TV/FILM: CRTC data shows specialty and pay TV operators are in solid financial health. Revenue for specialty, pay, pay-per-view and video-on-demand services rose 7.6% to $2.9 billion in the year ended Aug. 31/08. Profit before interest and taxes grew 5.9% to $686.1 million. The largest share -- $2.3 billion – went to specialty. Employment was flat at 5,500, but the amount spent on Canadian programming rose 11% to $1.1 billion... Research by Pulse has found that 71% of U.S. households think the economy is either in a recession or heading toward a depression and thus, lifestyles and buying habits are changing. Respondents report being 35% more likely to be at home watching TV rather than participating in outside home activities. More than half (53%) of American households surveyed said they’re shopping less, eating out less (52%), going on fewer vacations (51%) and attending fewer concerts and theatre performances (50%). CTAM, the Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing, distributed the research and noted that the things most people won’t give up are cable TV and broadband service... Canwest Global says it’s delaying the potential closure of its E! stations in Montreal, Hamilton, Victoria, Red Deer and Kelowna, probably to the end of summer. The company had set a deadline for the end of March to either sell, shut down or restructure the stations, but the deadline was pushed back because of the apparent interest of potential buyers in some of the operations... Rogers Sportsnet and Regina-based Access Communications are in the midst of a dispute involving the fee-for-carriage fees Access pays Rogers. Rogers has proposed new fees to which Access takes exception. The matter is now in the hands of the CRTC. Leading up to the Commission’s involvement, however, was the withdrawal of certain shows by Rogers. Full Sportsnet service is now back on the Saskatchewan BTU...

G ENERAL: Canwest Global’s uncertain future is affecting the stock of Corus Entertainment and Astral Media, according to Eric Bernofsky of Desjardins Securities. He says that, coupled with an overall downturn in advertising spending, is affecting all broadcasters. Bernofsky says that while Desjardins still believes Corus and Astral to be the two best positioned media companies in Canada, there are a number of near-term risks that may weigh down their share prices... The cash-strapped CBC is scaling back its sports and news coverage and reducing the number of episodes for marquee TV shows. Cuts include: Reduction in number of episodes of shows including The Border, Being Erica and Little Mosque on the Prairie; reduction or elimination of sports coverage including international figure skating, skiing, world aquatics, world athletics and soccer; elimination of CBC Radio programs Out Front, The Inside Track, In the Key of Charles, The Point and the weekend
The edition of The Signal; elimination of 80 positions from CBC News; elimination of daytime Living programs; reduction of staff at The Fifth Estate and Marketplace; reduction in spending on children's TV programs; reduction to one-hour of regional radio noontime programs; reduction of live music recordings and radio drama; closure of one-person bureaus in La Ronge and Thompson; reduced staffing in Windsor, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Quebec City; Moncton, Saint John, Sydney, Corner Brook, Labrador, Gander and Grand Falls, NL. The CRTC began hearings in Gatineau Tuesday to reconsider FM applications for the National Capital Region (Ottawa/Hull). As well, the Commission is looking at the Pelmorex application for mandatory distribution on digital basic of The Weather Network and MétéoMédia... Nomination for the Paul Mulvihill/NABS Humanitarian Award are open until April 10. The award is presented annually to honour those from the communications industry who have volunteered to better the lives of others, with local/national charities or through community service(s) in Canada. The winner will be announced May 14 at the 25th Annual National Advertising Benevolent Society (NABS) Fundraising Gala Dinner in Toronto. For a nomination form, click: www.nabs.org/events/paulaward/... The Edmonton chapter of Canadian Women in Communications has an April 29 luncheon on tap that features men. For info, click www.cwc-afc.com and then follow the links to Events>Edmonton.

**REVOLVING DOOR:** Wayne Waldroff, VP/GM of The Canadian Press and – before the name change – GM of Broadcast News, will retire at the end of May. Waldroff’s early years at the news agency included duties as the weekend sportscaster at BN Audio. Before joining the agency, Waldroff worked on-air at CJSS Cornwall and CJRN Niagara Falls... Terry Scott has been promoted to Director of Broadcasting at The Canadian Press, effective June 1, succeeding Waldroff. Scott has been with the news agency since 1990, beginning as a Reporter/Editor and working his way up to General Executive in 1994 and Director of News and Information/Broadcast in 2006... It’s official. Nadir Mohamed, 52, has been confirmed as Rogers Communications’ President/CEO. Mohamed had been President/COO of the company’s communications division since May 2005... Nick Ketchum, after 23 years with the CRTC, officially retires at the end of June – although he’s on holiday leave as of now. Most recently he was Special Advisor, Broadcasting. Ketchum may be reached at nfjk@hotmail.com... Norm Bolen becomes the new President/CEO of the Canadian Film and Television Production Association (CFTPA) April 15. Bolen is the former Exec VP, Content, at Alliance Atlantis Communications and the current Chair of the Banff World Television Festival... Gord Marratto, who worked with Byrnes Media and who’s a previous owner of CKDK-FM Woodstock, is now RSM at Evanov Radio Group’s 88.5 The Jewel Toronto... Ed Watson is the new Assignment Editor at CTV British Columbia in Vancouver. Watson was CTV’s legislative Bureau Chief and a former CHEK-TV Victoria Anchor... Daniel Tremblay, with Astral Media Radio since 2001, has become PD at CHOM 97.7 Montreal. He’s held several positions in the company including GM of CFOM Quebec and GM of Énergie and Rock Détente stations in Quebec.

**SIGN-OFFS:** Larry Glick, 87, in a Florida hospital after open heart surgery. Many radio hosts point to Glick as their inspiration and tributes from “Glicknics” have been pouring in to the WBZ Boston website... David Ross, 64, in Kamloops of cancer. The veteran Canadian actor, producer and arts supporter was the 20-year producer of the Western Canada Theatre Company in Kamloops. He had roles in more than 100 CBC Radio dramas.

