Houses divided: White vs Representatives over LPFM
Bill Clinton has threatened to veto any Congressional attempt to put the brakes on the FCC's proposed LPFM service. Stay tuned.

Kennard lectures NAB 2000 on its anti-LPFM stance
Fireworks come early as June pacing skyrockets
Fee fall? FCC Phone co. increase may benefit broadcasters
Musicam going into StarGuide with Infinity backing
Who wants to marry a multimillion dollar syndicator?
BuyMedia: To market, to market to buy a Marketron
WW1 is on the spot with Internet schedule and delivery system
Loot suit: Interep tries to skin the Katz
FCC to enforce toothless EEO rules despite pending appeal
Redstone of Blackrock in love with radio
Internet will not put radio on the Fritts

Will Viacom have to upend UPN?
Ackerley goes on small market buying spree
Doings at Fox, BroadcastAMERICA.com, UK

Star power: KTAO-FM powers up with solar

Clear Channel builds London bridge; Journal shows its fiber

Multicultural shock? Ethnics swap in two major markets
Mega Media and Multicultural Broadcasting are doing a deal which leaves each in a major market and allows each to add one—the markets are Washington and NYC.
KFRE Fresno: The price is right(ly filed at the FCC)
Bunny money builds Dubuque duo
De Soto station liberated by Radio Free Texas
Cumulus swap lets Clear Channel choo choo into Chattanooga

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LPFM skirmish becomes a war

President Bill Clinton jumped into the battle over Low-Power FM last week (4/12), threatening a veto if the Radio Broadcasting Preservation Act (HR 3439) makes it to his desk. The White House weighed in on the issue on the eve of an expected House vote on the bill which would sharply curtail the FCC’s LPFM plan. At RBR’s 4/13 deadline, the measure was on the House’s tentative calendar, but had not yet been considered. (Please check www.rbr.com for late-breaking details).

“The Administration supports efforts to create a new class of microradio licenses that allow nonprofit groups like schools and churches to reach their local communities over the airwaves,” the White House statement said. “At a time of increased concern about diversity in broadcasting and broadcast ownership, it is important to make sure that access to the airwaves is facilitated.”

The Clinton Administration noted that there are concerns about possible interference to existing stations, but insisted that any such problem “will be promptly and fairly resolved by the FCC.”—JM

Kennard pushes LPFM at NAB 2000

The FCC boss had one question on his mind last week when he addressed attendees of the NAB 2000 Convention in Las Vegas: “Why in the midst of all this opportunity for broadcasters have you chosen to muster your considerable resources in Washington and around the country to deny churches and schools and community-based organizations just a little piece of the broadcast pie?”

Bill Kennard, feeling the heat rise from Capitol Hill as the full House considered a bill to reduce the number of LPFM stations able to take to the airwaves, used the forum to make a last minute plea with broadcasters to support his LPFM radio service and ignore calls that LPFM would cause interference to existing stations.

“Interference is and has always been a solvable problem,” he said. “The FCC has credibility in fighting interference. I have shut down more pirates than any chairman in the history of the agency, yet you think that the Commission would create an interference nightmare that the agency would be responsible for curing.”

“What this is about is fear of new entrants in the market,” he added. “It is no different from the battles to kill low-power TV, cable TV, satellite radio and satellite television.”

Kennard also took a minute during his speech to encourage broadcasters to embrace the inevitable switch to digital. “I believe, and many of my colleagues in government believe, that digital technology is the biggest opportunity for broadcasters in a generation.”

Digital radio, he announced, could attract additional listeners by emulating benefits of the Internet. “When I listen to a story on National Public Radio that has already been broadcast, I have to go to the NPR web site. Why can’t that technology be incorporated into my receiver, so that I can store and retrieve and show I want when I want it,” said Kennard. “Digital radio technology will make it real for millions of Americans in the next few years.”—TS
StarGuide purchasing Musicam Express interest from Infinity

StarGuide Digital Networks is buying the rest of digital delivery company Musicam Express (50%), we reported 4/11, from Infinity (N:INF) and Westwood One (N:WON). In exchange, Infinity and Westwood get an equity position in StarGuide in the deal.

StarGuide did have a joint venture in Musicam with Infinity/Westwood—StarGuide’s store and forward technology that Infinity Westwood were the first to adopt is used by Musicam. CBS CFO Farid Suleman may join the StarGuide board, according to RBR sources. Scott Ginsburg remains Chairman. Other major names in the broadcasting biz may come in as equity partners.

“We are delighted to consolidate ownership and control of Musicam within StarGuide, and we are equally pleased that Musicam’s long-time joint venture partners Infinity and Westwood One, will now participate in the growth of both Musicam and StarGuide as StarGuide shareholders,” says Ginsburg.

Two weeks ago on rbr.com, we told you that StarGuide and DG are on the path to a merger (RBR 4/10, p.3).—CM

Superadio on the verge of a sale

We told you 4/13 on rbr.com: Syndicator Superadio may announce a merger soon. A deal is “rounding third base,” according to RBR sources, who add among the latest companies looking at Superadio’s offering include Media America, Premiere, Westwood One and Radio One. Some have placed bids, and the process is coming to a head. Two nets asked would not offer comment on record.

“There have been several companies that have approached [them]. Right now, Superadio is taking a look at each of the companies to see what offer is the best,” the sources say.

