attendance, including live C-SPAN coverage.

Saying the industry had "gouged consumers, crushed competition and bullied regulators," the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG), flanked by a Who's Who of re-reg activists, last week called for new regulations to rein in the industry, chastised the FCC for failing to exercise its regulatory power over cable, and warned that the wired industry was extending its "tentacles" into the broadband Internet marketplace.

Jeff Chester of the Center for Digital Democracy even blamed cable for contributing to the growing obesity of America's youth, saying that as a gatekeeper of programming and advertising targeted to them it had to take some responsibility.

Also on hand to drive home the criticism were Mark Cooper of the Consumer Federation



## CAPITAL WATCH

### Disney Backs Dereg... But

ABC hasn't given up on the 45% cap, but it appears unwilling to expend too much political energy on it.

In response to a report that ABC owner Disney would no longer actively push to retain the FCC's increase of the station ownership cap to 45% of TV households, the company's top lobbyist, Preston Padden, said last week: "Disney/ABC continues to support deregulation of broadcast ownership. But because we are at 24%, the impact on our company of a rollback to 35% would not be as severe or immediate as it would be to other networks." Some network executives viewed the news as less a breaking of ranks than a statement of political reality.

ABC was the last of the networks to pull out of the NAB over that group's decision to push for a rollback to the previous 35% cap, and at 24% coverage it still has plenty of room to maneuver under the cap. With the issue becoming a hot one on the Hill, and bipartisan support growing to roll back the cap, some positions have become concurrently fluid. NAB backed off its push for 35%, then raised that standard once again as prospects brightened for a bill that would not also undo other FCC deregulatory moves NAB supported.

### FCC Grants More Time

The FCC has granted NAB's motion to extend the comment and reply comment periods for defining radio markets in non-Arbitron survey areas—the redefinition stems from the FCC's June 2 ownership rule rewrite. But it only gave them an extra 30 days for each, not the six-plus weeks, and two months, respectively, NAB had asked for. The comment and reply comment periods had been Sept. 4 and Sept. 19. NAB, saying it needed to study data from a survey it had commissioned, had wanted the FCC to bump the deadlines to Oct. 20 and Nov. 19. Instead, the FCC, saying it needed to complete its proceeding in a timely fashion, while recognizing the "public interest" served by a brief extension, set the new deadlines at Oct. 6 and Oct. 21.

### MMTC Needs More Room

While we're on the subject of FCC filings (see above), a coalition of groups led by Minority Media Telecommunications Council has asked the FCC to extend the page limitations on petitions to reconsider the FCC's June 2 broadcast rule changes. Current limits are 25 pages each for petitions to reconsider and oppositions to petitions to reconsider, 10 pages for reply comments. The groups want to double those limits, saying it is the most "far-reaching and complex broadcast ownership proceeding in history," and that it is actually six proceedings in one.

### Read all about it

The Aug. 9 issue of National Journal documents NAB's lobbying challenges in a story headlined "Broadcast Blues." The generally positive piece chronicles the network/station split over the ownership cap issue and the "major policy challenge" it has "foisted" on the association. In the end, the piece's reporting suggests, NAB will continue to be a force to be reckoned with, even if it does not regain the network members it has lost during the fight.

### COPPS OPINES ON OPIE



**F**CC Commissioner Michael Copps (above) has chastised the commission for failing to address indecency complaints about last August's *Opie & Anthony* show on WNEW-FM New York allegedly containing a broadcast of sexual activity at St. Patrick's Cathedral. "Nothing has changed over the past year," and he predicted "things will get even worse." Copps, who has called for stricter indecency enforcement, blames media consolidation for part of the problem: "It stands to reason," he said, "that as media conglomerates grow ever bigger and control moves further away from the local community, community standards will go by the boards."

# BUSINESS

## Thanks to *Idol* and *Joe*, Fox Ent. Is Looking Good

Entertainment Group reports increase in operating income, revenues in 4Q

BY STEVE MCCLELLAN

**F**ox Entertainment Group, News Corp.'s publicly-traded 80%-owned subsidiary posted a five-fold gain in pre-tax operating income to a record \$2.1 billion, for its fiscal year 2003, which ended June 30. Revenues were up 13% to \$11 billion for the year.

The profits this year look particularly good compared to last year when the company took a write-down of nearly \$1 billion for national sports contracts, primarily Major League Baseball and the National Football League. No further sports-related write-downs were taken this year.

For the company's fiscal fourth quarter (ended June 30), pre-tax profits were up 58% to \$505 million on a 15% gain in revenue to \$2.8 billion.

The company reported that the Fox TV network turned the profit corner during the fourth quarter but remained in the red for the full year, while narrowing the previous year's loss. The network posted fourth quarter operating income of \$29 million versus an \$89 million loss in the fourth quarter of 2002.

For the full year, the operating loss totaled \$183 million, a \$100 million improvement over the \$283 million posted in fiscal year 2002.

The company attributed the network's improved financial performance to better ratings and ad sales thanks to programs like *American Idol* and *24* (not to mention *Joe Millionaire*).

The Fox owned station group posted a 13% gain in revenues for the full fiscal year to just over \$2.1 billion.

In a conference call with analysts last week, Lachlan Murdoch, who oversees News Corp.'s publishing operations and TV stations arm, said that the profit margins of the company's UPN affiliates (the Chris-Craft stations that it bought a couple of years back) trailed the Fox affiliate O&O's by 16% to 20%. "That's the bad news," he said. The good news is the UPN stations are profitable and performing ahead of last year. But that's not good enough, he said, although he's willing to give UPN management "a shot with this new season to turn around the performance of the network. If they can't turn it around, we have lots of options and I will leave it at that."

The Fox cable networks nearly doubled their pre-tax operating income for the fiscal year to \$472 million, on a 22% revenue gain to \$2.1 billion. For the fourth quarter, the cable profits were up 140% to \$106 million on a 19% revenue gain to \$637 million.

