

BROADCAST Dialogue

Essential Reading

Christensen Communications Ltd. • 18 Turtle Path, Lagoon City ON • L0K 1B0 • howard@broadcastdialogue.com

Thursday, February 5, 2015

Volume 22, Number 35

REVOLVING DOOR: Jim Blundell will retire from *Rogers Radio* March 1. Al Ford will become GM for Rogers Radio in British Columbia effective upon Blundell's departure. Ford recently moved from Edmonton to become *JACK fm Vancouver* PD, starting in that position this past Monday. Blundell's background includes: *CHUM Radio* at Peterborough, Kingston/Brockville, London and, following *Bell Media's* purchase of CHUM, moved to become VP/GM of the Victoria properties. In 2012, Blundell joined Rogers as GM of the company's stations in Alberta. Later, he became GM for television and radio in B.C., including administration and management for *City* and *OMNI Television* in Vancouver... Ken Lydford, the sales manager of news and entertainment at *Bravo*, *Space*, *CTV News Channel*, *E!* and *FT* will leave that position Feb. 13, moving with his wife, Sharon, to their lake home near Kingston. He'd been with the *Bell Media* properties for close to eight years. Before that, he held a sales management position at *CBC*... Three senior reporters and two senior news photographers are no longer with *CTV Calgary*. They are Karen Owen, at the station since 1989, Bill Marks, on staff since 1983, general news reporter Elisa Carpenter, a 15-year veteran, photographers Jim Moule, on staff since 1982 and Wes Metz, who joined the station in 1978... May Lam became director; promotion, marketing and sales integration Monday at *Bell Media Vancouver*. Lam joined the company in November as manager, sales integration, local TV-radio... Tyler Jordan has joined *91.7 The Bounce Edmonton* as the pm drive host. His last stop was in mornings at *Newcap Radio* in Brooks... Doug McCormack is the new creative director at *Newcap Radio Calgary*. He had been a creative writer for 15 years at *Rogers Radio Calgary*... Taylor Kaye who, until a week or so ago, was with *KISS 92.5 Toronto* as the mid-day announcer, moves to *CHUM-FM Toronto* in a part-time capacity beginning this weekend.



Jim Blundell



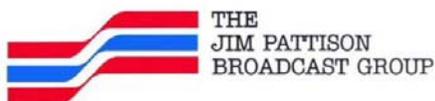
Ken Lydford



May Lam



Doug McCormack



Account Manager - Kamloops

For Details or To Apply,
Click [HERE](#).

HIGH INTENSITY LED TOWER LIGHTS

± 270K CANDELAS

- + DUAL OR WHITE ONLY AVAILABLE IN A SINGLE FIXTURE
- + SERVICEABLE AT POINT OF LIGHT
- + SIMPLE MOUNTING CONFIGURATION
- + ALL POWER SUPPLIES AND CONTROL MECHANISMS LOCATED AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TOWER

Call or write to find out more:
Info@technostrobe.com
877-721-1077
technostrobe.com

TECHNO STROBE™

See the light

SIGN-OFFS: Jim Leek, 58, at Key Largo, FL. The *JOY 1250 (CJYE) Oakville* morning host/music director had been scuba diving in the Florida Keys but shortly after resurfacing became unresponsive. Before joining as a full-time employee, Leek was host of a Christian music program which aired on the station... Mike Critch, 93, in St. John's. He was a journalist with *VOCM St. John's* for over 20 years beginning in the 1960s, and is the father of comedian Mark Critch and radio announcer Mike Campbell. Critch was known for his distinctive style and presentation.

TELEVISION: The CRTC decision regarding simsub of future *Super Bowl* games being banned saw BCE's EVP/chief legal and regulatory officer, Mirko Bibic, respond by sending an e-mail to all commissioners arguing against it. *"I really do believe the negative impacts to advertisers, Canadian content and Bell Media significantly outweigh the convenience to some viewers of being able to watch American ads within the broadcast itself,"* he wrote. Bibic asked to discuss the issue with each of them. CRTC senior general counsel Christianne Laizner denied the request, writing that the Commission had already considered input from stakeholders. Bibic said he is looking at the possibility of taking Bell's case to court. He says the decision holds nothing good for Canada. Rather, that the broader ecosystem loses and Canadian advertisers lose. CRTC spokesman Denis Carmel was quoted as saying *"They had a chance to make their point. And coming after the fact hoping to reverse the decision is contrary to our way of doing things."* The simsub decision is being described by many as a "slippery slope". Kaan Yigit of *Solutions Research Group* in Toronto was quoted as saying, *"[Those] advertisers are already experimenting with a migration of their dollars out of TV. We don't have to give them new reasons."* Analysts say that the door is open for other live events such as the *Oscars* and *Grammy Awards* to see simsub revoked. To be clear, CTV will still be allowed to switch out *Super Bowl* commercials on their own network(s) but not on American channels delivered to most Canadian homes via cable or satellite... The second decision, of more yet to come, involves over the air television. The commission said it must be maintained for now, citing the proliferation of digital television antennae

that, except for the purchase price, offers Canadians a free delivery service. And on the matter of mobile TV, the CRTC says providers can no longer give their own services an unfair programming advantage. *Bell Mobility* must eliminate the practice by April 29... Meanwhile, this year's *Super Bowl* broadcast set a Canadian audience record with 9.2 million watching on *CTV* and *RDS*. It was a 13% increase compared to the previous record high of 8.18 million viewers in 2012 and a 16% increase over last year's big *NFL* final...

Bell Media's TSN has been shut out by *Rogers* in the pursuit of the *2016 World Cup of Hockey TV*. The two-week tournament will be making a comeback after a 12-year absence and is set for Toronto's *Air Canada Centre*... Rick Green, a co-creator and performer on *The Red Green Show*, is among 26 people who have become the latest recipients of the *Order of Ontario*... *Videotron* has won *CRTC* approval for an

English-language community channel in Montréal to be called *MYtv. Matv*, on the other hand, Videotron's French community channel, has been found to be in non-compliance with the requirements of the Broadcasting Distribution Regulations relating to access programming and local reflection. It has been given until March 15 to form a citizen advisory board and provide proof of it by April 1... The more lonely or depressed you are, the more likely you're a binge viewer. Findings from a study at the University of Texas at Austin, to be presented at the 65th annual *Conference of the International Communication Association* in San Juan, Puerto Rico, conclude that binge-watching a TV show on *Netflix* or *Hulu* is one of the great pleasures of modern life. A survey of 316 people in the 18-29 demo on how often they watched TV; how often they had feelings of loneliness, depression and self-regulation deficiency; and on how often they binge-watched TV found that the more lonely and depressed the study participants were, the more likely they were to binge-watch TV, using it to move away from negative feelings... *CBS*-owned *Showtime*, a premium cable network, has struck a deal with *Bell Media*; the first time its programming will be distributed and marketed under

Wherever the future takes us!