“We’ve been approached by many people with all kinds of offers, and at this point in time, we’ve rejected every single one. Basically, our general partner, John Garabedian (“Open House Party” host) has rejected every single offer over the last three years,” Superadio President Gary Bernstein said.

Superadio could be an attractive acquisition in that it is profitable and has 25 different radio programs, many cleared in the top markets. They include “Open House Party,” Russ Parr and the “Mixx” shows. Superadio syndicates five programs in NYC alone.—CM

BuyMedia.com buys Marketron

BuyMedia.com, the service that allows media buyers to purchase premium advertising, has acquired Marketron, a software solutions provider to radio and TV stations. According to Mike Jackson, CEO/Founder. BuyMedia.com, “In order for the Internet exchange to operate effectively and efficiently, the needs of both buyer and seller must be met. By streamlining the process of researching, negotiating and placing broadcast advertising orders, BuyMedia has quickly become a media buying industry standard. Acquiring Marketron—the most widely adopted industry software provider—will enable BuyMedia.com to deliver similar gains in efficiency to stations.”

Jerry Cronin, President, Marketron, agrees with Jackson. “There is a real need in the media industry to create a common language among buyers and sellers. BuyMedia.com has already done that with the buyers and the integration of Marketron’s products with BuyMedia.com’s Internet infrastructure is the step that closes the loop with the stations.”

More than 2,200 media buyers are using BuyMedia as a sales channel. BuyMedia currently sees about $12M a day in broadcast orders. About 750 stations employ Marketron’s software solutions.—KM

Westwood launches online spot/affidavit system

Launched 4/11: Using the Internet, Westwood One (N:WON) is speeding up spot schedule and delivery to affiliates with “The Westwood One Online Commercial Schedule and Affidavit System.” Saving paper and expenses, the system makes it easier and faster for affiliates to provide clearance reporting and will provide program schedules for Sports, Talk, music programming and advertiser summaries.

“It’s going to cut down the whole process of getting affidavits back and forth from stations by half,” Westwood CEO Joel Hollander tells RBR. “Already, we have 1,000 stations signed up. We believe we will have most signed on soon.”

The system could help agencies and advertisers in their buying process as well. It might be able to speed up other post-buys for advertisers, by getting information quicker and processing it quicker on the network end.—CM

Regulatory fees going down in 2000?

Broadcasters may actually get a break in fiscal year 2000. While Congress has required the FCC to collect more than $185.7M through regulatory fees, 7.6% more than was collected in FY 1999, the federal agency has proposed individual fees that are approximately $25 cheaper than those collected last year (RBR 6/28/99, p. 4). According to one FCC official, that decrease could be possible because fees “may be higher in other categories,” such as wireless and telephone industries, to make up the monetary difference.—TS

FY 2000 Radio Station Regulatory Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Served</th>
<th>AM Class A</th>
<th>AM Class B</th>
<th>AM Class C</th>
<th>AM Class D</th>
<th>FM Class A, B1 &amp; C3</th>
<th>FM Class B, C, C1 &amp; C2</th>
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Source: FCC
**RBR News Briefs**

**Joyner launching portal**
While ABC Radio Networks morning drive star Tom Joyner made his acceptance speech after being inducted into the NAB Hall of Fame yesterday, he announced "BlackAmericaWeb.com," an Internet portal or on-ramp for the African-American community. News, entertainment and shopping will be the initial offerings. Press releases are going out next week and the site is expected to launch soon.—CM

**WUBE fires Fox for Internet sting**
AMFM's WUBE-FM Cincinnati GM John Rohm has decided to fire (4/11) morning drive jock Allen Pruett, a.k.a Jim Fox, after his arrest 4/8. Pruett, 51, was the victim of an Internet sting by the Xenia, OH police department. Detectives pretended to be a 14-year-old girl (chat name “Curious and Cute”) in an online chat room for days. After numerous exchanges with Pruett, he allegedly solicited a meeting for sex. Pruett pled no contest and got a suspended 30-day jail term, five years probation and a mental health evaluation.—CM

**Mike Siegel chosen as replacement for Bell**
Premiere President/COO Kraig Kitchin gave us his five replacement considerations for Art Bell last week (RBR 4/10, p.3); Mike Siegel is the choice for Coast to Coast AM weekdays, beginning 4/26-27; WGST Atlanta host Ian Punnett is the choice for Dreamland Sunday nights; Dreamland Saturday nights will include a variety of rotating hosts including KOMO Seattle host Peter Weissbach. Kitchin traveled to Pahrump, Nevada last week for a photo shoot with Bell and Siegel.—CM

**NBC and United Stations to launch Dobbs vignettes**
Last October, NBC announced it would be working with former CNN EVP and President of CNNfn President Lou Dobbs to launch financial news radio reports on the radio. That has come together and will launch with United Stations Radio Network for syndication 7/10. Targeting the News-Talk and Adult music formats, "The Lou Dobbs NBC Financial Report" is three daily (morning drive, midday and afternoon drive) vignettes covering market trends, the economy, and financial news. The show will be staffed completely at United Stations.—CM

**Interep sues Katz and Clear Channel**
"It makes no sense for us to continue to pay for stations that we don't have anymore," says Ralph Guild, Chairman, Interep, commenting on Interep's $23M lawsuit against Katz Communications and Clear Channel Communications (N:CCU). Guild explains that Interep continues to pay "buyout" to Katz for 300 stations they no longer represent. Buyouts are negotiated settlements of the contract damages resulting from the termination of a representation agreement whereby the new rep agrees to pay to the fired rep, on behalf of the station, the station's contract damages.