**AUDIO:** FRED-FM (CFRK-FM) Fredericton has been re-launched, now 92.3 FRED-FM... Fredericton’s Greatest Hits. Among changes, says GM Hilary Montbourquette, is a unique music position, an entertaining, compelling, relevant and local morning show and target-specific local content. Note the emphasis on local... LIFE 100.3 Barrie raised $376,000 during its annual listener-supported Sharathon March 25-26. Station Manager Scott Jackson said the recession concerned him going into the Sharathon but that the Christian station’s goals were met half-way through the second day... Shore Media Group has won CRTC approval for its Shore FM Vancouver for a move to 104.3 from 104.1. The company struck a deal with KAFE-FM Bellingham to trade frequencies. All that remains now in the approvals process is the nod from the U.S. FCC. Shore FM President/GM Roy Hennessy says he expects the new station to be on the air within a few months... X.92.9 FM Calgary, the Harvard-owned station, says it’s standing strong in its “no Nickelback guarantee” despite the band’s three Juno awards won Sunday night. PD Christian Hall says the station has had the guarantee in place since its inception almost three years ago... and there are no plans to change. Hall says X.92.9 started the slogan to illustrate what kind of “radio station we are not.”

**LOOKING:** CTV Ottawa - Supervisor, Accounts Receivable; CBC Radio & TV Yellowknife - Regional Manager of Production and Resources; CP24 Toronto – Reporter/Anchor; CHAT-TV Medicine Hat – News Anchor/Producer; TVO Toronto – Media Archivist; CBC Toronto - Senior Technical Analyst - ETL Developer and a Producer; CBC Ottawa - Manager, Internal Control, Finance and Administration; Astral Media Radio Fort St.John – Account Executive; Astral Media Radio Ottawa – Swing Announcer/Music Assistant; and, Lloyd FM Lloydminster - Mid-Day Announcer.
TV/FILM: The feds are said to be considering a $150-million fund to keep local TV stations in business in light of MPs’ concerns over the CRTC not moving fast enough to head off possible small station shutdowns. In Moncton yesterday (Wednesday) afternoon, Prime Minister Harper said no decisions have been made on an industry bailout. Localities threatened are CTV and Canwest Media properties in Brandon, Windsor, Wingham, Barrie (CTV) and Canwest’s E! stations in Red Deer, Kelowna, Victoria, Hamilton and Montreal. Local TV backers say any money must go directly to the small market stations where their existence is threatened. CTV and Canwest are said to be opposed to any of these funds being used to support CBC. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty says he’s encouraged about the possible $150-million fund to help rescue local stations and their newscasts... Canwest Media has a two-week extension – to April 21 – from senior lenders and additional access to credit. In a memo to staff, President/CEO Leonard Asper said that while it’s only two weeks, “...it is part of an ongoing discussion between the company and its lenders in which we seek to reach a longer-term solution.” But there may be a showdown with bondholders next week, though not seen as likely. However, if Canwest doesn’t make a $30.4-million interest payment to them by April 15, they could push the company toward insolvency. The company has enough cash on hand to make the payment but its banks are the senior creditors and would likely block any pay-out to other creditors. At Noon EDT today (Thursday), Canwest will host a teleconference to review the corporation’s second quarter and the first six months financial results for the 2009 financial year. Formal remarks will be followed by a question and answer session. Leonard Asper will be joined by CFO John Maguire and other Canwest executives... Meanwhile, Canwest subsidiary CW Media has received gross proceeds of roughly $6.6-million for its 16.6 million shares to a previously announced issuer bid by Score Media... Pelmorex Communications, which operates The Weather Network and MétéoMédia, has – for the third time – sought must-carry ("exceptional importance") status from the CRTC. Along with that, it also wants approval for its emergency alert system, which would be a voluntary opt-in for other broadcasters. The Commission has asked the company to file an implementation plan demonstrating that such a system could be up-and-running by next year. However, intervenors from Rogers Cable and Bell TV say Pelmorex hasn’t offered any new evidence of "exceptional" status since its last two denials... The B.C. Court of Appeal has issued a ruling that allows Adbusters Media Foundation to pursue legal action against the CBC and Canwest Global for refusing to screen its anti-consumerist TV ads. The Adbusters' legal counsel said that the case’s significance lies in whether private broadcasters using public airwaves have the right to determine who gets to speak on them; about the rights of the people to hear alternative viewpoints in a public space. Adbusters launched a legal challenge after the CBC pulled its anti-car ad from its automotive...
show Driver’s Seat... Dave Devall, who retired last Friday as CTV Toronto’s Weatherman, was honoured that afternoon by the Guinness Book of Records for having the longest career as a TV weather forecaster – 48 years, two months and 27 days.

Radio: Corus Entertainment, StreamTheWorld and MySpace Canada have a deal for an online radio streaming service to be called MySpace Radio. Located at www.myspace.com/radio, it streams roughly 50 Corus stations... The CRTC has denied applications for new FM’ers in Iroquois Falls and Cochrane. The Northern Ontario localities, says the Commission, don’t have the capacity to support new commercial stations... Shore 104 FM Vancouver, the AAA-formatted station scheduled to launch June 1, will be repped nationally by Astral Media Radio Sales. Shore 104 FM is a private company owned by David Aisenstat, Roy Hennessy (President/GM), Sam Feldman, Bob Mackowycz, Bob Mackowycz, Jr., Sean Morrison and Michael Landsberg... More than $210,000 was raised at the 4th Annual ‘Kids Can’t Wait’ Radiothon last Friday, with all three Rogers Kitchener stations taking part. The KidsAbility foundation is the beneficiary of the efforts by the folks at 96.7 CHYM FM/KIX 106.7 FM/570 News. Each year, KidsAbility — Centre for Child Development provides assessment and therapy services in the Waterloo Region and Wellington County to over 3,300 children with challenges that range from communication disorders and developmental delays to physical disabilities... Dominik Schollmayer, a German DJ at Hit Radio Antenne in Hanover, has set a world record for the longest, continuous radio show – on-air for 169 consecutive hours – just over seven days. The 26-year-old was allowed to play two tracks consecutively for up to six minutes but had to return to the mic after the second song. While he was allowed a five-minute break per hour, he often banked it so he could take 15-minute breaks every three hours. The existing record of 168 consecutive hours of broadcasting was held by a DJ in India.