News Corp. chief operating officer Peter Chernin reported that talks continue with affiliates on a renewal of the recently expired agreement under which stations contribute roughly \$50 million a year toward the company's rights payment for the NFL in exchange for program exclusivity. "We are optimistic we'll have something finalized pretty quickly," he said. ■



**Rupert Murdoch's Fox TV network remained in the red for the full year, but did trim the previous year's loss.**

## EchoStar Up, But at a Cost

BY JOHN M. HIGGINS

**E**choStar's subscriber growth slowed a bit during the second quarter, but the company still swiped plenty of business from its cable and DBS rivals.

For the three months ended June, EchoStar posted strong 21% growth in revenue to \$1.4 billion. Operating cash flow increased 22% to \$289 million (excluding a \$34 million gain from the settlement of litigation).

But there were a couple of blips.

The topline-cost of acquiring new customers totaled \$492 per subscriber, down 4% from last year. But adjusting capitalized equipment expenses, Merrill Lynch analyst Marc Nabi said subscriber acquisition costs actually rose 18% from last year.

EchoStar added 270,000 subscribers during the quarter, down 7% from the 295,000 net additions during the year-earlier period.

Still, EchoStar Chairman Charlie Ergen expressed enthusiasm. "There's not any cable operator who's immune to an attack from

Dish Network," he said. Weaker systems, particularly in markets where EchoStar's Dish Network delivers "local-into-local" broadcast stations, are prime targets.

Ergen said that EchoStar is still working through the details of how telco SBC will retail the DBS service in its 13-state market following a recent joint venture deal. He said that EchoStar will lose some subscribers to SBC's bundled DBS and DSL Internet packages. But he believes the reduction of customer churn will benefit EchoStar in the long run. ■

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## TECHNOLOGY

## RealOne Goes Mobile

New mobile service created for cell phone users

BY KEN KERSCHBAUMER

**R**ealNetworks is hitting the road with RealOne Mobile, a service that brings audio and video news updates to Sprint PCS Vision cellular phones. The service costs \$4.95 a month and includes content from Fox Sports, CBS Marketwatch, the Weather Channel, NPR and ABC News.

"By the end of next year every new wireless device will have the ability to stream audio and video live off the Internet," says Bernie Gershon, ABC News.com senior vice president and general manager. "So we think this is a great way to extend the ABC News brand to mobile professionals domestically and, eventually, worldwide."

Mark Donovan, RealNetworks director of strategy and marketing, says the company is focused on the Sprint deployment for the near term but that he expects it to be available via other mo-

bile carriers in the near future.

"We're talking to all the major operators in the U.S. and Europe on a variety of fronts, including media services and media delivery infrastructure," he adds.

True video delivery to cell phones isn't possible yet but it is possible to deliver four frames of video per second, allowing for slide-show presentations in conjunction with the audio reports. About 90 pieces of content will be available every day. "The focus is on building a business model that works for Sprint, ourselves, and the content providers," says Donovan.

Gershon says the deal is similar in structure to the one ABCNews has for RealOne's SuperPass. That model calls for content providers to get a small payment per subscriber.

Gershon says the audience is different from the SuperPass audience. SuperPass users are more interested in entertainment or having access to song files, while RealOne Mobile customers are expected to be interested in getting



Clips from ABC World News Tonight will be available to RealOne mobile subscribers.

news information while travelling.

"This is similar to the broadband market three-to-four years ago," says Gershon. "And we see the technology increasing and improving dramatically in the next few years." ■

## Cutting

## Edge

## Concurrent Looks to NDVR

Concurrent is introducing Real-Time Media, which will enable cable operators to deliver enhanced, automated on-demand services, such as network-based digital video recording (NDVR). The system uses the company's MediaHawk Generation On-Demand Platform and MediaMatrix system. MediaMatrix helps with stream management and storage, making it easier to deal with fluctuating demands. Bruce Bradley, vice president of product development for Concurrent's video-on-demand division, Xstreme, says that NDVR is something satellite operators cannot provide.

## Media 100 OK

Clear Channel stations KOKI-TV Tulsa, Okla., and KTFO-TV Tulsa have begun using Media 100's 844/X real-time online vertical editing system, a move that has doubled its production capacity for promos and graphics. KOKI/KTFO Creative Service Manager Charlie Ray says the 844/X's ability to work in real time has been the key timesaver. The unit handles promo spots, IDs and graphics for two stations, three newscasts and an array of episodic shows.

## ContentProbe Keeps an Eye on Signals

BY KEN KERSCHBAUMER

**T**he multichannel environment has opened up new monitoring challenges that Omnibus co-founder Glyn Powell-Evans is hoping to remedy with his new company, IdeasUnlimited.tv.

The company's ContentProbe system takes "fingerprints" of audio and video content as it leaves a facility and verifies its integrity by matching the fingerprint when it arrives at a facility. The new company resulted in Powell-Evans' resignation from Omnibus, the traffic system developer he co-founded in 1992. He most recently was Omnibus group executive, strategy.

"This is outside the main core of what Omnibus is doing, although we think there is a lot of value to link our product to the Omnibus system," he says.

"There are a number of things that can go wrong with a signal when it leaves a facility and is sent to another," he notes. IdeasUnlimited's fingerprint helps broadcasters more easily verify the delivery of audio and video signals around the world.

Potential problems range from loss of video or audio to having the wrong audio channel received with the video channel. Compounding those problems is that people who monitor signal quality are generally asked to moni-

tor a large volume of outgoing and incoming signals, dividing their attention into smaller slices, increasing the possibility of error or a missed problem. And Powell-Evans says that while it may be possible to monitor the video portion of multiple video signals it's impossible to monitor the audio portion.

"You can't listen to 10 audio channels at once," he says.

ContentProbe is based on a 1RU PC that runs embedded Windows XP-based software that by creates a "unique 24-byte digital fingerprint." That file is then sent to another ContentProbe PC on the receiving or monitoring side via the Internet. The two fingerprints are then compared and, if they match, both the audio and video arrived safely. If they don't match up, an alarm in the form of an SMS message to a mobile phone or an email with an attached .pdf report and mini pictures is sent to notify engineering of the problem.