Interep agreed in 1996 to assume the $23M buyout in exchange for the contract to represent the previously Katz-represented Clear Channel stations. But with the Clear Channel/AMFM merger announced last October, those stations were reassigned to Katz. Interep alleges that no buyout was offered to them and that Katz still expects fulfillment of the $23M buyout obligation. Katz Radio Group President, Stu Olds, declined comment since the case is pending.—KM

**FCC moves ahead with EEO rules despite protests**
The FCC has shot down a petition by all 50 state broadcasters associations, requesting the Commission to temporarily stop its EEO regulations.

In their joint petition, the organizations asked the FCC to stay the new broadcast EEO rules until an appeals court rules on their appeal. The revised "outreach" rules are expected to go into effect this week.

The FCC has ruled that, lacking a federal court order, it will not halt enforcement of the rules. "Suspension of the rules will likely result in some potential job candidates not having notice of job openings, and being foreclosed from job opportunities of which they are unaware," reasoned the FCC in its decision.

The associations had argued that the rules encourage a "racial and gender based employment program." According to the Commission, the new rules do not require a station's staff to reflect the racial composition of its community.—TS

**Redstone praises radio efficiency**
With Viacom (N:VIA) about to get back into radio in a big way with its pending acquisition of CBS (N:CBS)/Infinity (N:INF), Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone noted in his NAB 2000 keynote address (4/10) just how strong a force radio continues to be for advertisers: "Speaking of radio: how ironic is it that an 80-year-old technology would play such a key role in helping to launch the dot-com gold rush? Radio is reaping enormous rewards as young companies realize how cost-effective and efficient it is. In 100% of homes, 100% of cars, 100% of workplaces: radio is a fantastic medium."—JM

**Internet NOT the death of radio, says Fritts**
The NAB's head man last week told attendees of the NAB 2000 Convention in Las Vegas that the Internet should not be looked upon as the enemy of broadcasters.

"The very fact that these high-tech, dot-com companies desire partnerships with broadcasters should tell us something," said Eddie Fritts, CEO/Pres. "What do we have that they don't have? They have investors with money, but they don't have the eyes and ears that broadcasters can deliver...they're connected to the world, but they don't have our connection to the community."

He announced that Internet-related companies find broadcasters attractive because they "fill a need" for localism that the Internet cannot provide. "We can provide a broadcasting platform for the Internet," Fritts said. "The dot-coms and high-tech companies want what broadcasters provide...radio and TV broadcasting can continue to fill" that need in the years ahead.—TS
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$500 million in station revenue this year. That’s powerful stuff.

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Or call 1-800-788-9245. BuyMedia.com. We’re big, and we’re on your side.
Fox hopes to hold onto UPN

Now that Viacom (N:VIA) is the sole-owner of the UPN TV network (RBR 4/10, p. 23), CEO Sumner Redstone is stepping up his lobbying effort to hold onto the second network when Viacom acquires CBS (N:CBS).

"There is no public service argument that could be made that would warrant the death of UPN," Redstone said in a news conference at last week's NAB 2000 Convention in Las Vegas.

Ironically, Viacom/CBS could start another network if it wanted. It is barred from owning both CBS and UPN because both networks were established when Congress passed the 1996 Telecommunications Act. The lawmakers assumed that ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, UPN and WB were all established, stable networks which should not be allowed to combine. In fact, UPN was already in financial trouble then, and its troubles just got worse. Just how bad the situation has gotten is demonstrated by Chris-Craft's willingness to jetison its $200M investment in UPN for $5M.

If the FCC doesn't give Viacom a waiver to own both CBS and UPN, it might just shut down UPN—perhaps following that with the launch of a new UPN-like network. That scenario is so ridiculous that most observers expect the FCC to go along with the waiver.

Ackerley adds in East and West

Clustering doesn’t work quite the same in TV as in radio, but The Ackerley Group (N:AK) is building regional clusters as it adds to its TV group.

In its latest deals, Ackerley is buying WWTI-TV (Ch. 50, ABC) Watertown, NY from Smith Broadcasting Group of Watertown LP. The price was not immediately disclosed. With the addition, Ackerley will have seven stations in its New York cluster. Although all are in smaller markets, Ackerley notes that collectively they are about the same size as the Phoenix or Denver markets.

Out West, Ackerley is also buying KKFX-LPTV (Ch. 11, FOX) Santa Barbara, CA from FOX 11 LLC. Ackerley already owns KCOY-TV (Ch. 12, CBS) Santa Maria, CA. Both cities are part of Nielsen market #113.

Rivals invest in UK project

The Walt Disney Co. (N:DIS) and Time Warner (N:TWX) may be tooth-and-nail competitors in the US, but they’re now partners in the UK. Both media giants are buying stakes in Yes Television Plc, a British pay TV operation. Terms weren't disclosed, but Time Warner is acquiring a 10% stake and Disney 9%. Those stakes will be reduced to 7.5% and 6.8%, respectively, when Yes Television completes a pending IPO. Yes Television is planning to sell 25% of its stock to the public for roughly $306M.