The best partners means constant innovation.

Top radio and television stations rely on Pippin Technical and their partners' constant quest for innovation every day. Our real world broadcast experience guarantees the seamless integration of RF transmission, broadcast automation and studio systems.

This means we can find a solution, whatever your need. Over 150 man-years of experience is why Pippin Technical is the Canadian broadcaster's choice for system integration.

Pippin Technical

Call toll FREE 888-508-4677 • www.pippintech.com

the Showtime umbrella outside the U.S. The channel's programming will be featured during a special branded

Sunday evening block on *The Movie Network*. It will also appear on *CraveTV*.

GENERAL: Scott Moore, the president, *Sportsnet* at *Rogers*, blames poor ratings for *NHL* games on the methodology used by *Numeris*. But Phil King, the president, *CTV*, sports and entertainment programming is having none of it. King describes Moore's position as "utter nonsense", that it's "laughable" to blame the decline on *Numeris*. Formerly *BBM Canada*, *Numeris* reported a drop of almost one million viewers for the *NHL* all-star game, with 1.479 million people watching on all *Rogers* networks plus the *CBC*, compared with the last all-star game in 2012 shown only on *CBC*. *Rogers* had budgeted for a 20% increase in viewers this season and went to advertisers with a 20% bump in rates. *Numeris* President/CEO Jim MacLeod said the *Rogers*' concerns are being looked into but that anything unusual has yet to be discovered... *Rogers Communications* posted a 7% fall in fourth-quarter profit. It had net income of \$297 million, or 62 cents a share, in the three months ended Dec. 31, compared with \$320 million, or 57 cents a share in the same quarter a year ago. Revenue was up 4% at \$3.37 billion... The *Ontario Association of Broadcasters* (OAB) will present its 10th annual *Career Development Day* March 2 at *Corus Entertainment* headquarters in downtown Toronto. For details, contact Valerie Skivington at 905-554-2730 or memberservices@oab.ca.

RADIO: *Power 97 (CKJR-FM) Winnipeg* has been relaunched as *97.5 BIG FM*, where "big hits and real Classic Rock lives". Doing mornings are Jay & Jolene; Robin LaRose is in middays; afternoon drive is Adam K; and evenings belong to Jeff Woods. Casey Norman does weekends. Music includes a mix of artists from the late '60s to the '90s, including Manitobans such as *The Guess Who*, *Tom Cochrane*, *Bachman-Turner Overdrive* and *Neil Young*... *Radio Fierté (CHRF) Montreal* launched this past Monday with a Hot AC format serving the LGBT community. This is the second LGBT station owned by *Evanov Communications*. The other is *Pride FM Toronto*. The first song played on *Radio Fierté* was *Je pense encore a toi* by *Les Handclaps*. PD/MD is Marie-Noëlle Gagnon, most recently with *CKOI Montreal*; GSM is Alain Tanguay, ex-GM of the *Radiodiffusion Sorel-Tracy* stations; and the project coordinator is Yvan Ruel, ex of the *Corus Montreal* division. The new on-air line-up sees Michel Duchesne & Sylvain Verstricht in mornings, Michel Duchesne 9 to Noon, Marino from 1 to 3 p.m., Miguel Doucet and Joe Bocan in afternoon drive. At the launch, *I'm coming out* by Diana Ross was played for a few seconds... *Roundhouse Radio's* new B.C. station now has its official call letters: *CIRH-FM Vancouver*. The calls once belonged to a Halifax station that aired airport arrival and departure delays. *CIRH-FM* is expected to sign on this spring with a format of niche spoken word targeting 25-64s living in the downtown area... Elmer Hildebrand, the CEO of *Golden West Broadcasting*, is among four individuals who will be honoured June 2 through their induction into the *Manitoba Business Hall of Fame*... *Newcap* is requesting *CRTC* approval to move its *LIVE 88.5 (CILV-FM) Ottawa* transmitter and bump power from 2,300 to 37,000 watts to improve its signal to the eastern and southern sides of Ottawa... Ethnic *World 101.7 Edmonton* has begun offering the audio portion *Hockey Night in Canada: Punjabi Edition* from *OMNI Television*... Nominations are open for the *Allan Waters Young Broadcaster of the Year in Honour of Steve Young*. The award celebrates Canadian radio's young broadcasters and remembers the late Steve Young, one of the industry's greatest supporters of young talent. To nominate a candidate, click [HERE](#). The deadline for entries is Feb. 28... Amazing women in radio are being sought as nominees for this year's *The Rosalie Award*. Award winners are women who have had successful careers in the radio industry and are seen as leaders, mentors and people making a difference in the business. The award will be presented at *Canadian Music Week* May 7. Nominations close March 13. For more information and how to submit a nominee candidate, go to www.radiotrailblazers.ca.

The last tube user manual



Why, you ask, am I writing about transmitter tubes in this day and age? Surely it's time to bury this technology and move on to something a little newer!

While it's true that RF power tubes are rapidly disappearing from the broadcast scene (and they left technical school a few decades ago), there are still a few around in standby service here and there, and even in a few main transmitters still in primary service. Our use of them in broadcasting is so specialized that the general reference books, while still available, are often of little use when it comes to the practical nuts and bolts in the care and feeding of power grid tubes as we use them. So this column is a last chance to pass on some of the ancient lore surrounding these once-ubiquitous devices and their special needs. It really is "the last tube user manual" you will likely ever see!