Powell-Evans says the system has been registered with SMPTE as Class 14 metadata meaning it can be incorporated into the Media Exchange Format (MXF) metadata wrapper. It's available for purchase or rental with a cost of about \$5-\$8 per day, per channel. ■



'You can't listen to 10 channels at once.'

GLYN POWELL-EVANS, IdeasUnlimited.tv

## Focus

## MIGRATION TO DIGITAL

## Kalypso sings



## NEP Sings New Song

The NEP Supershooters truck used for ESPN-HD's NFL coverage employs the new Grass Valley Kalypso HD video production switcher and is the first North American user of the Grass Valley C2IP camera control system. The production company, based in Pittsburgh, Pa., used more than 20 Thomson LDK 6000 Worldcam camera systems and the Grass Valley Profile XP Media Platform HD video server.

## Sharp, Samsung Tap TV Guide

Sharp and Samsung will incorporate Gemstar-TV Guide's interactive program guide into some of their product lines. Sharp will place the guide into its LCD televisions and digital video recorders in North America, Japan and Europe. Sharp will pay Gemstar license fees based on the number of units sold that include the technology. The agreement does not include a minimum commitment. Samsung's multi-year deal calls for the incorporation of TV Guide On Screen into its digital television and DVRs.

# Outage Makes for Long, Cool Night at Fox

*Continued from page 1*

Within a few minutes he noticed something going on outside of the brand new street-level Fox News studio in midtown Manhattan. Workers were pouring out of nearby Rockefeller Center buildings and filling the street. "We saw a flood of people right out our window," Cavuto said.

Minutes later word came: New York City had gone dark. And it soon became clear that a massive blackout had shut down a large swath of the Northeast, Midwest and southern Canada.

Now it was time to swing into action and put to the test all those contingency plans to keep a New York-based network on the air when everyone else's power went out. Talk host Bill O'Reilly was in his office, and ran out to descend 17 crowded flights of stairs to the network's ground-floor studios. Everyone was calm except for one man trying to push past everyone else. "There was one jerk," O'Reilly complained. "I was going to strangle him."

Commentator Shepard Smith was stuck at JFK Airport on his way to his vacation, phoning in some observations until his cell-phone batteries died. Sean Hannity, who has been doing his radio show from ABC Radio's nearby studio, walked into the newsroom sweaty and wrinkled at 8:15 p.m., but was crisp and ready for air by 9 p.m.

On the plus side, Fox News didn't have to go far to flood the zone: it was in the middle of the most dramatic part of it. Sure, the blackout swept dozens of other cities in eight states and one Canadian province. But New Yorkers can out-throng Cleveland or Syracuse, N.Y., any day.

"At the same time everyone's heading for Penn Station, so were we," said executive producer Bill Shine.

Deploying reporters and shooters was tough, partly because of an overloaded cell-phone system, partly because of traffic. Fox broadcast stations were tapped for feeds.

The National News Service cooperative among Fox, CBS and ABC was invaluable, with Fox News making liberal use of feeds from WCBS-TV's helicopter sweeping over the thousands of commuters pushing toward ferry terminals.

Fox News was reminded that a TV network is power hungry. The news network had access to two diesel-powered generators located on the 7th and 10th floors of the News Corp. office tower. One is shared with the *New York Post*.

But the other is dedicated to the network.

Normally, the dedicated generator could pull the network for 20 hours. But Fox News Engineering Director Chris Bauer said that some of the fuel had been depleted by periodic tests.

The tank was only three-quarters full. "That's what we get for not topping off," Bauer said.

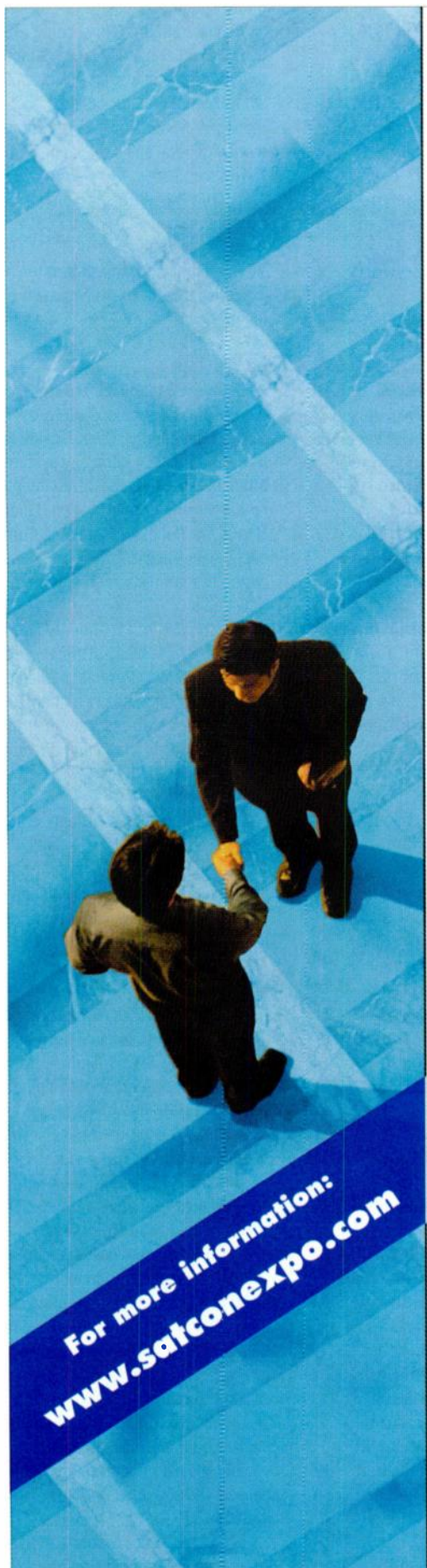
A voice over the public address system begged staffers to shut down any PCs, lights and other gear that weren't absolutely essential. Fortunately, air con-

ditioning was excluded.

The conservation may have helped. The generators were still chugging when the power came back on in the Fox neighborhood on Friday morning around 7 a.m.