Yes Television is only available in two cities today, with some 300 people subscribing to the trial service. A London test will start later this month and a national rollout is anticipated in the Fall.
Solar radio: K-TAOS

KTAO-FM is the pride of Taos, New Mexico, the “Solar Capital of the World.” Running at 50kw erp (1050w@2,824ft. HAAT), this is certainly the world’s most powerful solar-only radio station, if not the world’s only (we also know of KFMU-FM Steamboat Springs, CO, which is not pure solar at the moment). Owner Brad Hockmeyer and CE Sara Allen launched this brainchild in 1991, atop a 10,800 foot mountain peak outside the city. They had help, for sure, and it was a lot of work. However, the electric bill only reflects the control room downtown, which is slated next to go solar.

Ironically, we scheduled the interview and a week or so later, much of New Mexico was hit with a power outage 3/18 (RBR 3/27, p.4). KTAO was silent only as long as it took to fire up the studio generator.

Not every station can convert to solar, but the ones that can should look into it. Here, Brad and Sara shed some light on the solar solution.

Tell us how the solar idea came up and when?

Hockmeyer: In 1985, I believe it was, we got permission from the FCC to increase our power from 3,000 to 50,000 watts erp. I went to Sara and said that this was terrific. She said, “No, not so fast because where our transmitter was, if we increased the power, all that would do is increase the amount of multipath. If you really want to have this be an added value to the radio station and pick up more listeners, there is only place to put this—on top of Picuris Peak.” I didn’t really know how that was going to happen. Up on top of Picuris Peak, needless to say, there is no power. It is eight miles up one of the toughest roads you’ve ever been on. It is rocky and full of woods.

Allen: The other issue was that it crosses National Forest and historic lands. Everytime you moved earth, you’d have to have an archeologist doing a survey. The power company said it would cost about $200K-$300K in three to five years.

Hockmeyer: At first we went up there with an anemometer that measures wind. At the time, I smoked cigarettes. I would blow a smoke ring and it would just sit there. It was obvious that yes, we do have windy seasons, but for a 365-day transmitter site, wind was not going to work. Then we started thinking about doing it with propane and we realized that we didn’t want to be involved with sticking a big can of propane up in the middle of the woods. We were environmentally oriented as a radio station from the very beginning. Then somebody said, “What about solar power?” So we looked into that and found a guy who told us we could do a turn-key operation for $65K to get the erp at 50,000 watts up on top of Picuris Peak. We also needed to build an earthship, which houses our batteries and our transmitter. It all came in at about $195K. In the summer of 1991 we built this solar array and the earthship that houses the batteries and the transmitter. On Thanksgiving Eve of 1991, there was a 50,000 watt powered radio station in Taos, New Mexico.

How far does the signal reach?

Hockmeyer: At first we went up there with an anemometer that measures wind. At the time, I smoked cigarettes. I would blow a smoke ring and it would just sit there. It was obvious that yes, we do have windy seasons, but for a 365-day transmitter site, wind was not going to work. Then we started thinking about doing it with propane and we realized that we didn’t want to be involved with sticking a big can of propane up in the middle of the woods. We were environmentally oriented as a radio station from the very beginning. Then somebody said, “What about solar power?” So we looked into that and found a guy who told us we could do a turn-key operation for $65K to get the erp at 50,000 watts up on top of Picuris Peak. We also needed to build an earthship, which houses our batteries and our transmitter. It all came in at about $195K. In the summer of 1991 we built this solar array and the earthship that houses the batteries and the transmitter. On Thanksgiving Eve of 1991, there was a 50,000 watt powered radio station in Taos, New Mexico.

How is this system put together and how does it work to power the station? How about the air chain?

Allen: We start with the solar panels, which are Kyocera, the company that bought out Photocomm. Zomeworks out of Albuquerque, I think, did the structural work for the support of the solar panels. Todd Communications, out of Las Vegas, NV did the steelwork. The transmitter shack, which
Hockmeyer: There is a guy here in Taos named Mike Reynolds, who invented what is known as an "Earthship." This guy is well known. It's a unique way of building a house, which is out of recycled materials, including old tires and old beer cans. It's interesting because I was looking at where we were going to put these batteries and this equipment—I was told that we can't have this stuff freezing in the wintertime and we can't have it 120 degrees in the summertime. Mike came and told us that he could guarantee us that it wouldn't go below 40 degrees in the winter or above 90 in the summer. He was right. It is absolutely perfect.

So, the sun heats the solar panels and what?
Allen: The solar panels give us the energy, which we store in batteries. We have a fairly large battery bank up there. It is over 6,000 amp hours. They're industrial forklift-type batteries, lead acid, because you can abuse lead-acid batteries and they will still work, as opposed to some of the newer technology batteries. Photocomm, at the time, designed and built the power distribution panel—that directs the solar power energy into the batteries and then takes the energy we need out of the batteries and distributes it to the equipment. It's a 60 volt nominal DC system. And to keep it as efficient as possible, because we didn't want to use any power to heat or cool the building, is the reason we went to the earthship. In addition, we didn't want to waste power converting it to AC to just convert it back to DC in the equipment again. All of the equipment up there in the airchain is DC—the transmitter, exciter, STL receiver and remote control is all DC.