General: Corus Entertainment reports a profit of $29 million for the quarter ended Feb. 28, down from $35.4 million during the same quarter the year before. The results were equivalent to 36 cents per share, down from 41 cents per share in the year-earlier quarter. CEO John Cassaday, in a conference call yesterday (Wednesday), said the company is looking at new ways to reduce costs including all aspects of the Corus Radio division. Corus’ Discovery Kids and YTV specialty channels declined by double-digit percentages while its W Network and Cosmopolitan TV experienced ad growth. Advertising aimed at younger viewers has been in a decline for several quarters. Overall, revenue in Corus Television increased 5% to $123.4 million, while radio revenue sank 6% to $57.9 million... The Canadian Press is cutting 25 jobs, 8% of CP’s workforce, in a restructuring that also includes the suspension of pension contributions for 2009-2011. In a first effort, selected staffers have been offered buyouts before any layoffs occur... Careful, this plan might be on its way to Canadian news operations. The Associated Press in the U.S. and the newspaper industry there plan an aggressive effort to track down copyright violators on the Internet and try to divert traffic from websites that don’t properly licence news content. “We can no longer stand by and watch others walk off with our work…” said Dean Singleton, the AP’s chairman and the chief executive of newspaper publisher MediaNews Group. The AP has tangled with bloggers over the extent to which “fair use” principles should allow them to post AP text on their sites... The newly expanded Vancouver Convention Centre officially opened Friday, the building getting set to play host to broadcasters from around the world who’ll flock to Canada for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The International Broadcast Centre features a 2.4-hectare living green roof and a restored marine habitat underneath. The site will open to national and international broadcasters January 12, 2010 and close in late March.

Evolving Door: Terry Spence, after 35 years at the station, has been fired by CFXV Victoria. The former ND, Exec VP, part owner and GM, had been a talk radio mainstay in the B.C. capitol. C-FAX was sold to CHUM in 2004, which in turn was bought by CTV Globemedia... Still with CFXV Victoria, Johnny Z (Zwolak), the longtime Production Manager – after 36 years with the station – will retire in May... Dave Simon, ex VP Engineering for Astral Media Radio in Toronto, is the new Director of Engineering, Radio for CTV Ltd.’s CHUM stations. He succeeds Dave Haydu, who left the company a week or so back. Simon, unlike Haydu did, works from the Agincourt office... Brian Main, the Station Manager/GSM at Global Saskatoon, has departed his 21-year career with Global and moved to the mining industry. Succeeding him on an interim basis is Wayne Rorke... Derek Debolt is the new Managing Editor at Global Edmonton. Debolt had been Senior Producer at CBC Radio Edmonton and, prior to that, ND at CFCN-TV Lethbridge and an instructor at Lethbridge College... Charlene Packer has joined the Newcap Calgary (XL 103fm/Fuel 90.3fm) creative Team. Parker, after four years with Astral Media Radio Ottawa, began at Newcap Calgary March 30... Lucie Brodeur, GM, Marketing & Promotions at Corus Québec, left that post last week to start a marketing communications and special events firm
called Plan B. She can be reached at lucie.brodeur@gmail.com.

SIGN-OFFS: Murray Gaunt, 73, in a London hospital. Gaunt, the Huron-Bruce MPP for 18 years and CKNX Wingham’s farm editor for 17 years after that, was inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2005 because he was "a strong voice for the agriculture community as a member of the legislature, farm news broadcaster and agricultural commodity group leader for more than 40 years"... Grant Wyatt, 54, in West Vancouver. Wyatt was an ENG/Steadicam Operator at CKVU-TV/Citytv Vancouver for over 32 years.

LOOKING: Big Dog 92-7 Regina - Senior Account Rep; Harvard Broadcasting Regina - Promotion Manager; Astral Television Networks Toronto – Research Analyst; CTV British Columbia Vancouver – Graphic Artist; NHL Network Toronto – Story Editor; CTV Edmonton/Calgary - Reporter/Producer; CTV Retail Sales Toronto – Account Executive and a Web Developer; Canwest Media Toronto – Digital Solutions Specialist; CBC Toronto - Senior Technical Analyst - ETL Developer; CBC Ottawa - Senior Manager, Risk Management and Administration, CBC Pension Fund and a Manager, Internal Control, Finance and Administration; Evanov Radio Group Toronto – Creative Director; Dougall Media Thunder Bay – Creative Writer; and, Newcap Radio Thunder Bay – Account Manager.

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TV/FILM: The idea of buying more ads to help local TV stations is being discussed at the cabinet's committee on priorities and planning. While general support is there for helping local TV, how best to do it remains the question. There had been talk about a government handout of up to $150 million as a quick solution but some MPs are worried that a money funnel wouldn't do much to hold off cuts. Instead, they say, the feds could benefit from the advertising... The Writers Guild of Canada, however, wants no part of a bailout, ad buying or otherwise. It maintains that Canwest is still a profitable business, as is CTV. The Guild maintains that while conventional ad revenue was down, specialty channel advertising was up. Further, it wrote, “It seems when Canwest reports to its shareholders, it’s an integrated business – but when they talk to government it’s all about the hardships of over-the-air.” Executive Director Maureen Parker asks: “How can the broadcasters ask for a taxpayer bailout when broadcasting remains profitable?”... Knightscove Media, a Canadian distributor of family entertainment, has entered into a non-binding letter of intent to acquire the operations of Ellis Entertainment. Ellis is a Toronto-based producer and distributor of TV product to about 150 countries... CTV Saskatoon will lose 10 and a-half positions this summer when the station moves a large chunk of technical operations to Calgary. The positions are concentrated in production and traffic... TLN Telelatino has launched a campaign in support of Red Cross efforts for victims of the recent Italian earthquake. Rather than promote any other activities, TLN says that what “… our Italian friends and relatives need right now is relief from experts who provide emergency services year-round all over the globe”. Italian Red Cross rescue teams were on the scene an hour after the earthquake struck. All monies raised in Canada will go directly to the Canadian Red Cross’ sister agency in Italy.