The tubes we're going to be discussing are referred to variously as transmitter tubes or power grid tubes but the main thing that separates them from "receiving tubes," or "consumer-type tubes," is the composition of the filament or heater structure. In our power tubes, the filament is made of thoriated tungsten metal (an alloy of thorium and tungsten) upon which carbon has been deposited. Receiving tubes, and small tubes generally, have filaments composed of oxide cathodes. While they both emit electrons in use their behaviour in detail is quite different. Other notable differences are that receiving tube envelopes are commonly made of glass—transmitter tubes more often are made of nickel- or silver-plated steel and ceramic materials—although glass was used in older designs. It has proven over the years to be very difficult to maintain an airtight seal between glass and metal, particularly with thermal cycling

by Dan Roach



causing unequal expansion and contraction. Ceramic insulators can maintain a better seal at metal junctions. And, of course, transmitter tubes are built to handle much higher voltages and currents than should ever been seen by a typical receiving tube.

Tubes are named and described by the number of structures or elements in them... there's always a cathode, or heater, which is energized with a fairly low voltage to heat up and release electrons for the tube's operation. Then there are one or more grids operated at relatively low current and generally as the input and possibly as gain control elements of our amplifier or oscillator. Finally, the plate or collector element retrieves the electrons by attracting them electrostatically with a high positive voltage. Provided that a tube is properly cared for and isn't subjected to stresses of excessive high voltage or operating temperature, the normal wear mechanism for a tube is when its cathode no longer emits enough electrons for proper operation. Lots of bad things can happen to tubes to cut their life short but, ideally, it will be low cathode emission that will bring the useful end to our tube's life.

Aside from the heat necessary to get the cathode to emit those electrons, heat is the great enemy of long tube life. It can cause warping and internal arcing of grids, and localized heating can create cracks in ceramic parts and leaking of vacuum seals. Even more critically, the emission of electrons by the cathode is extremely dependent upon cathode temperature. When a tube is first energized, it is usually able to produce lots more electrons than are indicated on the spec sheet. As the tube ages and electrons are "boiled" off the cathode, the carbon coating gets thinner, and electron emission decreases until the tube needs replacing. Cathode temperature, it develops, is extremely dependent upon the filament voltage. A change of as little as 0.1 volts at the filament contacts can change the operating temperature of the tube by 20°C.

As a result, one of the best ways to get the most life out of a power transmitting tube is to control and regulate the filament voltage. Any extra voltage that causes the tube to produce more electrons than are needed is going to shorten tube life.

It turns out that matters are a little more complicated than this, however. The "depth of vacuum" inside the tube envelope is also extremely critical. Any extra gas molecules inside the vacuum tube can "poison" the chemistry inside and result in premature tube death. Tube manufacturers work very hard to get all the stray molecules out of the tube before sealing but they also use a secret weapon called a getter that "gets" or combines with any extraneous molecules and effectively removes them, providing a better vacuum. A common getter is a bit of zirconium wire. The trick is that the getter can only work its magic at full operating temperature. Consequently, the proper operating procedure to get maximum life from a power tube is to operate it at full suggested filament voltage for the first 100-200 hours or so of use, then reduce the voltage to the minimum that will allow the tube to produce full output, and

then monitor every 1,000 hours or so, gradually increasing the filament voltage as necessary until full tube output is not possible and it needs to be replaced.

While all of this sounds like a lot of bother, it can increase useful tube life by 50% to 100% and thus may save a few thousand dollars.

Dan Roach works at Broadcast Technical Services in Vancouver. He can be reached at dan@broadcasttechnical.com.

BROADCAST Dialogue

Essential Reading

Christensen Communications Ltd. • 18 Turtle Path, Lagoon City ON • L0K 1B0 • howard@broadcastdialogue.com

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Volume 22, Number 36

TELEVISION: As you might expect, the controversy over the *CRTC* decision on simultaneous substitution won't be going away anytime soon. *CTV* owner *Bell Media*, which has already shelled out a considerable investment for *Super Bowl* broadcast rights beyond 2017, wants the decision reversed. *Mirko Bibic*, Bell's

chief legal and regulatory officer, says consideration is being given to mounting a court challenge. Legally, the question facing Bell is whether or not the Commission made an error of law or went beyond its jurisdiction. One approach, said Bibic, might be to establish that the decision wasn't based on any evidence on the public record. (For the broader story, see this week's feature article.)...

Moody's Investors Service asserts that Canadian television's survival is

not in question. While the competition between broadband companies and third party video streaming services continues to intensify, Canadian television distributors will be able to counter some of the competition from Internet-based programming by using both their traditional distribution channels as well as the Internet, and by offering a range of subscription options that balance fees against advertising support. *Bill Wolfe*, a *Moody's* senior VP, says that "since most of Canada's television broadcasters are owned by its broadband companies, which also own the country's television distributors, the programming and advertising effects are concentrated, but we think the broadband companies will be able to manage the growing encroachment." Advertising, says *Moody's*, will continue to sustain television news and entertainment programming for quite some time, given television's ability to motivate consumers through brand recognition and image association...



The 57th annual *GRAMMY Awards* earned *City* an average audience of 2.64 million viewers, a record high for the network. A countrywide audience of eight-million viewers watched some or all of the broadcast. *City* announced the next day that it had extended the Canadian *GRAMMY* rights until 2018. This year, in a Canadian first, *City* produced a 90-minute, second-screen

broadcast which was streamed live...

A joint complaint by the *Public Interest Advocacy Centre* and *Consumers' Association of Canada* to the *CRTC* raises concerns over how *CraveTV* (*Bell*) and *shomi* (*Rogers/Shaw*) "unduly prefer" their own customers through tied selling. Both services require subscribers to buy TV or Internet from them on top of the appropriate streaming video platform. The *shomi* and *CraveTV* video streaming products were launched last fall in response to *Netflix's* popularity. *Netflix* doesn't require subscribers to pay for any other service...

The *Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television* (*ACCT*) has created two new awards for Canadian television: most-watched Drama/Comedy and highest-rated Reality Series. Each category's winners will receive Golden Screen Awards. Finalists for TV Drama/Comedy are: *The Listener* - *CTV*, *Motive* - *CTV*, *Murdoch Mysteries* - *CBC*, *Rookie Blue* - *Global* and *Saving Hope* - *CTV*. Finalists for Reality shows are: *The Amazing Race Canada* - *CTV*, *Battle of the Blades* - *CBC*, *Big Brother Canada* - *Slice* (*Shaw Media*), *Dragon's Den* - *CBC* and *Masterchef Canada* - *CTV*...

NBC Nightly News anchor and managing editor *Brian Williams* has been suspended for six months without pay for misleading the public about his experiences covering the Iraq War. *Lester Holt* will fill in for him during the suspension. Last night (Wednesday), *NBC* pulled his name from its *Nightly News with Brian Williams* broadcast...