The solar panels are Kyocera, the solar controller is a proprietary Photocomm (now Kyocera) design and build. The battery bank is Trojan Batteries. The DC-DC converters are Vicor, out of Andover, MA. Our transmitter is QEI model 675T660 with a type 675 exciter. The remote control is a Burk TC-8. The STL is a Moseley PCL 6010 receiver. We are using a Shively 6813 four bay antenna mounted on a Pirod 50 foot self supporting tower. At almost 2,800 feet above average terrain you really don't need too tall of a tower.

How do you keep the steady power output when there are days of clouds, storms or snow?
Allen: We have enough battery back-ups for a good five days. After that, we have to start conserving power. We have to power down, but we've only had one winter where we've run into a problem.

Hockmeyer: When we built the thing back in 1991, in order to figure out how many batteries we were going to need to keep the radio station going, we went over the weather reports for the last 50 years in Northern New Mexico. Based on those weather patterns of sunshine and cloudy weather, we got enough batteries that could keep us going if it was totally black for five days. And so the first winter it worked flawlessly. The second winter we had the cloudiest stretch of weather in 70 years and we were basically caught with our pants down after the five days. We were powering down and going off the air. This was like three weeks worth of just "yuck." We were going off the air at 10:00 o'clock at night. Basically, we had the community rooting for the sun to come out so that they could listen to their radio station. Talk about building loyalty!

What are the deciding factors of being able to go solar or not?
Allen: Of course you have to consider how many days of sunlight you have and how high up you are. Because if you are a 50,000 watt equivalent radio station, you will have to meet that class contour. The lower you get, the more power you have to put out. The more power you have to put out, the more solar panels that you have to have and the larger battery bank that you have to have. The more expensive it also gets for everything. This just
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happens to be a perfect situation. We are up high enough. We have enough solar panels, enough batteries so we can meet our class contour.

But there are certainly plenty of places around the country that this would work.

Allen: Right. A Class A is do-able just about anywhere.

What would you say you are saving a month or a year on electric bills?

Allen: I would say that we are probably saving, currently, close to $1,000 a month on electric.

How long do those batteries last? Have you had to replace them?

Allen: We are probably going to have to replace them sometime within the next five years. They last 15 to 20 years depending on how well they are maintained.

Are you going to convert your control room to solar?

Allen: Yes. Hopefully we can do that soon so that in case of a blackout, we wouldn’t even miss a beat. I have been looking forward to doing that for a long time.

Hockmeyer: We are negotiating with a potential partner. That is really a goal of ours.

It is a little bit premature to get into who it is we are talking to and what level that is at. But, we are working with a partner in other side-programming project that is involved in the solar industry. They’ve come up with a radically new type of solar panel that we want to be the first to be putting into use. I think we are looking in the next couple of years of being completely off the grid.

What do you think about being the world’s most powerful solar station?

Hockmeyer: Not only that, but also we want to be a radio station that does more than plays four songs and then plays four commercials, gives the time and temperature, and then plays another four songs. We do a solar music festival every year. During that, we have two stages, one of which is completely solar-powered. The concept behind that is sure, you could have a solar fair and you might get a couple of hundred people, but you put Big Head Todd and The Monsters and Harry Belafonte on stage, and you are going to get a couple of thousand of people. It is a way to get solar and alternative energy to the masses.

Why does Taos call itself the Solar Capital of the World?

Hockmeyer: In 1997, right before the first solar music festival, I went down to Austin, Texas to see if I could find some bands that would come play and support the concept of solar energy. I got off the plane and walked into the Austin Airport. It said, “Welcome to Austin, Live Music Capital of the World.” So I came back here to Taos and thought "Boy, look at all the sunshine we get and look at all the people doing projects with solar energy. Why can’t we be the solar capital of the world?” So I went to the governor and I went to the mayor and asked them if they would proclaim Taos as the solar capital of the world. They thought it was a great idea. We have proclamations on the wall to prove it.

How long does it take you guys to get up there in the Winter?

Allen: It depends. If there is a snowmobile track already broken up to top, you can be up there in 1/2 hr. Believe it or not, you can go a lot faster on a snowmobile than you can in a truck on a bad road. If it happens to be during bad weather, it can take almost all day to get up there. Many times I’ve left in the morning at 9:00 and we turned around at 3:00 p.m. and still had not made it. What happens is that the terrain is so steep and the snow is so deep, you get the snowmobile stuck. Then you try to snowshoe the rest of the way.

What happens when snow covers up the solar panels? Do you have to go up there and clean it off?

Allen: No, normally it takes two to three hours after the sun comes out and it slides right off the panels. That one winter where it went on for 21 days was awful. I did go up there and I did scrape the panels, because we were trying to get every little bit out of it. If you’ve never scraped solar panels with a plywood board stuck on the end of a 15-ft. 2x4 in snowshoes, I might add, you haven’t lived.

They must be paying you well Sara, I tell you.

Allen: I love my work, let’s leave it at that.
A company in which Clear Channel (N:CCU) is an investor has won a digital radio station license in Great Britain. Switch Digital Ltd., which is owned 42.5% by Clear Channel International and 42.5% by Wireless Group Ltd., won the digital multiplex license for London. Emap Digital Radio Ltd. won the digital license for Leeds. Guardian Media Group's Real Radio Ltd. won the license for South Wales.