GENERAL: Astral Media has reported a second-quarter profit of $28.9 million, down from the $57.3 million it reported last year after booking a big tax-related gain. Astral said its earnings were unchanged after stripping out the year-ago tax gain. Astral’s earnings were 51 cents per share, versus 98 cents in last year’s same quarter. Revenues rose two per cent to $209.3 million... Canwest Media has a new deadline of April 21 from an ad hoc committee of senior noteholders as the Canwest Global subsidiary works on recapitalizing itself. The committee agreed to postpone demands for a US$30.4-million interest payment – due March 15 – for another week... Canwest
Global Communications reported a quarterly net loss of $1.44 billion including a $1.19-billion writedown of assets, mostly in its newspapers. Revenue was $637 million in Canwest's second quarter ended Feb. 28, down by 10% from $701 million in last year's same quarter. The net loss ($8.09 per share) compared with a year-ago loss of $34 million, 19 cents per share. Its operating profit for the quarter fell to $15 million from $95 million... The Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton says that the Corus Entertainment Ph.D. Fellowship in Television Studies will begin in September 2009. The $10,000 annual fellowship is aimed at applicants working "within the broader area of critical-cultural television studies". The successful applicant will also get the Sociology department's standard PhD funding package. Deadline for application is April 30 and the decision to award the scholarship will be no later than May 15. Questions? [serra.tinic@ualberta.ca]... Eleven stations shared in the 29 Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards that went to Canadian shops as determined by RTNDA International in the U.S. The Regional Murrows for the Canadian winners will be presented at the RTNDA Canada regional award dinners in Moncton, Edmonton, Vancouver and Toronto in May and June. Winners are:

**RADIO, LARGE MARKET**

**Overall Excellence**

- Newscast  
  680News (CFTR) Toronto

- Continuing Coverage  
  680News (CFTR) Toronto

**TELEVISION, LARGE MARKET**

**Overall Excellence**

- Videography - TV only  
  CIVT-TV Vancouver

- Web site  
  CIVT-TV Vancouver

**RADIO, SMALL MARKET**

**Overall Excellence**

- Newscast  
  VOCM St.John’s

- Feature: Hard News  
  CIVI-TV Victoria

**TELEVISION, SMALL MARKET**

**Overall Excellence**

- Videography - TV only  
  CIVR-TV (‘A’) Barrie

- Feature Reporting  
  CJCH-TV Halifax

- Investigative Reporting  
  CIVI-TV Victoria

- Newscast  
  CIVR-TV (‘A’) Barrie

- Videography - TV only  
  CIVI-TV Victoria

- Writing  
  CIVI-TV Victoria
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The National Broadcast Reading Service Inc. (NBRS) is a non-profit Canadian success story. Established in 1989, this multi-media organization assists the blind, low-vision, senior and other Canadians in making print, film and other forms of entertainment more accessible. Through innovation, creativity, accountability and a shared enthusiasm for the organization’s vital role, NBRS is well positioned to deliver on its vision - to reduce barriers to media faced by vision and print-restricted Canadians. The President and CEO will support and lead this effort, working with a strong national Board of Directors and a dedicated staff. Accountable for all operations and business planning, as President and CEO you will ensure that the systems, business processes and resources are continually enhanced to deliver value and corporate performance. Core to your role is the ability to provide leadership and a renewed sense of direction. You will play an important external role, building relations with volunteers, stakeholders, partners, the media, governments, clients and the public. You will champion initiatives to define and achieve the goals of a new strategic plan. As the ideal candidate, you are a respectful, empowering and decisive leader who fosters a culture of enthusiasm, team, excellence and accountability. You are a strong communicator, influencer and can interact with comfort and confidence with a range of audiences, including staff, Board, volunteers, governments and players in the broadcasting industry. You recognize that technology is an enabler and can apply exceptional relationship abilities and business management skills in fulfilling the organization’s mission. Regarded as a leader in the broadcasting industry, previous experience working with a nonprofit board will serve you well, as will exposure to the CRTC.

To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Joanna Solomon at (416) 366-1990. To apply, please submit your resume and related information online at www.rayberndtson.ca/en/careers/7562.

NBRS is committed to the principles of equity and diversity in the workplace and in particular welcomes applications from individuals who are blind or have vision restrictions.

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ROUND-UP:

The National Broadcast Reading Service is searching for a new President/CEO. See the ad on this page... Other jobs we’ve heard about include CBC Toronto - Director of Technological Maintenance for English Services; NBRS Winnipeg - Program/Volunteer Coordinator; CP24 Toronto - ENG Editor; Canwest Toronto – Assistant Editor; CBC Winnipeg - Regional Media Production Support, Manager; CBC Sherbrooke - Regional Line-up Editor; CBC Toronto – Mobile Application Programmer; CHAT-TV Medicine Hat - Writer/Producer; Corus Radio Peterborough – Junior Account Exec; and, Evanov Radio Group Toronto – Creative Director.

IGN-OFF: Harry Kalas, 73, in the broadcast booth at Nationals Park in Washington. Kalas had been the voice of the Philadelphia Phillies for nearly 40 years. The news of his passing prompted makeshift memorials around Philadelphia and made headlines on newscasts and websites across the U.S.

REVOLVING DOOR: New GM/VP for Rogers Radio Vancouver is Geoff Poulton. He’s going to stay as GM at Citytv Vancouver until a successor is found... New Manager, French Services at CBC Sudbury is Michel Morin. He returned to Sudbury after a 15-year absence after turns at CBC points in Toronto, Montreal and, his most recent stop, Radio-Canada Trois-Rivières where he was Executive Producer. It was in 1979 that Morin took part in initiating CBC French language service at Sudbury... Barb Matheson, the Director, Publicity and Communication at E1 Entertainment Canada in Toronto, has moved to Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures Canada, also in Toronto... At The Jewel 88.5 Toronto/Newmarket, Paul Stoutenburg has become the Promotions Coordinator. Stoutenburg arrived from CTV’s ‘A’ Barrie. Also at the Evanov Radio Group station, Candace Lowes became the Assistant Promotions Coordinator. Her background includes promotions at Moose FM Haliburton.