Producers had little idea what the competition was doing. Except

for a feed from NBC's Washington bureau, the Fox newsroom gets CNN, ABC, CBS and other networks the way most Manhattanites do, from the local Time Warner Cable system, which failed. The newsroom monitors were as dark as the rest of Manhattan. ■



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## PEOPLE

## THE FIFTH ESTATER

## Making His Cable News Dream Come True

Balboni nurtured New England Cable News to prominence

In a 30-year-plus career in local news, Phil Balboni moved from print to broadcast and later helped create a medium that combines both of those with cable. His New England Cable News includes partner stations in all New England markets, several of New England's newspapers and its own staff, which includes New England television news icons Chet Curtis and Tom Ellis, Balboni said.

There were only one or two local cable news channels in the country during the mid-1980s when Balboni, then news director at WCVB-TV Boston, first thought the idea might work in New England. He nurtured the idea through his time in Hearst's corporate office, and helped launch the channel, owned by Hearst and Comcast in 1992.

"We thought at first we could use a lot of our WCVB programming," Balboni recalled. "It turned out that what our cable partners wanted was mostly original programming. Over time we learned that you've got to create original news and original value in order to get cable carriage. And without that carriage, you're nothing. Distribution is our lifeblood."

Back then, there were many more cable entities to deal with and he had to travel from town to town pitching the channel. Even today, NECN deals not only with the five major cable companies, but also several smaller cable companies across six states.

According to Balboni, with the exception of the full year recession of 2001, the cable channel has been in the black since 1998. It's won Peabody and DuPont Awards and recently added the Radio-Television News Directors Association's prestigious national Edward R. Murrow award—the only cable network to win a Murrow this year, he noted.

Longtime Boston anchor Curtis, who, as a WCVB-TV anchor and now NECN host, goes back more than 25 years marvels that Balboni "started this place. He's nurtured it, supported it, and

made it successful. And news guys don't always make good business guys."

And, Curtis said, Balboni remains a newsman. "Phil is very hands-on. Hardly a week goes by he doesn't make some comment on the program I do—and it's not always flattering. He's always around with suggestions about topics or guests."

Balboni's future wasn't always as clear. When he came home from Vietnam in 1966, where he was an officer in Army Intelligence, he was anxious to get on with the rest of his life, but uncertain where to start. In France, where he had enrolled at the Sorbonne, he gave some thought to international relations. He also considered journalism.

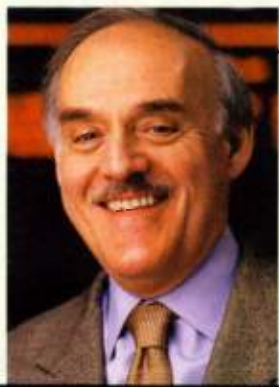
At the Benjamin Franklin Library in Paris, Balboni went through an old *Editor & Publisher* yearbook and sent off 30 letters of inquiry to American newspapers, which produced a few responses and an offer from the *Delta Democrat-Times* in Greenville, Miss. When he returned to the states, Balboni dropped in on two of the other newspapers that had indicated interest and ended up as a general assignment reporter on the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Balboni's first job in television was researching editorials for WCVB-TV. He joined the storied station shortly after the infamous and protracted battle over the FCC's revocation of the *Herald-Traveler's* license to operate the station and the transfer to locally-owned Boston Broadcasters.

The station's editorial board chairman was well-known Harvard historian Oscar Handlin, whom Balboni remembered as "brilliant and irascible." He likens the meetings determining the station's editorial policy to those of a great debating society and he laments their lost practice in local television. "Working at

WCVB was like starting at the top," Balboni said, "although it took years before we realized how special it was."—Dan Trigoboff

## Phil Balboni

President and Founder,  
New England Cable  
NewsB. Feb. 15, 1943, Norwood,  
Mass.

## EDUCATION

BA, Boston College, 1964;  
Certificate in French Language  
and Civilization, The  
Sorbonne, Paris, 1967; Ford  
Foundation Fellow, Graduate  
School of Journalism  
Columbia University, 1971

## EMPLOYMENT

Reporter, *The Richmond (Va.)  
Times-Dispatch*, Richmond,  
1967-1968; editor, correspon-  
dent, *United Press  
International*, Boston, 1968-  
1970; editorial director, direc-  
tor of public affairs, vice pres-  
ident and news director  
WCVB(TV) Boston, 1972-  
1990; special assistant to  
Hearst Corp. President and  
CEO, New York, 1990-1994;  
present position since 1994.

## PERSONAL

m. Elizabeth Houghteling,  
March 20, 1988; children.  
Jessica (30), Philip, (12).

## FATES &amp; FORTUNES

## Broadcast TV

**PAM SCHOEN**, on-air writer/producer, KTLA(TV) Los Angeles, promoted to on-air senior producer.

**DEVIN HORENSTEIN**, account executive, Blair Television, Miami, promoted to group sales manager, Philadelphia.

**ADAM WEYNE**, local sales manager, WFMY-TV Greensboro, N.C., named general sales manager, KOLD-TV Tucson, Ariz.

**RICHARD LOWDEN**, regional account executive, Comcast Cable, San Francisco, joins KPIX-TV/KBHK-TV San Francisco, as account executive, business development team.

**RICHARD LOWDEN**  
KPIX-TV/KBHK-TV

## Cable TV

At Comcast Cable: **TIM HAGAN**, director, business operations, Comcast Cable, Chattanooga, Tenn., promoted to GM, Comcast's Kentucky systems; **ROSALIE JONES**, assistant VP, human resources and administration, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, joins Comcast Cable, Voorhees, N.J., as area director, human resources, Southern New Jersey.

At Cox Communications, Atlanta: **CATHERINE MITCHELL**, VP/GM, Roanoke system, Virginia, named executive director, loss prevention; **BETH DENNING**, director, sales and distribution, named field marketing director.

**ROSALIE JONES**  
Comcast Cable

## Programming

**SANDY WAX**, senior VP, brand strategy and research, SoapNet, Burbank, Calif., appointed senior VP, program planning, scheduling and acquisitions.

**KENNETH WARUN**, VP/creative director, Game Show Network, Los Angeles, joins Beantown Productions, New York, as senior VP.