The UK is implementing digital radio (Eureka-147, of course) in the VHFF band. Switch Digital Ltd. got the second license for the London area, which will allow it to broadcast eight digital channels around a center frequency of 223.936 MHz (just above US Channel 13, 210-216 MHz), using 10 transmitters in the greater London area. The company plans to begin broadcasting in June and will pay an annual license fee of 8.5K pounds (approx. $13.5K).

In addition to Clear Channel and Wireless Group, minor shareholders in Switch Digital are Ginger Media Group Ltd. and Carphone Warehouse Ltd. The first London digital licensee, CE Digital, plans to begin broadcasting in May. Londoners already receive digital radio from Digital One Ltd., which won a national digital license for the UK.

Fiber drives growth at Journal

You may think of Journal Communications as a media company, but fiber optic telecommunications was its growth vehicle in the past year. Journal’s Norlight Telecommunications Inc. subsidiary saw its revenues grow 23.9% in 1999 to $101.4M. Pre-tax earnings increased 34.3% to $32.5M.

Meanwhile, Journal Broadcast Group weighed in with a 13.7% revenue gain to $130.9M. However, pre-tax earnings declined 18.2% to $27.8M. The four TV stations had a 4% drop in revenues to $69.4M, due to the loss of the previous year’s election and Olympics business. Radio revenues shot up 43.5% to $61.5M, largely due to the acquisition of the former Great Empire group.

Overall, revenues for Journal Communications rose 3.2% to $755.9M and pre-tax earnings rose 12% to $115M. Newspaper publishing is still the company’s biggest revenue generator, providing 39.1% of total revenues. Commercial printing follows at 28.9%, broadcasting 17.2%, telecommunications 13.3% and direct marketing 1.5%.

Although Journal Communications doesn’t allow its stock to trade publicly, thousands of company employees own stock through its ESOP and the company makes regular filings with the SEC.

$125M for Regent Broadcasting

The Media & Entertainment Group at FleetBoston Financial has provided a $125M senior secured revolving credit facility for Regent Broadcasting, Inc., a subsidiary of Regent Communications, Inc. (O:RGCI). Regent plans to use it to finance its latest transaction with Clear Channel (N:CCU).
Multicultural in Mega deal

Two of the fastest growing privately held radio groups are each adding a market by swapping with one another. The swap will give Alfredo Alonso’s Mega Communications its first entry into the New York market by acquiring WKDM-AM. In exchange, Arthur Liu’s Multicultural Broadcasting will get to enter the Washington, DC market, acquiring WZHF-AM & WKDV-AM. Also being rolled into the deal is Multicultural’s pending $12M purchase of the five-station The Freedom Network group from Mega co-owners George and Adam Lindemann (RBR 3/27, p. 13). When all of these pieces have closed, Liu will also walk away with $24.5M in cash, making the total value around $45M.

**RBR observation:** Talk about a win-win deal! Both companies get to add a new market without having to give one up. Alonso told us four months ago that he would be divesting an AM or two in DC after moving one of his Spanish formats to newly acquired WMJS-FM (RBR 12/6/99, p. 12). The obvious choice was WKDV-AM, well out into the Virginia suburbs, along with either WZHF-AM or WINX-AM. After this reshuffling, Mega will still have four Spanish formats in DC. They’ll be carried on three AMs and one FM, rather than five AMs.

Meanwhile, Liu adds another desirable East Coast market, DC, with two stations that should work quite well for his time-brokering operation. Along with the Dallas station included in the Freedom acquisition, Multicultural also expands to five of the top 10 markets. Liu will still have three AMs in New York, so he should be able to find timeslots for the best customers currently on WKDM-AM.

Fresno price revealed

Harry Pappas has now made a public filing at the FCC of the price he’s being paid by Radio Unica (O:UNCA) for KFRE-AM Fresno, CA. Now that the information has been made public, as required by the Commission’s rules, RBR has withdrawn the motion it had filed seeking to have the FCC rescind its approval of the license transfer (RBR 4/18, p. 18). The 4/7 supplement shows that Pappas received a $4.5M payment when the contract was signed 12/23/99. At closing he’s to receive an additional $1M, plus 76,555 shares of Radio Unica. The contract valued those shares at $2M, making the total deal $7.5M, but the stock is now worth a bit over $800K. Even so, Pappas made quite a profit on the station, which he bought for $1.025 less than five years ago (RBR 12/18/95, p. 16).

Rabbitt hops into Dubuque

Group owner Donald Rabbitt is building a duopoly in Dubuque, IA. In separate transactions, Rabbitt’s Nobles Broadcasting Co. is buying KDTH-AM & KATF-FM from Woodward Communications for $3.68M and Rabbitt Enterprises Corp. is buying KGRR-FM from Hemmer Broadcasting Co. for $1.5M. Paul Hemmer will become a VP and shareholder.

Radio Free drives into De Soto

Radio Free Texas Trust is buying a second radio station and it’s not even in Texas. The trust, managed by Trustee Jerome Friemel, is paying $125K for KHAD-AM De Soto, MO, outside St. Louis. Seller Kim Schaefermeyer previously sold his FM, so he’s now radio free, thanks to Radio Free. Broker: John W. Saunders

Cumulus swapping for spin-offs

Cumulus Media (O:CMLS) confirmed rumors last week (4/10) that it will swap its five Chattanooga stations as partial payment for its Clear Channel spin-offs (RBR 3/13, p. 6-7).
AMFM's CEO musical chairs carried a price tag

Four CEOs in two years has been an expensive proposition for AMFM Inc. (N:AFM). According to the company's 10-K report to the SEC, here's what it has cost to say goodbye to three CEOs. With any luck, number four, Tom Hicks, will stay in place until the company finishes its merger with Clear Channel Communications (N:CCU).