RADIO: The Jim Pattison Broadcast Group and BC Children’s Hospital Foundation have formed a partnership in which Pattison stations will support and promote a $200-million Campaign for BC Children around the province. It will urge BC’ers to “Be A Superhero” by supporting the construction of a new BC Children’s Hospital and Child Health BC, an initiative that is improving access to pediatric care for all BC children... Two six-year-old twins from the Montreal Italian community cracked open their piggy bank and donated $9.12. An elderly Montreal widow wrote a cheque for $1,000. The city’s Italian community has, so far, collected more than $80,000 toward the relief and recovery effort under way in the aftermath of the Italian earthquake. And a CFMB Montreal radiothon on Good Friday raised the majority of it – $61,000. Host Ivana Bombardieri hopes the results of another fundraiser yesterday (Wednesday) will bring the total up to $1 million... Corus Radio has been employing an engaging and successful campaign at The Fox Vancouver in which it hooks up a listener with a need to a supplier that’s willing to provide it at no charge. The most recent “hookup”, the fifth so far, saw a young man move towards acquiring laser eye surgery so that he can become a transit policeman. An eye clinic will perform the surgery and will, in turn, receive $5,000 in advertising from The Fox. The FOX HOOKUP happens every weekday morning.
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T V/FILM: Appearing yesterday (Wednesday) before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, Ivan Fecan, President/CEO of CTVglobemedia and CEO of CTV called for “swift federal action” to address “the crisis in local Canadian television”. Fecan said CTV wasn’t looking for a bail-out or a short term fix. Instead, he said, “what interests us is a plan to build a sustainable future for conventional television in Canada”. CTV put forward a three-point plan that would, it said, provide a viable new framework: immediate implementation of fee-for-carriage that would not involve consumers but rather would be an industry-to-industry matter; satellite carriage for local TV stations that the Broadcasting Act has already determined requires priority carriage of local TV; and, a hybrid digital transition strategy that would speak to the unjustified spending of several hundred million dollars to reach 9% of the Canadian marketplace, particularly, said CTV, when the investment produces no additional revenue... In attacking claims that the TV sector is in decline, Rogers Communications questioned assertions from CTV and Global Television that their conventional TV business needs regulatory relief. RCI Vice-Chairman Phil Lind told MPs on the House committee examining the state of the local TV industry that declining income isn’t the result of a TV sector in turmoil. Instead, he said, it’s the temporary drop in ad revenue in this recession. RCI also points to both companies buying up specialty channels in recent years. Refuting that was CEO Pierre Péladeau of Quebecor. He said the TV industry has changed forever, with cable and the Internet splintering audiences. There’s no reason, he said, that companies should be forced to own money-losing conventional TV assets if specialty channels are making the lion's share of profits. This week’s hearing was organized after the nets warned that several small stations could be closed because they’re losing money... Speaking of losing money, YouTube makes newspapers look like the smart place to put your cash. Credit Suisse says Google will lose $470-million U.S. on the video-sharing site this year alone. If that figure is even close, YouTube, which Google bought in 2006, is in big trouble because, as one competitor admitted, user-generated content is proving to be a financial albatross: They haven't made the “ton of money” the tech evangelists said they would. The content that seems to do best online is the same stuff that did well offline -- content produced by professionals... A new Global Television series – Copper – has been
picked up for broadcast on ABC in the U.S. The hour-long drama will begin taping in Toronto in June. Copper joins The Listener, Flashpoint and The Bridge among Canadian productions finding a second life on American TV... Global Television, TVA Montreal and Sun TV Toronto have CRTC approval to suspend parts of their licences relating to cross-media ownership and to replace it with a standard policy called the Journalistic Independence Code. It would provide for an independent body half controlled by the industry it’s regulating to adjudicate complaints related to independence of co-owned media outlets. The outlets are to have independent news management but no restrictions on news gathering... Fox Business Network has been approved for carriage in Canada as an eligible satellite service for distribution on a digital basis... CTV Ottawa VP/GM Louis Douville has been named Executive of the Year, Private Sector, by the Regroupement des gens d’affaires de la Capitale nationale (RGA). The RGA’s gala event last weekend honoured businesswomen and businessmen who achieved outstanding performances in their businesses and who continue to make social contributions to their community...

**GENERAL:** Corus Entertainment says it won’t be laying off any employees now but instead, as a cost-cutting measure, most full-time employees will take an unpaid week off. Further, the company has suspended its portion of paying into the employees pension plan from June 1 to August 31. Corus says those two moves will save it several million dollars. Exceptions are commissioned sales people, contract workers and part-timers... During his remarks opening NAB2009 in Las Vegas, NAB President/CEO David Rehr said that the broadcast industry, despite the current downturn, is poised “to reap tremendous benefits from exciting new advances in digital technology for radio and TV.” Nearly every industry (in America), he said, faces tough economic times but that not many of them are as well-positioned to succeed as broadcasters are... While the numbers of delegates are down at NAB this year, it’s not nearly as bad as some had been expecting. Definitely a far cry from the worst of predictions. Best estimates are about a 20% decline from last year... Canwest Global Communications has arranged another extension from lenders and noteholders, to May 5. The previous extension expired Tuesday. Canwest says it continues discussions with the secured lenders and a committee of holders of its eight per cent senior notes who, meanwhile, will continue to provide credit... Broadcast audiences routinely complain about the jarring audio level changes between commercials and programs or when switching from one station to another or even between different programs on the same channel. But this may soon be a thing of the past thanks to a new loudness meter developed by the Advanced Audio Systems group of the Communications Research Centre (CRC) in Ottawa. The next big step will be adopting a loudness level that the world’s broadcasters agree on. CRC is hoping that will happen by month’s end... CBC says it will embrace a 24/7 breaking news format for its TV, radio and online news operations, breaking news online first before it services CBC Newsworld. That’s a shift from feeding The National first while regarding Newsworld and CBC.ca as afterthoughts. Further, supper-hour local TV newscasts will expand from one hour to 90 minutes, and beginning at 5 p.m. To better deliver news with less money, the CBC proposes to introduce a central news assignment desk for its multi-platform operations... A reflection of the American broadcast news situation on Canada’s TV stations may be appropriate. A just-released survey shows jobs in local U.S. TV news declined by 4.3% and salaries dropped by 4.4% last year. At the same time, stations set a record for the amount of news on the air while the net number of stations originating news declined by only four in the past 16 months. The 2009 RTNDA/Hofstra University Annual Survey shows that more than half of stations are making a profit on local news. Bob Papper, director of the survey and professor and chair of the department of journalism at Hofstra University, says, he expects jobs and salaries to continue to decline in 2009, but looks for improvement in 2010... Coming up May 13, the Canadian Broadcast Distribution Association (CBDA) will hold an advanced wireless seminar in Toronto with a focus on rich media applications. To register, click: https://secure.calexis.com/cbda/get.php?pageID=CBCDA_Seminar_Registration.
REVOLVING DOOR: Len Lawson, Director, Broadcast Sales at Telesat in Ottawa, will retire in August. He says an immediate goal is “a lot of international travel, including New Zealand”... Don Mumford succeeds Jim Blundell as VP/GM of Bob FM London. Blundell moved to Victoria as VP/GM of the CTV properties there, A Victoria and the two radio stations. Mumford retains his duties as VP/GM at A London, A Windsor and A Wingham... Dave Ostler, after 19 years with the Moncton operation, will retire from his Sales Manager’s job at the Newcap stations effective May 29. Ostler is part of the team seeking his successor and will help in the transition process... Michelle Dubé, co-anchor of CHCH-TV Hamilton’s evening news, has left the station after four months to become a Reporter at CTV Toronto (CFTO-TV)... New PD at Radio Ville-Marie’s CIRA-FM Montreal is Claudette Lambert. She had worked as a journalist, host, director and in public relations during her 24-year career at CBC radio and TV... Brenda Dittrich is now with Shore FM Vancouver as the yet-to-be-launched station’s Creative Director. She moved from her Ass’t Creative Director’s gig at Newcap Edmonton... Peter Puxley, a former CBC Radio Parliamentary bureau chief, is returning to the Hill as a senior political aide for NDP leader Jack Layton’s office. He begins May 4.