At MTV Networks, New York: **LIZ GATELEY**, director, original programming, Lifetime Television, New York, joins as VP, production development; **LISI HARRISON**, director, production development, promoted to senior director.

**JIM RAPSAS**, director, development/executive producer, Discovery Kids, Silver Spring, Md., named VP, program development.

At The Weather Channel: **KATHLEEN LANE**, director, public relations, Atlanta, promoted to VP; **RICK MONIHAN**, senior manager, ad sales, properties/messaging, AOL, New York, promoted to director, pricing and inventory, The Weather Channel Media Solutions, New York.

**KIM WOODS**, director, Western region ad sales, AMC, Los Angeles, promoted to VP.

**ERIN HARVEGO**, corporate marketing manager, Rainbow Sports

**SANDY WAX**  
SoapNet**KENNETH WARUN**  
Beantown Productions

Networks, Jericho, N.Y., named director, marketing and promotion.

**NOAH SOLOMON**, executive assistant to Neil Strum, executive VP, Universal Television Productions, Los Angeles, named manager, business affairs, Universal Network Television.

**JENNIFER ALBRIGHT**, senior account executive, KWBB-TV Beaumont, Texas, joins The WB 100+ Group, Atlanta, as national spot sales manager.





**TIM ETTUS**, litigator, Chadbourne & Parke LLP, New York, joins Hurricane Entertainment, New York, as director, development.

**SHAWN DENNIS**, VP/group head, Global co-branding, MasterCard International, Purchase, N.Y., joins the NFL, New York, as VP, marketing services.

**JENNIFER WILSON**, consultant, Cap Gemini Consulting, New York, joins Varsity Entertainment, New York, as director, business development and client relations.

**STEVE KERR**, former Chicago Bulls NBA player, joins TNT, Atlanta, as an NBA analyst for *All-Star Weekend* and TNT's NBA playoff package.

**ELLIE HIRSCH**, account service representative, Hallmark Channel, New York, joins The Football Network, Baton Rouge, La., as account executive.

#### Journalism

At KPHO-TV Phoenix: **VALERY H. LODATO**, deputy managing editor, *USA Today Live*, McLean, Va., joins as senior executive producer; her husband **MARK J. LODATO**, Washington correspondent, KPIX-TV San Francisco, joins as investigative reporter.

**MICHELLE VALLES**, evening anchor, KTSM-TV El Paso, Texas, joins KXAN-TV Austin in the same capacity.

**ALYCIA LANE**, weekend anchor/reporter, WTVJ(TV) Miami, joins KYW-TV Philadelphia, as anchor.

**ALITA GUILLEN**, night reporter, WBBM-TV Chicago, promoted to weekend morning anchor.

**TERRI GRUCA**, anchor/consumer reporter, WSPA-TV Spartanburg, S.C., joins WCCO-TV Minneapolis, as weekend evening anchor/consumer reporter.

**CHRISTINE HAAS**, weekend anchor/reporter, KARE(TV) Minneapolis, joins KVUE-TV Austin, as primary anchor.

**JEWNA COOPER**, weekend morning anchor/reporter, KXAN-TV Austin, Texas, joins WAGA(TV) Atlanta, as general assignment reporter.

**CHRIS MARTINEZ**, general assignment reporter, Central Florida News Channel, Orlando, Fla., joins WFTS(TV) Tampa, Fla., as reporter.

**RYAN BAKER**, Sunday sports anchor, WKMG-TV Orlando, Fla., joins WMAQ-TV Chicago, as weekend sports anchor.

**DOUG KAMMERER**, morning meteorologist, WOFL-TV Orlando, joins WCAU-TV Philadelphia, in as evening meteorologist.

**MEGAN HENDERSON**, co-anchor, *Good Day Utah*, KSTU(TV) Salt Lake City, joins KDFW(TV) Dallas, as co-anchor, *Good Day*.

#### Advertising/Marketing/PR

**JEANELL BOOMER**, assistant account executive, Magnet Communications, New York, joins DKB and Partners, Morristown, N.J., as senior account executive.

#### Radio

At KABC(AM) Los Angeles: **ELSTON**

**BUTLER**, account executive, Radio Disney and KABC(AM) promoted to local sales manager, KABC(AM); **BERNARD PENDERGRASS**, executive producer, *The Ken & Company Morning Show with Ken Minyard and Dan Avey*, named assistant program director for the station.

At Katz Radio: **LAURA FERNANDES**, account executive, Los Angeles, promoted to senior account executive; **KATIE IAMELE**, account executive, New

York, promoted to senior account executive.

**MICHAEL SCHULTE**, account executive, Clear Channel Radio Sales, Chicago, named senior account executive.

#### Technology

**ROB TARTRE**, global account executive, i2 Technologies Inc., Dallas, joins Broadband Services Inc., Highlands Ranch, Co., as senior VP, sales.

**DELWIN L. BOTHOF**, consultant,

Strategic Media Group, Montclair, N.J., joins Broadwing Communications Inc., Austin, Texas, as strategic consultant.

#### Satellite

At Sirius, New York: **JOEL SALKOWITZ**, format director/brand manager, Clear Channel Communications, New York, joins as VP, programming operations; **STEVE BLATTER**, VP, Big City Radio, New York, VP, music programming.

**MARY SALIH**, director/European sales manager, Vyvx Broadband Media Services, Tulsa, Okla., joins GlobeCast America, New York, as director, broadcast sales.

#### WHAT'S YOUR FATE?

Send it to Llanor Alleyne, editorial assistant, BROADCASTING & CABLE (e-mail: palleyne@reedbusiness; fax: 646-746-7028; mail: 360 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010).

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## EDITORIALS

BROADCASTING &amp; CABLE COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

# The Other Steel-Toed Boot

The cable industry is now forewarned. The confluence of re-regulation activists Jeff Chester, Mark Cooper and Andy Schwartzman last week at a press conference is a sure sign that the cable ownership issue is heating up. If some in that industry took secret satisfaction from the trials and tribulations at the NAB, which faced an unexpected wave, make that a tsunami, of opposition to long-contemplated rule changes, prepare to seek higher ground.