Scott Ginsburg: $59.475M

"In connection with Mr. Ginsburg's resignation [April 1998], the Company incurred a one-time executive severance charge of $43.475M which consists of (i) a lump sum severance payment of $20M to Mr. Ginsburg; (ii) fees of $12.5M to be paid to Mr. Ginsburg over five years, (iii) one-time cash payments of $5M and $2M to Mr. [Jimmy] de Castro and [CFO] Mr. [Matt] Devine, respectively, (iv) execution bonuses of $1M each paid to Mr. de Castro, Mr. Devine and Mr. Marcus and (v) other costs incurred in connection with Mr. Ginsburg's resignation of $975K." (The company incurred additional severance costs of $4.186M when Devine resigned a short time later.)

AMFM has now calculated the fair value of the stock options Ginsburg collected as he exited: "In connection with Mr. Ginsburg's resignation, the Company incurred non-cash compensation expense of $16M in 1998 related to the grant of 800,000 stock options to Mr. Ginsburg at an exercise price of $23.25 per share."

Jeff Marcus: $8.58M + options

"In connection with the resignation by Jeffrey A. Marcus as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company in March 1999, Mr. Marcus entered into a termination agreement, which provided, among other things, that (i) Mr. Marcus received a one-time cash payment of $6.25M and a pro-rated bonus for fiscal year 1998 of $2.333M; (ii) Mr. Marcus was granted options to purchase 800,000 shares of AMFM common stock at an exercise price of $47.0625 per share; and (iii) unvested options to acquire 625,000 shares of AMFM common stock previously granted to Mr. Marcus automatically vested and became immediately exercisable." (The company has apparently not yet completed the complicated calculation to determine the fair value of those options.)

Jimmy de Castro: $5M + options

"In connection with the retirement of James E. de Castro, AMFM's former Vice Chairman and President and Chief Executive Officer of the AMFM Radio Group, on February 16, 2000, Mr. de Castro entered into a separation agreement with the Company. The agreement provided, among other things, that (i) Mr. de Castro receive a one-time cash severance payment of $5M; (ii) unvested options to acquire 1,120,000 shares of AMFM common stock previously granted to Mr. de Castro will automatically vest and become immediately exercisable upon completion of the Clear Channel merger; and (iii) an additional 160,000 stock options of the 640,000 stock options granted to Mr. de Castro on April 17, 1999 will vest on April 17, 2000 and an additional 200,000 stock options granted to Mr. de Castro on April 9, 1999 will vest on April 9, 2000." (Obviously, it will be a while before the value of those options is calculated.)

Source: AMFM Inc. SEC Form 10-K filed 3/30/00
The deals listed below were taken from recent FCC filings. RBR's Transaction Digest reports on all deals that involve assignment of a station license (FCC Form 314) and substantial transfers of control of a licensee via a stock sale (FCC Form 315), but not internal corporate restructurings (FCC Form 316). All deals are listed in descending order of sales price.

$85,000,000 KACD-FM & KBCD-FM
Los Angeles (Santa Monica-Newport Beach CA) from Citicasters Co. (Lowry Mays), a subsidiary of Clear Channel Communications (N:CCU), to Entravision Holdings LLC (Walter Ulloa, Philip Wilkinson, Paul Zevnik, Univision Communications). $17M escrow, balance in cash at closing. Notes: No contour overlap. Crossownership with Univision’s KMEX-TV (Ch. 34, Univision) LA and Ulloa’s KJLA-TV (Ch. 57, Univision) Ventura CA.

$30,000,000 WEEX-AM & WODE-FM

$7,689,666 KOKA-AM & KDKS-FM
Shreveport LA (Haughton LA) from Cary D. Camp to Access.1 Broadcasting Inc. (97% Sydney Small, 3% Adriane Gaines). $21K non-refundable deposit, $364K escrow, balance in cash at closing. Note: The buyer is filing separately to buy KLKL-FM Benton, LA, which is also in the Shreveport market and partially owned by Camp. Broker: The Mahlman Co.

$7,650,000 KBAB-FM Austin (Marble Falls TX) from Munbilia Broadcasting Corp. (B. Shane Fox) to Rodriguez Communications Inc. (Marcos Rodriguez, Charles Brooks, James Anderson, James Gannon). $382.5K escrow, balance in cash at closing. Broker: Media Services Group.

$7,000,000 WKIO-FM Champaign-Urbana IL (Urbana IL), 100% stock sale of Tak Communications II LLC from Sharad Tak to Saga Communications of Illinois Inc.

Clear Channel Broadcasting Licenses Inc. (Danville KY) from Hometown Broadcasting Corp. (Brereton Jones, Steve & Vickie Inc., a subsidiary of Commonwealth Broadcasting Inc., a subsidiary of Cumulus Media (O:CMLS). $100K escrow, balance in cash at closing. Superduopoly with CBC's WBRT-AM Bardstown KY. Note: No duopoly overlaps.