RADIO: Two flips to FM for Newcap have been approved in Alberta. CHLW St. Paul will move to 97.7 with 16,000 watts and maintain AM’s Country format while CKVH High Prairie goes to 93.5 at 25,000 for its Classic Hits format... The CRTC has issued a deadline of May 21 to submit interventions or comments on Jim Pattison Broadcast Group’s application to increase power for its CIBW-FM Drayton Valley from 7,400 watts to 50,000... CBC Radio One host Jian Ghomeshi, host of “Q” – and the same announcer who got stuck with but brilliantly handled actor/musician Billy Bob Thornton’s twisted knickers – will MC the Dora Mavor Moore Awards this summer. The awards honour talent in Toronto’s performing arts industry... A new, weekly two-hour radio show with host Ben Mulroney – called E Talk 20 – that counts down Canada’s chart-toppers launched on CHUM stations last weekend. It’s anchored at CHUM-FM Toronto... Owen Sound-based Bayshore Broadcasting has partnered with eight area hospitals for an on-going educational and promotional campaign designed to stimulate planned giving. Called Bayshore’s Healthy Tomorrows, the campaign is aimed at building awareness of the importance of planned giving to the well-being of medical facilities. There will be two campaigns a year, each with open line programs to inform listeners of planned giving options and radio commercials encouraging them to include a bequest to their local hospital foundation in their wills.

LOOKING: Jrfm/The Peak Vancouver is seeking Account Executives. See the ad on Page 1 for details. Other jobs we’ve heard about include Newcap Moncton - Sales Manager; CTV Brandon - News Anchor and a News Reporter; Global News Toronto - Reporter; CBC Montreal – Director, Advertising and Branding and a Project Manager for Internet and Digital Services; CBC Yellowknife – Regional Manager of Production and Resources for Radio and Television; CITI FM Winnipeg – Program Director; Corus Radio Woodstock/London – Mid-day Host; and, CFQR-FM/CINW-AM Montreal — Directeur des promotions.

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Ron Bremner

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TV/FILM: So much has been going on in the National Capital Region this week related to over-the-air (OTA) television that to cover it all would go way beyond the mandate of this executive briefing. Instead, here are the highlights:

- Canwest Global says big-market TV could face the same fate as some small-market stations unless the CRTC recognizes the problems of declining ad sales on conventional TV, the growing popularity of specialty services and the Internet, and that the Commission allows conventional TV access to another source of revenue. CEO Leonard Asper reiterated the company’s request for a carriage fee from cable and satellite operators.

- Asper said federal rules are to blame for the problems plaguing the TV sector – not the economic crisis or the staggering debt his company faces.

- Asper told CRTC Chair Konrad von Finckenstein that a small amount of financing won’t make any difference; that conventional TV’s financial health is under too much stress. Ditto, more or less, from CTV. Although CTVglobemedia CEO Ivan Fecan did say that CTV’s A Windsor might be kept operating if concessions were significant enough.

- During Canwest’s appearance, von Finckenstein said: "Regardless of what the outcome of these hearings is, you’re telling me I should really get used to Canwest without the E! chain?" "Yes," replied Canwest's president of broadcasting Peter Viner.

- Just before Canwest's presentation, Rogers Communications Sr. VP of regulatory affairs, Ken Englehart, downplayed the concerns of conventional broadcasters, claiming that it’s a collective PR campaign geared toward crisis generation and building support for financial relief.

- Asper said the regulatory system is tilted toward the BDUs. While BDUs have won concessions, he said, broadcasters’ obligations have become more onerous. CTV has already said it will close A Windsor, A Wingham and CKX-TV Brandon while Canwest says its five E! stations are for sale.

- The financial crisis has forced conventional TV broadcasters to write down the value of their assets by billions of dollars.

- “The structure of the market has been fundamentally altered as a result of years of over-licensing and authorizing too many foreign signals into Canada,” Asper said. “Our only source of revenue is advertising and the market is now saturated.”

- Rogers Communications, as a condition of contributing 1% of its cable revenue to a newly created $60-million local programming fund, said it wants the CRTC to set conditions, e.g. that no small-market stations be shut down. CTV wants that contribution tripled to 3%.