Three new members have been appointed to the *Canadian Film Centre's* Board of Directors in Toronto. *John Morayniss*, CEO at *Entertainment One Television* and *Heather Conway*, executive VP, *CBC English Services* are the two broadcasters. The third appointee is Toronto City Councillor *Jaye Robinson*...

Max Keeping, the former long-time *CJOH-TV Ottawa* (now *CTV Ottawa*) anchor and major supporter of the *Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario*, was absent when it was announced that the *Max Keeping Foundation* will cease operations this summer. *Keeping* is battling incurable cancer. When it dissolves, the foundation's remaining \$150,000 will be donated to the *CHEO Foundation* to start the *Keeping Fund*, aimed at supporting families "facing extraordinary financial pressures when their child or teen experiences a serious illness, disability or trauma."

GENERAL: *Rogers* will pay *BCE* \$392-million in cash as part of a deal to share control of cellphone retailer *Glentel*. The two media giants formed a joint venture for control of *Glentel* after *Rogers* agreed to drop a court challenge it launched to block *BCE's* sole takeover...

BCE reported fourth-quarter financials that beat analysts' estimates. The conventional TV assets were written down by \$95 million because of the soft advertising market. *BCE* posted a quarterly profit of \$542 million, up

9.5% from a profit of \$495 million in 2013. Overall revenues rose 2.6% to \$4.94 billion. *Bell Media* revenues (radio and TV) fell 4% to \$789 million and adjusted EBITDA slid 16.5% to \$192 million. To launch *CraveTV* against *Netflix*, *Bell Media* invested heavily in streaming rights to popular *HBO*, *Showtime* and other U.S. series...

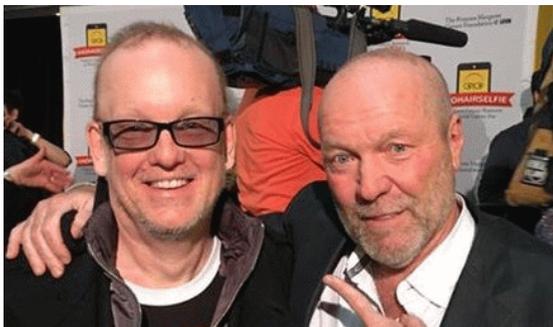


Quebecor's top outside shareholder, *Beutel Goodman & Co.*, has whittled away its interest in the company from a 22.8% stake down to less than 10%. The Toronto-based fund manager didn't say what prompted the sell-down. *Pierre-Karl Péladeau*, now a *Parti Québécois* MNA, continues to exercise nearly 75% voting control of *Quebecor* but has been off the board since running for office last year.

RADIO: *The Jewel 106.7 (CHSV-FM) Hudson/St-Lazare* is scheduled to launch March 2. The station, owned by the *Evanov Radio Group*, is 45 kms west of central Montreal with a signal that won't reach that far, instead designed to cover the western off-Island area. The morning host will be *Ted Bird*, the veteran Montreal-and-area personality who is best known for his years in mornings at *CHOM-FM*. He also freelances as a sports commentator on *City Sportsnet Central Montreal*... *CKDU Halifax*, the campus station, celebrated its 30th anniversary Feb. 1... A new app allows listeners to transform any smartphone or tablet to a radio. The radio app's website includes 20,000+ stations and podcasts worldwide. *radio.net* offers both Internet-based stations and the online streams of popular FM stations and can be sorted by popularity, format, topics, cities, countries or languages... The *Saskatoon Media Group* stations – *98COOL*, *CJWW* and *92.9 The Bull* – raised \$706,868.00 over a two-day period during its *13th Annual Children's Hospital Foundation of Saskatchewan Radiothon*. The money will go towards specific pieces of pediatric and maternal medical equipment... *C100 Halifax's 14th Annual IWK Radiothon* raised \$370,336.72 in support of the *IWK Health Centre's* most urgent priority needs, e.g. advanced technology, research, improved facilities and up-to-date equipment. The *IWK Health Centre* is a Halifax hospital that provides care to women, children, and youth from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island... *Corus Radio Winnipeg* has presented *Winnipeg Harvest* (a non-profit, community based organization that is a food distribution and training centre) with a listener-funded donation of \$32,956 in support of *Hunger for Hope*, a program dedicated to ending child hunger in Manitoba. *Corus Feeds Kids* is a national initiative focused on nourishing children's bodies and minds... *Gary Slaight*, the president/CEO of *Slaight Communications* and former president/CEO of *Standard Radio*, raised \$370,000 toward his overall goal of \$600,000 in 2015's 'Support Cancer Research on World Cancer Day'. The initial premise had been that if he raised \$250,000 he would donate a matching amount. Further, he would have his hair cut off. The next day (Feb. 4), Slaight's hair hit the floor and cancer research benefitted to the tune of \$620,000 for his efforts.



Ted Bird



Pat Cardinal and Gary Slaight

Cardinal is a cancer survivor

REVOLVING DOOR: Michelle Tonner has been promoted to managing producer at *CTV News Northern Ontario* (Sudbury), effective Feb. 17. The former decade-long senior news anchor is a 20-year veteran of CTV News Northern Ontario... **Bill Turner**, *CKLO Brandon's* long-time morning host, has decided to retire after 35+ years with the station. He's also host of CKLO's open-line show. Turner's last day is set for Sept. 16... **Terri Barach**, after almost 30 years at *CHUM/Bell Media Kingston* as a sales rep, will retire March 27. She began as a sales assistant, moving into sales about 15 years ago... **Jon Stewart**, the 17-year host of *The Daily Show* on *Comedy Central*, has announced that his departure from the political and social satire show will happen later on this year. A date hasn't been specified nor a reason for his decision... **Mike Evans** will become senior engineer at *Corus Radio Edmonton* Feb. 17. He moves from his chief engineer position at *CHIN Radio/TV International Toronto*. He's been with CHIN since September of 2001... **Randy Pike** is no longer the news director at *Q99 FM (CIKT) Grande Prairie*. Pike's background includes ND stops at *FREE FM Grande Prairie*, *CJOK/KYX 98 Fort McMurray* and *CKDR Dryden*.