Bowker Media Services Group

$2,000,000 KDAB-FM Fayetteville AR

$875,000 KADF-FM & KATF-FM Dubuque. Conditioned upon the purchase of KDTH-FM, a subsidiary of Entercom Communications Corp. (Joe & David Field), a subsidiary of Entercom Communications Corp. (Prairie Grove AR) from Vinewood Communications Corp. (Ira & Judy Southern). $43,750 escrow, balance in cash at closing. Superduopoly with WIWS-AM, WMTD-AM & FM, WTNJ-FM. Note: No more than four FM stations overlap at any point. LMA since 2/4.

$870,000 KCUL-AM & FM Marshall TX

$860,000 WNYG-AM Nassau -Suffolk NY

84,000 hits in Jan.

4/17/00 RBR

The Hits Keep Coming!

174,000 hits in Mar.

118,000 hits in Feb.

117,000 hits in Jan.

and we will call in answer

$875,000 WAXS-FM & WCIR-FM. Note: No contour overlap with WSPA-AM or WORD-FM Searsport ME. Broker: Media Services Group; George Silverman & Associates.

$2,375,000 WTNJ-FM Beckley WV (Mt. Hope WV), 100% stock sale of West Virginia Broadcasting Inc. from Anthony Paul Gonzalez

$2,000,000 KAKM-FM, KXSS-FM & KREX-AM & KATF-FM Dubuque. Conditioned upon the purchase of KDTH-FM, a subsidiary of Entercom Communications Corp. (Joe & David Field), a subsidiary of Entercom Communications Corp. (Prairie Grove AR) from Vinewood Communications Corp. (Ira & Judy Southern). $43,750 escrow, balance in cash at closing. Superduopoly with WIWS-AM, WMTD-AM & FM, WTNJ-FM. Note: No more than four FM stations overlap at any point. LMA since 2/4.

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226,000 hits in Nov.

923,000 hits in Oct.

115,000 hits in Sep.

111,000 hits in Aug.

110,000 hits in Jul.

108,000 hits in Jun.

94,000 hits in May.

111,000 hits in Apr.

84,000 hits in Mar.

118,000 hits in Feb.

117,000 hits in Jan.

174,000 hits in Dec.

and we will call in answer
Doug Lane, owner and GM of WWDL (FM), WICK (AM) and WYCK (AM), Scranton and Wilkes Barre, PA says he “saves more than $45,000 per year with Scott Studios’ Voice Trax automation. While the investment was major for a small family company like ours, the pay back was fast and real. And the savings are year after year after year.

“Unless we are running evening baseball or Friday night high school football, we close the building at 6PM and operate unattended until 5:30 the next morning.

“We use several independent announcers to record Voice Trax for us, along with our regular staff. Even me! We operate both live assist and automation."

Normally, each announcer records a fresh show every day. Scott’s exclusive Voice/Music Synchronizer guarantees every song plays only with the correct voice track. If a jock gets too busy and doesn’t do their show in time, Scott’s unique Voice Trax System automatically airs evergreen standbys that sound right! Doug says, “No one but Scott Studios has this great fail-safe feature. Scott Studios’ System provides a separate specific generic Voice Trax for every track for every hour and every day of the week in case someone can’t track their show in time.”

Scott’s Voice Trax recorder is the industry’s easiest to use: most tasks are done with just one button. The mouse and keyboard are seldom touched. Voice Trax take only seconds per cut to record. Scott’s AutoPost makes announcers sound better and minimizes Voice Trax re-cuts. Experienced jocks don’t waste time checking their work because they hear their voice and record.

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“The use several independent announcers to record Voice Trax for us, along with our regular staff. Even me! We operate both live assist and automation." Normally, each announcer records a fresh show every day. Scott’s exclusive Voice/Music Synchronizer guarantees every song plays only with the correct voice track. If a jock gets too busy and doesn’t do their show in time, Scott’s unique Voice Trax System automatically airs evergreen standbys that sound right! Doug says, “No one but Scott Studios has this great fail-safe feature. Scott Studios’ System provides a separate specific generic Voice Trax for every track for every hour and every day of the week in case someone can’t track their show in time.”

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The Scott System is radio’s most user-friendly. You get instant airplay or audition of any song simply by spelling a few letters of its title or artist. You see when songs played last and when they’ll play next. You also get voice tracking while listening to music in context, hot keys, automatic recording and graphic waveform editing and scrub of of phone calls, all in one computer!

a compressed price) and a week of Scott School training of your whole staff at your station. You get Cart Walls for instant requests, a phone recorder with waveform and audible scrub editing, the ability to record Voice Trax in your air studio while listening to music in context in headphones, title and artist displays for your website, time announce and Cat. 5 audio wiring for fast installation. Scott’s S532 System can feed different spots to webcasts or second stations, run satellite formats and ABC’s LocalMax. Scott Studios offers optional auto-transfers of spots and Voice Trax to distant stations over Internet or WAN, wire capture and newsroom editors, unattended school closing reports and 24/7 live support via toll-free cell phones.

Scott Studios’ unequalled money-saving measures mean more U.S. stations use Scott than any other digital audio studio systems (5,500 workstations in 2,250 U.S. Stations and nine of the top ten groups). See our web site and toll-free phone at the right.