Cable was being fitted for a jacket with a target on its back last week as a familiar litany of its alleged offenses were ticked off before a sizable press contingent and a C-SPAN audience. That press event, organized by U.S. Public Interest Research Group had a sense of déjà vu about it. The room was different, but the anti-Powell, anti-industry rhetoric was similar to that of a press conference some three months ago. At that gathering, the Consumers Union and the Consumer Federation of America threatened that June 2 would be "only the beginning" or the broadcast-ownership rule battle. Then the deluge.

Don't be surprised if e-mails start flooding the FCC from "average citizens" asking that the commission restore the cap on cable subscribers, mandate ISP access, ask that PUC's and local franchising authorities be given wide ranging regulatory powers, and demand seats on a cable operator's board or enough money to give access channels *West Wing*-type production values. Prepare to be amazed at the "average citizen's" sudden command of a la carte tiering, leased-access

rates and more. Cable had best have its counter-arguments ready and its lobbying ducks in a row.

## Lights Out for Bonzo

Back in 1991, the FCC modified its political broadcasting rules to restore the common sense stripped from them in the FCC's 1976 *Bedtime for Bonzo* ruling, when the FCC held that old Ronald Reagan movies triggered broadcaster obligations to provide time to other candidates. The 1991 commission narrowed the equal opportunities provision to appearances authorized by the candidate after he or she had become a candidate. But by 1994, a new commission, this one headed by Reed Hundt, had put *Bonzo* back in business. Fast forward to last week and California, which has more fruitcakes than a dumpster on Dec. 26 and now has twice as many gubernatorial candidates as counties. With most of those candidates angling for publicity and many of them out for mischief, *Bonzo* is taking on the proportions of King Kong. We hope the spotlight exposes its absurdity, not to mention inequity. Since the rule doesn't apply to cable, *Terminator* marathons could abound on TNT without triggering any obligations, but let a Gary Coleman *Love Boat* guest slip past on a TV station and 135 candidates could come knocking, stop watch in one hand and tin cup in the other. It's past time to put *Bonzo* to bed for good.



## AIRTIME

GUEST COMMENTARY

# We Have Our Radios. Now What?

Approaching the second anniversary of Sept. 11, one item remains at the top of every checklist for emergency readiness: The battery-operated radio, ever ready to transmit information in times of crisis. Whether we take our cues from the Department of Homeland Security or our next-door neighbor, the radio (we are told) is an indispensable safety device.

Ideally, radio is a great deal more. It is ubiquitous, timely, distinctive, dependable. At its best it presents the news in deeper context, rendering current events comprehensible and relevant. Radio provokes. It entertains. It offers comfort and companionship in difficult times.

But the reality is lamentably different. Recent consolidation has led to homogenized programming that in many communities leaves public radio as the only local voice.

Earlier this year the Columbia space shuttle provided a sobering example. As WNYC-FM New York reported in *On the Media*, a series we produce for National Public Radio, news of the tragedy was nonexistent on thousands of commercial radio stations nationwide. Instead, listeners heard the same old song: automated programming taken straight from the satellite. Some remote-run stations were able to switch to a centralized news feed for the breaking story. But many don't have that capacity, or don't use it.

The disappearance of radio news—or even live hosts who can read an emergency bulletin—started in the 1980s when stations were liberated from public service obligations. But the Telecommunications Act of 1996 changed everything. While there are benefits to consolidation, these huge national con-



**Radio is timely, distinctive and dependable. But it is being threatened.**

**LAURA WALKER,**  
WNYC-AM-FM

glomerates have no incentive to invest in the production of local news or programs.

As listeners here is what we should demand:

- Commercial broadcasters must participate in creating an informed citizenry, whether or not the FCC requires them to. In a style that works for their specific format and audience, they should make a consistent commitment to news programming and to local concerns.
- Our federal government must recognize that consolidation has ill served the free exchange of information. As FCC Chairman Michael Powell himself has noted, "the public interest is about promoting diversity, localism, and competition." Citizens and Congress should hold to that wise objective. At the same time, since in-depth news will never be a priority for most commercial broadcasters, government should unstintingly invest in the essential public service performed by public radio.
- As for public radio, we have a greater responsibility than ever. We can and should be human,

contextual and engaging—the antithesis to homogenize, automated broadcasting. We need to be even more deeply engaged in our communities, voice more divergent views, inspire reflection, stimulate civic action, and express the inexpressible through music, stories and the arts.

Across the country, the radio is on. In these anxious and politically charged times, let's make sure it is playing what the public needs to hear.

*Laura Walker is president and chief executive officer of New York Public Radio, WNYC-AM-FM. This column was written before last Thursday's blackout.*



## OPEN MIKE

### Missing the Real News

Editor: I agree with your commentary of Aug. 4, "TV's Big Assist." The last few years we have been so consumed with the sensationalism of the sexual prowling of people in the public eye that we have become distracted from the people who are trying hard not to be noticed—those who train in our country to fly planes, who set up headquarters in our neighborhoods, who travel in and out of the country undetected. They know that the media are their allies because they distract the American public.

Our government officials should be keeping us abreast of the wars. They should be having press conferences, but instead they are wiping their brows with a sigh of relief that the cameras are focused on something else. While America is waiting to see what happens to Kobe being caught with his pants down, we better make sure that our pants are pulled up, zipped and tightly buckled.

**CAROL MANGIN,**  
WCCB(TV) Charlotte, N.C.



## TWO CENTS



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**RICH CRONIN,** as reported  
by Joal Ryan, E! Online.

"I normally prefer not to be out of the country on vacation when I'm sued. However, from everything I know about law regarding satire, I'm not worried."

Humorist **AL FRANKEN,**

vacationing in Italy, responding to Fox News Channel lawsuit against him for the use of the phrase "fair and balanced."



"It is extraordinary that one of the largest media corporations would take such action. In trying to suppress Al Franken's book, News Corp. is undermining the First Amendment principles that protect all media, guaranteeing a free, open and vigorous debate of public issues. The attempt to keep the public from reading Franken's message is un-American and runs contrary to everything this country stands for."