Michelle Tonner



Bill Turner



Mike Evans

IGN-OFF: Jim Miller, 84, in Sudbury. He joined his father and partners (the Cooper and Plaunt families) at *Cambrian Broadcasting* in Sudbury as executive VP. In 1960, he moved west to head up newly purchased *CKRM Regina* as president of *Western Communications Ltd.* and remained there for a decade.



THE ROSALIE AWARD

Is there an amazing woman in radio who has impressed you as a ground-breaker in our industry? If so, nominate her for The Rosalie Award.

There will be two high-profile events in Toronto where the award will be presented; the first at an exclusive invitational function to recognize this year's recipient followed by an award ceremony on the stage of Canadian Music Week's Gala event with Canada's broadcast industry.

NOMINATE AN AMAZING WOMAN!

[CLICK HERE](#)

Tectonic shifts

with more to come

The last wholesale television review happened 20 years before the CRTC's Let's Talk TV process began in October of 2013. Twenty years ago we were talking about the transition from analog to digital.

Let's Talk TV was a public consultation on how to reconcile the interests of citizens, creators and consumers as TV evolved. Input was sought on three key themes: programming, technology and "the viewer toolkit".

In a January 29 speech to the London Chamber of Commerce, CRTC Chair Jean-Pierre Blais revealed the first three points that had been decided: local television stations, simultaneous substitution and mobile television services (see the sidebar for elaboration on these points).

In his address, Chairman Blais said: "Change requires adaptation by everyone, and those that previously enjoyed entitlements under the old system often make the loudest objections to the new system, set up the strongest roadblocks and dig in their heels deepest."

Are entitlements the fault of content creators or should the Commission have intervened earlier?

Consider that the CRTC chairman said in a 2013 speech at the Banff World Festival that he wanted to tear up the rules governing the TV industry (so as) to give consumers more flexibility while also giving Broadcast Distribution Undertakings (BDUs) greater manoeuvrability in competing with online challengers. "It's time to ask if the assumptions that



Simultaneous substitution

The CRTC has decided to prohibit simultaneous substitutions during the Super Bowl starting at the end of the 2016 NFL season (i.e., the Super Bowl in 2017). Reasons given were that U.S. commercials were part of the spectacle and substitution mistakes have been causing Canadians to miss parts of the game.

Cable and satellite companies that make errors may have to rebate their subscribers, while local television stations that make errors may lose the privilege to request simultaneous substitution for a period of time or for specific types of programming. Further details on this will be provided at a later date.

Local television stations will continue to be allowed to request simultaneous substitution and cable and satellite companies will be allowed to perform it for the time being. Cable and satellite companies, however, will no longer be permitted to perform simultaneous substitution for specialty channels.

lie beneath our current regulatory policies still hold true,” he said. “Broadcasting as we once knew it is no longer and will never again be the same.” At the time, Blais believed that the broadcast system was struggling under the weight of rules and regulations that made it hard for broadcasters to compete with online operators.

Simultaneous Substitution

By now you know that simsub, as broadcasters call it, will not be applicable for the airing of the 2017 Super Bowl game. That decision is being described as a “slippery slope” by many. Bluntly stated, to erode the value of a Canadian rights holder from monetizing one of the biggest events and promote Canadian content to ensure that U.S. commercials can be seen for a few hours is wrong. Revenues generated by simultaneous substitution are important to the Canadian broadcasting system in that they keep advertising dollars in Canada. That, in turn, helps create programs that Canadians value (including news and information), maintains jobs and supports local economies.

The Super Bowl is one of the highest rated televised sports events in North America. Canadian ratings this year showed an average audience of 9.2 million viewers. Overall, 19.3 million unique viewers—or 55% of Canada’s population—watched all or part of the 2014-15 NFL championship on CTV or RDS. The advertising revenue derived by CTV and RDS was significant.

In 2017, however, NBC will have its Super Bowl coverage aired in whole for a Canadian audience through BDUs. And while Bell Media may also air the game with Canadian commercials, it’s fair to say that NBC will get the lion’s share of Canadian viewers. And that will result in Bell Media taking a huge financial hit.

Michael Hennessy of the Canadian Media Production Association puts it like this: “First, when Bell makes a dollar on its broadcast business \$0.30 goes to Canadian programming, including things like local news. Take out \$20 million and the incentive is to reduce spending by the full \$20 million, including at least \$6 million on Canadian programming, probably more. And that means less original content, job cuts or station closures. And we believe the cuts will begin to happen long before it impacts the Super Bowl in 2017. The reason is because ad revenues are already well down, and no one knows if this is a cyclical phenomenon or not. What is clear is that the recent decision has just made the business a lot more uncertain.”

In a statement, Unifor, Canada’s largest union in the private sector, said that with the \$100-million Local

Over-The-Air Television

The status quo remains. Free over-the-air television will continue so long as broadcasters maintain their transmitters and not rely solely on BDUs for transmission of their signals. The Commission, aware that most television broadcasters would like nothing better than to dump the expenditure of transmitters and towers et al, said were they to do so they'd lose the benefit of mandatory carriage on basic cable and satellite packages.

Applauding the decision, Ryerson University's Gregory Taylor said "... it means that we are not restricted to cable and satellite subscription if we want to have access to broadcasting. If you remove the over-the-air sector, then we have no choice. The distributors have a complete stranglehold on things that are supposed to be public information, like news and current events."

Who should foot the bill for local programming is unclear. With the loss of the LPIF, a lagging advertising market and increased competition from online video services and specialty channels, the future is less than bright.

An Open Communication System

Also at the London announcement, Chairman Blais said: "It may be tempting for large vertically integrated companies to offer certain perks to their customers, and innovation in its purest form is to be applauded. By all means, we at the CRTC want broadcasters to move television forward by creating new and exciting ways to view content. But when the impetus to innovate steps on the toes of the principle of fair and open access to content, we will intervene."

The Commission directed Bell Mobility and Videotron to stop using a billing practice in which the two companies, for a fee of typically \$5 a month, allowed subscribers to stream up to 10 hours of TV programming without

Programming Improvement Fund (LPIF) expiring last summer, the CRTC had an opportunity to tell Canadians and broadcasters how the Commission would address the shortfall. Instead, it made the situation worse by allowing American Super Bowl ads to be run in Canada.

Kevin O'Leary of O'Leary Investments calls the decision "insane" and "perverse". He says it has to be reversed since it allows an American company to get Canadian audiences for free. The CRTC, he said, is not acting in favour of Canadians nor Canadian companies nor the Canadian economy. "They've gone to war against us", he said, noting that this kind of decision-making scares investor capital away.