- Rogers said it has no choice but to pass on to consumers the cost of the local TV fund. Any proposed increase to Rogers' contribution, the company warned, will drive more customers to drop cable for grey-market satellite systems.
Ivan Fecan said the CRTC has contributed to the situation now faced by conventional television. He says a series of Commission decisions over the last five years have favoured cable and satellite carriers to the extent that they “… have had the effect of compromising the underpinnings of conventional television.” Distributors, he said, “are enjoying record profits while conventional broadcasters are losing money.”

Both CTV and Canwest have had layoffs, cutbacks, the threat of station closures and, says Fecan, more trouble is on the horizon if the system isn’t changed to allow broadcasters revenue other than advertising.

Fecan also criticized the CRTC’s latest proposal regarding networks spending as much creating domestic programming as on buying American shows. Essentially, he told the Commission, that that’s a game of chicken with the studios. “What are you trying to achieve? Fecan asked Chairman von Finckenstein. “I’m at a loss to consider why . . . you would play this kind of risk with our business.”

Fecan also wants the CRTC to force satellite distributors to carry local stations. As an example, he cited the Timmins in Northern Ontario where 44% of the area’s population watches TV via satellite . . . and CTV Timmins isn’t carried. “If there is room for dozens of porn channels,” he said, “there should be room for Timmins.”

George Addy, a former head of the Canadian Competition Bureau, says he doesn’t know how the CRTC is going to deal with the nets’ requests. The senior partner at Davies Ward Phillips and Vineberg LLP was quoted as saying that “the business model for TV hasn’t changed in 50 or 60 years. Meanwhile, everything else in the economy has changed.”

Montreal-based TQS is requesting the creation of what it calls “a more equitable environment for all television broadcasters and a new distribution revenue sharing plan that would promote healthy competition based on creativity and talent rather than on a distorted regulatory structure.” TQS operates five stations in Quebec and company president Maxime Rémillard says continuing “… to cut conventional television broadcasters out of a share of distribution rights, is the equivalent of stating that their television content is of secondary importance and little value or worse yet, that we are doing them a favour. Studies demonstrate that conventional television broadcasters’ programming is in demand and will continue to draw 50% of the total audience.”

The Commission says the networks would collect $352 million if they were allowed to charge cable and satellite carriers 50-cents a month per subscriber for their signals. CRTC estimates show $56-million in new revenue would go to CTV, $72-million to Canwest and $57-million for Rogers Communications. They would be the three largest benefactors of about a dozen conventional broadcasters.

The CRTC is looking for ways to temporarily help broadcasters while searching for long-term fixes. Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s cabinet is also considering ways to help prop up local television.

Fecan said that since going digital is a public policy issue to ensure all Canadians are able to receive digital signals – even the 9% or fewer who still get signals off-air – the government should incur some of the costs. The cost to convert all of its transmitters to digital is too high, he said: “We’re quite prepared to operate without” the homes featuring rabbit ears. An investment of several hundred million dollars to reach 9% of the marketplace can’t be justified. “We are in a world where analog dollars are being converted to digital dimes,” he said.

In comments to the House of Commons heritage committee yesterday (Wednesday), Heritage Minister James Moore said digital technology will help broadcasters become more efficient and profitable in the long run. But he did not signal any areas where the federal government might further assist the industry.

Meanwhile, Canadian broadcasting distribution companies’ revenues in 2008 exceeded $10 billion, a higher gross than ever reported. The CRTC released the statistical and financial summaries which show cable’s total revenues rose from $7.1 billion in 2007 to $8.24 billion in 2008 (up 16.1%). Profits before interest and taxes (PBIT) went from $1.5 billion to $2.1 billion. While expenditures were up 7.8%, the PBIT margin improved from 21.2% in 2007 to 25.3% in 2008. Total revenues for direct-to-home (DTH) satellite distribution and multipoint distribution system (MDS) companies increased by 10.8% between 2007 and 2008, from $1.85 billion to $2.05 billion. After posting
a PBIT of $17.1 million in 2007, this figure climbed to $81.4 million in 2008. The PBIT margin improved over the same period, rising from 0.9% to 4%. Broadcasting distribution companies contributed $323 million to Canadian programming in 2008, up 7.9% in one year. Of that, $166.3 million went to the Canadian Television Fund, $41.2 million to independent funds and $115.6 million to local expression, such as community cable channels. Affiliation payments in 2008 saw cable companies pay out $1.56 billion. Included in that figure were payments to pay and specialty services. DTH and MDS companies contributed $740.8 million to their affiliates... Canwest Media has ordered two more new Canadian original series: Lawyers, Guns and Money and Shattered. Both are set to join the Showcase line-up next fall... A divided U.S. Supreme Court voted 5-4 to uphold the FCC’s policy allowing it to fine stations for “fleeting expletives”. At the same time, however, it sent the case back to a New York federal appeals court to consider whether or not the policy violates the U.S. First Amendment.