A statement from **DUTTON PUBLISHING,**  
publisher of Al Franken's *Lies*.

"You guys have your job to do and it's an important job. I sometimes wish you did it better—but then a lot of people wish I did my job better."

**TOM CLANCY** on journalists,  
from an interview in *Newsweek*.

### WE LIKE LETTERS

If you have comments on anything that appears on these pages and would like to share them with other readers, send them to Harry A. Jessell, editor in chief (e-mail: [hjessell@reedbusiness.com](mailto:hjessell@reedbusiness.com), fax: 646-746-7028 or mail: BROADCASTING & CABLE, 360 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010).

**HARRY A. JESSELL**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

# God Bless AM Radio

Maligned and forgotten, it proved its value last week

Of the electronic media, AM radio is the most neglected. It was the first, the progenitor of TV, FM, cable TV, satellite TV, VCRs, DVD and the Internet. For three decades, from 1920 to about 1950, it was king. But sometime in the 1950s, radio lost electronic supremacy to TV. And then in the 1970s, AM fell behind FM. A lot of folks don't bother with AM at all anymore.

But last Thursday and Friday, at least in New York City, AM was on top of the heap. When the power went out on a hot summer afternoon at 4:13 last Thursday, what you needed were a bottle of water and a battery-powered portable radio with an AM tuner. Fortunately, I had both. Actually, Tad Smith, one of our corporate executives had the radio, but he held it out and passed it around so that all could hear the news.

It was the only way folks tumbling out of our building at 26th and Park Ave. had of knowing what was going on after the lights and computer flickered off.

(By the way, for AM's temporary return to eminence, Smith's radio was oddly suited. It was new model, but built to look like an AM-only transistor of the early 1960s. In fact, as a radio from that time might, its plastic housing proudly proclaimed that it was "Transistor"—then the state of the art.)

Of course, Smith's radio had an FM tuner as all radios must these days, but we kept it on AM. It was an AM day.

As everyone kinda knows instinctively, AM is where you go when the power goes out. After it lost the fidelity war with FM, AM reinvented itself around news and talk. If you are lucky, you live in a town where one of the AM stations still has reporters on the street and takes local news seriously. New York is fortunate to have several.

All Thursday night and into Friday, I stuck to WCBS, Infinity's all-news station at 880 Khz. It had reporters scattered throughout Manhattan and one circling overhead in a helicopter. None had much to say, but all provided reassurance that things in Man-

hattan were not unraveling, that people were behaving themselves and, without actually saying so, that everything would be all right in the end.

AM has some inherent disadvantages to FM. Not only does AM sound worse, it is susceptible to noisy interference from lightning and electrical devices of all kinds. You don't want to

another ended, especially at night when AM signals tend to go wild.

For all that, AM still has some wonderful qualities. In every market, there are still a handful of stations with the juice and the antennas to lay down a signal powerful enough to pop from any radio, no matter how cheaply built. And these signals know how to propagate, how to get into every nook and cranny, and cover entire metropolitan areas seamlessly.

AM ain't what she used to be, but it's still an important role player and keeping the band strong and healthy is, I think, a matter of national security. AM radios are cheap and ubiquitous and they require little power. Should things really go bad in this country, AM is the most surest way of reaching the citizenry. A handful of the old clear-channel stations can cover the entire nation. And in a pinch you can build a receiver with a handful of wire and some headphones. You don't even need batteries.

They say that after the apocalypse, after mankind finally destroys itself in a nuclear holocaust, the hardest species—the cockroach—will inherent the earth. If so, I know what they will be listening to.

Even with AM, it was a trying few days in New York. We tried to return to work on Friday morning, after a long night, but power wasn't restored until Friday night. That meant the entire crew had to come in on Saturday and work 10 hours (without air conditioning) to complete the job. That you are reading this is testimony that we did.

It was an extraordinary effort. For it, I'd like to thank our reporters and editors, including those in Washington and Los Angeles who never missed a beat and kept on reporting. I'd also like to thank the support troops, the building managers and the IT and production staffers, and our printer. They too went out of their way to make this magazine happen.

Jessell may be reached at  
[hjessell@reedbusiness.com](mailto:hjessell@reedbusiness.com)



drive near the power lines during a key moment in the ball game.

The medium has been badly mistreated over the years. When radio makers noticed that listeners were migrating to FM, they accelerated the march by putting more money into the FM tuners and less into the AM. Some of the AM tuners are so bad you wonder why the manufacturers still bother. This is especially true of the tuners built into CD and tape players and those little sports radios for joggers.

The FCC has also damaged AM. For years, it had a policy of cramming as many stations into the band as it could until it practically collapse under its own weight. After a while, it was tough to find where one station began and

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# No Lights! Camera! Action!

Continued from page 1

operated sets could see any television. The blackout, said to be the largest in U.S. history, affected some 50 million people, and most of them got their news from radio, if at all, or from passersby. Literally and figuratively, everybody else was in the dark.

WXYZ(TV) Detroit's veteran News Director Bill Carey, coincidentally, was vacationing in New York. In the interim, Assistant News Director Dave Manney realized he was "in uncharted waters when we were trying to keep the generator alive. It was redlining. There was a garden hose connected by a rubber band cooling the generator. It worked." At one time the station was carrying a microwave picture from a press conference but audio from a cell phone.

## ANCHORS WEIGH IN

At the network level, the A-Team was in place, especially mindful after the horrors of 9/11. CBS's Dan Rather anchored from New York. ABC had backup power but de-

to the studio, sat in the half-darkened newsroom and related the story of passing groups of people gathered in the park, huddled around a tiny battery-powered radio like a campfire, then passing it on to the next group.

ABC correspondent Robert Krulwich phoned in from a sliver of Long Island to point out that one of the notable effects on a small town there was that a convenience store clerk was having to add everything up in her head, which turned the run on candles and flashlights into a crawl.

CNN's Maria Hinojosa was describing the blackout scene by from a Manhattan street when she was forced off the pay phone by pedestrians waiting to make calls.