Over-the-air television

The CRTC has chosen to maintain the status quo for free over-the-air television signals, which provide between five and 15 free channels through digital antennae.

Should broadcasters decide to shut down their over-the-air transmitters, they will lose the regulatory privileges that come with over-the-air transmission, such as mandatory carriage on the basic packages offered by cable and satellite companies and the ability to request simultaneous substitution.

An open communication system

With Canadians migrating more and more to the Internet for viewing content, the CRTC feels that it is important to ensure that these new platforms are made available to Canadians in a fair and open manner. Specifically, the CRTC has directed Bell Mobility and Videotron to stop using the billing practice in which the companies for a fee of typically \$5 a month allowed subscribers to stream up to 10 hours of TV programming without counting against the individual's monthly data cap. Content from other apps or websites such as YouTube, Netflix and others counted against the data cap.

counting against the individual's monthly data cap. On the other hand, content from other apps or websites counted against the data cap.

The CRTC action was initiated through an application filed by University of Manitoba graduate student Ben Klass who complained about undue preference on the part of Bell Mobility and Videotron.

Michael Geist called the ruling a “ringing endorsement” for net neutrality. He said the decision was grounded with net neutrality principles in mind. Blais said the decision wasn't so much about Bell or Vidéotron but rather about everyone's ability to access content equally and fairly, in an open market that favours innovation and choice.

Reacting, Geist said the combination of net neutrality rules and the principles of undue preference leaves Canada with an even stronger net neutrality framework that better safeguards new innovative services and that will leave U.S. net neutrality advocates looking north with envy. But Mirko Bibic, BCE's executive VP and chief legal & regulatory officer, challenged the decision. He said 1.5 million subscribers were taking the service and that 80% of the content is from other broadcasters.

Does a win for net neutrality represent a loss for customers? We'll only know after Bell Mobility customers react to higher monthly bills to.

The CRTC chair, addressing VOD, told his London audience it was “regrettable” that English Canada still lacks a true Canadian Internet streaming video-on-demand service that doesn't require a cable subscription.

Coincidentally, two consumer groups have launched a complaint over how CraveTV and shomi sell their streaming video services. Both require subscribers to purchase TV or Internet from the telecom providers on top of the streaming platform which, they say, runs against rules put in place by the CRTC to promote competition and consumer choice.

—BD

BROADCAST Dialogue

Essential Reading

Christensen Communications Ltd. • 18 Turtle Path, Lagoon City ON • LOK 1B0 • howard@broadcastdialogue.com

Thursday, February 19, 2015

Volume 22, Number 37

RADIO: *Dufferin Communications*, owned by the *Evanov Radio Group*, has approval to obtain effective control of ethnic-formatted *CFMB-AM Montreal*. With this addition, Evanov now operates three stations in Québec. The other two are *Radio Fierté (CHRF) Montreal* and *The Jewel (CHSV-FM) Hudson/St. Lazare*. With the CFMB addition, Evanov operates 18 stations in small, medium and large markets... *Soft Rock 101.5 myFM (CKMO-FM) Orangeville* launched at 6 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 17 with a local newscast, excited, they said, to cover a local story that began developing on the weekend. The first song played was *Trevor Guthrie's Soundwave*. 101.5 myFM started broadcasting Dec. 27 with 10,000 songs in a row. At noon Tuesday, dignitaries visited the station and the mayor cut the opening ribbon. Station staff include: General Manager *Gail James*, News Director *Tommy West*, three sales reps and a second newscaster... *102.3 CLEAR FM (CKY-FM) Winnipeg* is no more. In its ashes arose *KISS 102.3*, the *Rogers Radio* brand for eight of its stations across Canada. The format remains an AC music mix and the on-air line-up remains intact at CKY. The other seven KiSS stations in the Rogers chain are: *CHUR-FM North Bay*, *CHFM-FM Calgary*, *CHAS-FM Sault Ste. Marie*, *CISS-FM Ottawa*, *CKGB-FM Timmins*, *CKIS-FM Toronto* and *CJMX-FM Sudbury*... *Corus Radio* has extended its Fresh branding to the former *Hits 100.5 (CKWS-FM) Kingston* and *Hits 104.3 (CKRU-FM) Peterborough*. The new *Fresh Radio* (formerly Fresh FM) female-targeted Hot AC format is now heard at seven Corus stations (Edmonton, Winnipeg, Hamilton, London and Cornwall being the others). For Peterborough it's the second rebrand within six months. On Sept. 4, *100.5 KRUZ FM* became *Hits 100.5*. At *Fresh Radio Kingston*, the new brand opened with *Maroon 5's Sugar*. The on-air line-up at both Peterborough and Kingston remains solid... *FM96 (CFMK-FM) Kingston (Corus)* has updated its sell line from *Classic Rock* to *Kingston's Best Rock*. The music has switched to Mainstream Rock; chart toppers and the best of greatest Rock hits... *Alan Cross* and *Dave Charles* may become the needed element in helping the *Toronto Maple Leafs* win more *NHL* games. The two radio veterans formed *Major League Mixes*, a company that, for the Leafs, rolls out tunes from a 2,500-song library – everything from Rock, Rap and Country to whatever's hot – to jack up fan excitement levels. The idea is to shake up game-night



Alan Cross



Dave Charles



Maintenance Technician - Kamloops

For Details or To Apply,
Click [HERE](#).

experiences by making the *Air Canada Centre* rock by creating a positive environment... **Bill Anderson**, for years the morning show host at *Classical 96.3 Toronto*, is celebrating 50 continuous years on-air. His career has included just about every type of format; Pop, Rock, Easy Listening, Country, Middle of the Road and Classical. Staff threw him a party last Friday... *World Radio Day* Feb. 13 marked the fourth such event raising awareness of the importance of radio. *UNESCO* says the day is to encourage decision-makers to establish and provide access to information through radio as well as boost networking and international cooperation among broadcasters. *UN* statistics indicate that there are over 2.4 billion radio receivers and over 51,000 radio stations worldwide... *Bell Media Kelowna's Have A Heart* radiothon raised \$84,500 for *Kelowna General Hospital*. The one-day campaign by *99.9 Sun FM*, *101.5 EZ Rock* and *AM 1150* will see the proceeds go toward the purchase of life saving equipment... There are now 38 new



Bill Anderson



customized apps for *Corus Radio* stations, all available at no charge from station websites. Each app is curated specifically for each station's audience... French-language *CJVA Caraquet*, NB, has won *CRTC* approval to flip to FM. Owned by *Radio Acadie Itée*, *CJVA-FM* will target 45-65s and broadcast 81 hours of local programming a week. The balance will be simulcast from *CKLE-FM Bathurst*.