RADIO: Golden West Broadcasting’s new 99.5 Drum FM (CHOO) Drumheller went to air this past Tuesday morning, focusing on local news, information and events – plus rock, pop and AC songs from the last 25 years blended with the multi-format hits of today. Ron Zuke is Station Manager... Vaughan Mayor Linda Jackson is suing The Edge (CFNY) Toronto and its Dean Blundell morning show for $1.1 million after a string of on-air comments, including calling her a "pig" and "an angry large woman." The statement of claim, filed March 10, says the show featured "defamatory innuendos" suggesting Jackson was a "fraudster" and dishonest because she failed to account for her expenses. (The city of Vaughan abuts Toronto’s northern border.)... Acadia Broadcasting, owner of CKBW Bridgewater, has won approval for a sister FM station to run at 100.7 with power of 10,000 watts. Format is to be New Country... Merritt Broadcasting, owner of N L Broadcasting in Kamloops and Merritt, has won the Commission’s approval for a flip of CJNL Merritt to FM and programming AC. The CRTC also allowed N L’s application to allow CHNL Kamloops to take over the CJNL’s AM Merritt transmitter using the same technical parameters – 1230 kHz (Class C) with a day- and night-time transmitter power of 1,000 watts. Because CJNL has been airing CHNL programming, the addition of the AM transmitter would ensure the continuity of CHNL’s programming in Merritt... CKDH Amherst, owned by Maritime Broadcasting, has won approval for a flip to FM – 107.1 with power of 18,700 watts. An AC format will be retained... 99.3 The FOX (CFOX-FM) Vancouver’s hockey team raised more than $65,000 this season – all for BC Children’s Hospital. In the last nine years, the team has raised $195,000.00 in support of BC’s Kids... Tony Bennett, at a Tuesday evening gathering in Washington that included U.S. legislators, said it’s a crime performers don’t get paid by radio stations when their music is broadcast. He’s also been with the CHUM Windsor cluster for 10 years and with CHUM Radio for more than 16 in different on-air positions, succeeds Vince Cannova... Garry Raible retires today (Thursday) after 36 years in broadcasting and 13 years as morning sports anchor at News 1130 (CKWX) Vancouver. Succeeding him is Geoff Rohoman who was a news reader and fill-in sports anchor... Michel Saint-Cyr, President of the CBC’s Real Estate Division, resigned just as CBC is trying to sell assets to finance the majority of a $171 million shortfall... Former Ontario Progressive Conservative leader John Tory began a one-hour weekly talk show this past Sunday night on CFRB Toronto. Tory is also a former Rogers Media CEO, CFL commissioner and a corporate lawyer... Diane Humber has been appointed Managing Director at CBC Calgary. It's a move from Regional Director for Newfoundland and Labrador. ... Rachel Nixon will become director of Digital Media for CBC News effective June 1. Nixon spent nine years with BBCNews.com and is now the global news director of Vancouver-based NowPublic.com, the world’s largest participatory news network.

SUPPLYLINES: New York City-based Canadian Television Sales (CTS) has created a new division – Reliable Internet Planning and Execution (RIPE) – which will work with U.S. agencies that want to place media on Canadian websites. The company represents Astral Media, Canwest, CBC and The Score.

EVOLVING DOOR: Account Exec Deborah Stillie has been promoted to Retail Sales Manager at Astral Media Radio Vancouver. She takes over the position tomorrow, May 1... Dave Hunter, the morning show host at 89X Windsor, has added program director to his duties. Hunter, who’s been with the CHUM Windsor cluster for 15 years and with CHUM Radio for more than 16 in different on-air positions, succeeds Vince Cannova... Garry Raible retires today (Thursday) after 36 years in broadcasting and 13 years as morning sports anchor at News 1130 (CKWX) Vancouver. Succeeding him is Geoff Rohoman who was a news reader and fill-in sports anchor... Michel Saint-Cyr, President of the CBC’s Real Estate Division, resigned just as CBC is trying to sell assets to finance the majority of a $171 million shortfall... Former Ontario Progressive Conservative leader John Tory began a one-hour weekly talk show this past Sunday night on CFRB Toronto. Tory is also a former Rogers Media CEO, CFL commissioner and a corporate lawyer... Diane Humber has been appointed Managing Director at CBC Calgary. It’s a move from Regional Director for Newfoundland and Labrador. ... Rachel Nixon will become director of Digital Media for CBC News effective June 1. Nixon spent nine years with BBCNews.com and is now the global news director of Vancouver-based NowPublic.com, the world’s largest participatory news network.

IGN-OFFS: Les Walton, 52, of a stroke in a Hamilton hospital. Walton had worked at CKTB St. Catharines as a Newscaster the last 24 years... Art Gould, 95, in Saint John. The former broadcaster, politician and, earlier, a meteorological officer with the Royal Canadian Air Force, helped establish a daily, televised weather broadcast on CHSJ-TV Saint John in 1957. Gould had been the mayor, deputy mayor and councillor for
the city of Saint John... Ted Reynolds, 83, in Vancouver. Reynolds' career spanned more than 50 years, 35 of them with CBC Television. It included radio and TV play-by-play for 23 sports during 10 Olympic Games. He also did freelance broadcasting and retired from the business two years ago at the age of 81.

GENERAL: The National Post will be going without its Monday print editions for nine weeks beginning June 29. It’s a move that will lower newsprint costs at the Canwest Global-owned newspaper property. The company says it will still run full digital Monday editions this summer... Rogers Communications reported a 10% decline in net earnings to $309 million or 49 cents a share for the quarter ended March 31. Results met expectations but were down from net income of $344 million or 54 cents per share. Quarterly operating revenue rose 5% to $2.75 billion from $2.61 billion. The global economic downturn has been leaving its marks on various divisions in the company, including zapping ad revenues from the company’s media division which reported a 73% drop in its operating profit to $6 million... A judge in Halifax has ruled that an inquiry into the in-custody death of a Nova Scotia man who suffered deep psychological problems can be aired live on the Internet – a first for the province. Judge Anne Derrick agreed that the webcast would make the case more open to the public. Details of the webcast will be provided during the next court date July 6... Saskatchewan minister of justice Don Morgan has decided not to pursue a complaint about a CBC News interview with convicted murderer Curt Dagenais. Morgan – before the airing – had asked that the interview with the murderer of two RCMP officers not be broadcast. Morgan’s actions have raised concerns with Mitch Diamantopoulos, the head of the school of journalism at the University of Regina. He said that the minister’s action was one “that demonstrates a disturbing disregard for press freedoms”... Two of Fanshawe College’s (London) broadcasting success stories were honoured last weekend at the college’s Broadcast Awards Night. Cheryl Hickey (class of 1996), the host of Global Television’s Entertainment Tonight Canada, and Al Campagnola (class of 1979), the product manager for Rogers Radio’s Ontario North stations and the programmer of the company’s Country stations (and based in Sudbury), are the ninth and 10th members of the college’s Broadcasting Wall of Fame.

LOOKING: CTV Toronto – Control Room Director; CTV Brandon – Producer; CBC Toronto – Social Media UI Developer, a Media Player Flash Developer and a Maintenance Developer; CBC Ottawa – Senior Manager Risk Management and Administration, CBC Pension Fund; CBC Montreal – Senior Director Finance/Administration and a Maintenance Technician; Astral Media Radio Hamilton – Account Executive; and, CAM-FM Camrose – Middays/Promotions.

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