The blackout tested the grit and ingenuity of TV stations and their staffs. WABC-TV New York said the outage caused "major league" problems, and the station operated through creative uses of extension chords, and was relaying signals "from handheld two-way radios to a van to a helicopter" and eventually, to its audience.

In Cleveland, WKYC-TV's Stanley

backup power kicked in. WJBK's Ron Savage said that one of the biggest difficulties reporting from the field was that, due to the lack of pump power, "there were no men's rooms." In the studio, with its backup power—and functioning toilets—"they were living like kings," he joked.

## CABLE CONNECTIONS

Cable operators throughout the affected areas scrambled to bring services back to viewers, with the challenge being keeping in touch with utilities to make sure MSO efforts were focused on areas that were getting juice.

Comcast viewers in northern New Jersey reported no problems receiving the MSO's signals once power returned on Thursday but viewers and Comcast operators in Michigan weren't as lucky as the challenge of returning power proved much more daunting. Jenni Moyer, Comcast spokeswoman, said that as of late Friday there were still sporadic cable and broadband subscribers still without service. Subscribers with phone service also had difficulties getting service once



Cupid star Lisa Shannon's date was ruined.

## It Was a Light Schedule, Anyway

Network news outlets managed to stay on the air during Thursday's power outage via back-up generators, but production for several network shows located in the Big Apple was delayed. By contrast, syndicated fare originating in the city avoided similar troubles, helped by the TV's-dead-in-August timing.

NBC went ahead with Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*'s fab five makeover of *Tonight Show* host Jay Leno and revealed Jay's new look on Friday night as planned. But to allow East Coasters to see the show, NBC will repeat both *Tonight Show* episodes on Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 25 and 26.

CBS had to suspend taping on reality show *Cupid*, while star Lisa Shannon was on a date with one of her eight remaining suitors at a Times Square restaurant.

The outage in Canada also affected Hollywood, with taping on Fox's *Wonderfalls*, scheduled for mid-season, halted on site in Toronto. Four soap operas—ABC's *All My Children* and *One Life to Live* and CBS's *As the World Turns* and *Guiding Light*—had to stop taping Thursday night. Both ABC shows were back to work in their studios in New York's Upper West Side on Friday with power restored, while a CBS spokesman was unsure when the two CBS soaps would get back to work.

ABC's *Hope and Faith*, a new sitcom for fall, had to interrupt taping in New York after the outage, and stars Faith Ford and Kelly Ripa both had to walk home over New York bridges with the rest of the Manhattan masses.

Syndicated shows originating out of New York were little affected by the outages.

*Live with Regis & Kelly*, which airs live from New York, was done taping Thursday before the blackout. The show is pretaped on Friday's. It also begins a regularly scheduled two-week hiatus starting today. *Maury*, which also originates in New York, was on vacation, scheduled to resume taping this week. *Crossing Over with John Edward*, another New Yorker, was in production Thursday, but had wrapped taping and was not slated to tape Friday.—Paige Albinak and John Eggerton.



## New York City stations battled a lack of electricity and millions of people to cover the blackout.

cided to throw the anchoring to Ted Koppel from the still powered-up Washington bureau. ABC's Peter Jennings phoned in radio reports from his home outside the also-darkened Ottawa, where he was on vacation. Elizabeth Vargas, took over in New York at 10 p.m. that night.

CNN was on the story from soon after the power went out at about 4:15 p.m. ET. At first, John King anchored from Washington, but later the news network was anchored from its Atlanta headquarters. And Fox News Channel barely missed a beat—it had a brief snafu getting its signal out to cable operators—but had sufficient backup power. (See separate story)

Thom Bird, executive producer for news specials and event coverage at Fox News said that its still-working electronic ticker and loudspeakers outside the network's building on 48th Street were able to keep the gathering crowd of New Yorkers informed.

ABC's Charles Gibson, vacationing on Cape Cod, was able to fly back part of the way and drove the rest to do an extended *Good Morning America* Friday morning that went live across the country.

A report from ABC's Diane Sawyer suggested some New Yorkers were tapping into radio's much-touted localism. Sawyer, clad in her husband's shirt and having just walked through the city to get

lucked out: "Fortunately we'd installed a two-way radio system just this week. If we were relying strictly on cell phones we would have been in bad shape."

The blackout gave Cleveland's ABC affiliate, WEWS(TV), its share of difficulties. "After 9/11 you would think you're prepared for everything," said News Director Lynn Heider. "Even our backup generators failed for a few minutes." In addition, the studio was lit by a few standup lights and had only one of its live-shot receivers working. But the station was able to go live from some key locations around town, Heider said, and "somehow we managed. Our talent made up the difference."

## COVERING MOTOWN

In Detroit, Mo Gordon, executive producer of operations for WDIV(TV), Post-Newsweek's NBC Detroit affiliate, reported that the station's backup power kicked in immediately. Once they realized the blackout went well beyond Detroit, the station took MSNBC's feed for the first 20 minutes or so and checked out their own power and equipment. Following that, Gordon said, the station's signal was simulcast on some local radio stations.

Fox's WJBK(TV) Detroit News Director Dana McDaniel said his station went down for about five minutes before the

power was out. As of Saturday nearly 600,000 Michigan residents were still without power and full coverage was not expected until Sunday.

Cox had two areas affected: Connecticut and Cleveland. Ellen East, Cox vice president, communications and investor relations, said the outage in Cleveland was limited in its effect, with viewers up and running once power kicked back on. Viewers in Meridian and Southington also had limited problems due to 60 backup generators that were in place to ensure phone service. Six of the generators needed to be manually restarted but, with those exceptions, cable, phone and broadband services were unaffected, provided the subscriber had the juice to power a TV, computer or phone.

Not surprisingly, problems with collecting data in multiple cities has created "indefinite delays" in the release of prime time network Nielsen ratings from Aug. 14 and beyond. If coverage of a syndicated show drops by more than 10%, as it most surely will, the ratings won't count in season averaging.

Nielsen said the data will be released Aug. 18 or, "as soon as it becomes available," but a source said Nielsen hasn't decided whether to publish the ratings with an asterisk, or to withhold them entirely. ■

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