T**ELEVISION:** *Sun News Network* is no more, defeated by denial of mandatory carriage, news programming that went up against a host of national, regional and local news channels, and the resulting dearth of necessary advertising revenue. As a result, 150 full-time staffers and another 50 part-timers were put out of work. A deal with *Zoomer Media* to buy *Sun News* fell through a couple of weeks back. Last Friday morning, the plug was pulled to permanently close the four-year-old operation. *Sun News* parent *Quebecor* lost \$46.7-million between 2011 and 2013. **Leonard Asper** scrambled a last-ditch effort last week to buy *Sun News Network*, according to the *National Post*. Asper is CEO of *Anthem Media Group* and the former CEO of *Canwest*. On Feb. 11, his opening bid involved no cash up front, according to the *Financial Post*, but allowed a \$5-million equity to *Quebecor* at the back end after three years. *Quebecor* declined and did not engage in any further negotiations... (*Editor's Note: For an in-depth look at the channel's history, see this week's feature story*)...

Bell Media and *Telus* have asked the *CRTC* to dismiss a "frivolous" complaint from consumer advocacy groups about *Bell's CraveTV* streaming video service, saying that the regulator would be reaching beyond its jurisdiction to rule on digital media. The *Public Interest Advocacy Centre* joined with the *Consumers' Association of Canada* to express concerns over how *Bell* sells *CraveTV* to consumers. Documents were also filed regarding similar concerns with the *Rogers/Shaw shomi* service. *PIAC* and *CAC* say the companies are operating online video services which "unduly prefer" their own customers. Coincident to this story, *Bell Media* signed four more distributors for *CraveTV*: *Access Communications*, *Cable Cable*, *Nexicom* and *Northwestel*...

NBC Nightly News lost nearly 400,000 viewers to *ABC's World News Tonight* as viewers dipped from 9.8m at the beginning of last week to 8.6m on Thursday. **Brian Williams's** name was removed from the title on Wednesday. The week before, the *NBC* telecast was beating *ABC* by identical numbers. **Williams's** credibility

continues to be questioned amid new reports he lied about being at the fall of the Berlin Wall...

DHX Media, the owner of *Family Channel*, the English and French *Disney Junior* channels and *Disney XD* says it earned \$5.5 million in its latest quarter. The Halifax-based producer and distributor of children's TV shows, such as *Teletubbies* and *Degrassi*, also increased its quarterly dividend by a tenth of a cent to 1.4 cents. Profit amounted to four cents per diluted share for the quarter ended Dec. 31 compared with a profit of \$2.8 million or three cents a share last year. Revenue in the company's second quarter was \$64.3 million, up from \$30.4 million in the last three months of 2013... **Bell Media** has a deal with **FIFA** (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) extending its media rights deal through to 2026... **CTV** has become the first broadcaster in Canada to support **Google Chromecast**, a thumb-sized media streaming device that plugs into the HDMI port on TVs. **CTV GO** TVE users can "cast" from Android and iOS phones and tablets, and from laptops using Chrome browsers.

GENERAL: Prime Minister Stephen Harper told **FM93 (CJMF-FM) Quebec City** that "a lot of" **Radio-Canada** employees hate conservative values while a large number of Quebecers support them. His comments were in response to a question asking how he was going to convince Quebec voters to come onside in the next election. **Conservatives** hold five seats in Quebec while the **NDP** has 54 and the **Liberals**, five. Unions representing **CBC/Radio-Canada** employees have responded with indignation at the Prime Minister's remarks. They say Mr. Harper's public accusation that Radio-Canada employees detest conservative values is absurd and unfounded, and are calling on him to apologize. Thousands of people work at the CBC/SRC across Canada, they say, "and their political opinions are as varied and as private as every other Canadian's"... **CBC** President **Hubert Lacroix** defended his news staff, their journalism and the culture inside the CBC during a sometimes heated atmosphere at a Senate committee hearing studying the challenges facing the CBC in a changing media landscape. Senators were ruled out of order for persisting in asking questions related to **Jian Ghomeshi**, provoking testy exchanges. Lacroix, answering reporters' questions afterwards, did not respond to comments by Prime Minister **Harper** Monday charging that most workers at **Radio-Canada** detested conservative values...



Consulting, Design and Analysis and e-Procurement in IT and Communications Technology

Our Technology Advisory Services

- IT, Unified Communications, Networking and Contact Center Strategy, Design and Procurement Assistance
- Benchmarking, Vendor Comparisons, and Budgetary Financial Total Cost of Ownership
- Vendor Analysis, Negotiations and Project Implementation Support

Why choose FOX GROUP Technology ?

- We have been providing expert communications technology advisory service to Enterprise, Government, Education and Non-Profit sectors for over thirty years
- Our experience, eProcurement tools, processes help reduce the time, effort, cost and risk for our clients in selecting, deploying and managing future technology

To book a web demo of our eProcurement technology applications
Contact Roberta.Fox@FOXGROUP.ca or +1 289.648.1981
1-866.FOX.GROUP | www.foxgroup.ca

As for the rest of Lacroix's appearance before the **Standing Senate Committee on Transportation and Communications'** study on the challenges faced by **CBC/Radio-Canada**, his message was "Challenge us. Don't shrink us to mediocrity, challenge us to be great. Give us the basic tools to compete in the world..." With the public/private approach that's been the model of CBC for 80 years, he said, the Corporation is as creative, efficient and ambitious as any broadcaster in the world. And while there are financial and public policy challenges, he said, "few public broadcasters in the world, if any, provide more services for less money than **CBC/Radio-Canada**". A broken revenue model combined with declining advertising revenue and constantly shrinking public funding are the primary issues... **CBC & Radio-Canada Media Solutions**, just launched, is described as a full-service offering covering TV (conventional networks and specialty channels), radio, and digital platforms in both official languages and across Canada. The integrated media group is meant to better meet market needs...



Mary Ann Turcke



Borika Vucinic



Dervla Kelly



Lisa Lyons



Nikki Moffat

Broadcasters among the 15 people to be honoured in this year's *Women in Communications and Technology* annual awards are:

Woman of the Year: Mary Ann Turcke, group president, media sales local TV & radio, *Bell Media*

Leadership Excellence Awards:

Technology Innovator: Borika Vucinic, director, TV engineering and operations, *Bell*

Communicator: Dervla Kelly, head of corporate communications, *Shaw Media*

Empowerment: Lisa Lyons, president, Kids Can Press, *Corus Entertainment*

WCT Leader: Nikki Moffat, senior VP, finance, *Bell Media*

Mentor: Pat DiVittorio, VP, program planning, *Bell Media*

WCT Leader: Robin Hildebrand, manager, HR & regulatory, *Golden West Broadcasting*.

All are being recognized for their efforts to advance women's representation and achievement in Canada's information, communications and technology sector. The awards will be presented at WCT's Annual Awards Ceremony and Gala at Ottawa's *Fairmont Chateau Laurier* April 22.



Pat DiVittorio



Robin Hildebrand



Jeff Murray



Lochlin Cross



Nicola Crosbie



Kate Blank

REVOLVING DOOR: Jeff Murray has been promoted from his PD position at *Newcap Alberta East* to programming supervisor for the Red Deer stations and the *Newcap Alberta (South) Radio Group*. Those stations are: *ZED 98.9/KG Country Red Deer, Q91 Drumheller, Q93.3 Stettler, CJPR (Mountain Radio) Blairmore* and *101.1 The ONE/Q 105.7 Brooks...* *Harvard's 95.7 CRUZ FM Edmonton* has hired a new morning show set to begin this spring. Lochlin Cross, of *Bell Media's 100.3 The Bear (CFBR-FM)* afternoon drive show, and Nicola Crosbie, *Global Edmonton's* chief meteorologist, are partnering for the new gig... Morning show Host Steve Stax has moved from *102.3 JACKfm London (Rogers)* to *FREE 98.1 FM London (Blackburn)*. He joins *Blair & Brandt* on the morning show beginning Monday... Laura Geddes is moving from *101.7 The One*

Wingham (Blackburn) to join *91.5 The Beat Kitchener (Corus)* in mornings with *Carlos (Benevides)*, *Dave (Jutzi)* and *Laura*. She was the MD/afternoon host in *Wingham...* *Jessica Frost* has been elevated from her fill-in job co-hosting mornings and drive to become *MY 92.1 Regina's* new midday host. She starts Feb. 23 and succeeds *Twylla West* who resigned to raise her young family... After eight seasons, *Arlene Dickinson* is leaving *CBC-TV's DRAGON'S DEN* to free up more time for her business endeavours... *Kate Blank* has been appointed director, international sales at Toronto-based *Blue Ant Media*. She had been the director of international distribution at *Breakthrough Entertainment*.

SIGN-OFFS: *Ken Cameron (Kenneth Roy Camphaug)*, 58, in *Edmonton*. Cameron was a 30+-year veteran of radio in Western Canada, primarily in *Alberta*. He'd been on-air at stations that include *CHED Edmonton*, *CFCW Camrose/Edmonton*, *CFAC Calgary* and *CJOC Lethbridge*... *Bob Simon*, 73, in *Manhattan* after a town car in which he was riding crashed with another vehicle. The longtime *CBS 60 Minutes* correspondent was among a handful of elite journalists to cover most major overseas conflicts and news stories since late 1967. He'd been contributing to *60 Minutes* on a regular basis since 1996.

SUPPLYLINES: *Nautel* has announced the first deployment of high powered FM transmitters to *Broadcast Australia* under a new five-year supply agreement... The 2015 *WABE/SAIT Technical Training Seminar* is scheduled for June 1-5, offering both radio and TV tracks. For details and session topics, click [HERE](#).



May 12-14, 2015
PENTICTON
The 68th Annual Conference
BCAB

[CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!](#)



WAB
WESTERN ASSOCIATION
OF BROADCASTERS

[→ Registration Now Open!](#)

Western Association of Broadcasters 81st Annual Conference
June 3-4, 2015, Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta

There's only one chance to make a good first impression

Sun News, which began in 2011 promising “hard news and straight talk”, faded to black Friday morning, February 13 after low ratings on, first, its Toronto standalone analog channel and then for its cable specialty channel, Sun News Network. Two-hundred jobs were lost, 150 of them full-time.



As Yogi Berra once said, “It was déjà vu all over again.”

The previous owner, Craig Media, signed on in Toronto September 19, 2003, with CKXT-TV, a general interest TV station with a re-broad transmitter in Hamilton. Toronto One, as it was branded, was the first new Toronto station in 30 years. At the time, Craig Media was then Canada’s largest privately-held television broadcasting company with holdings including A-Channel Edmonton, A-Channel Calgary, A-Channel Winnipeg, CKX-TV Brandon, Toronto One and specialty channels MTV Canada, MTV2, TV Land and Stampede.

But Toronto One proved to be a financial disaster for Craig. Further, it was often criticized in the Toronto media for flashy, vacuous and repetitive local content, newscasts that had a tabloid feel and an uninspired prime time schedule based heavily on movies.

Eight months later 28 Toronto One employees were laid off and numerous programs were cancelled.

But the financial situation didn’t improve: Craig had weak results at its Western stations and the losses at Toronto One were higher than anticipated. In November 2004, CHUM Limited won CRTC approval for the purchase of all Craig Media Inc. shares, including all three A-Channels, CKX Brandon, Toronto One; and the specialty channels for \$265 million.

The CRTC also approved the sale by CHUM of Toronto 1 to Groupe TVA and Sun Media (both subsidiaries of Quebecor Media) for \$46 million.

At the end of August 2005, Toronto 1 became known as SunTV.

The performance of CKXT, transmitting on UHF, under Quebecor was no better than it was under Craig and more employees were laid off. The station began acquiring low-rated U.S. network series. It was the only English-language independent TV station outside of religious and community television stations in Canada on UHF and, to grow audience, it applied for and received approval for re-broadcasters in Ottawa and London in 2007.

On April 23, 2013, Sun News Network applied for mandatory carriage on basic cable and satellite packages across Canada through 2017. It proposed charges of 18 cents a month from every household that subscribed to basic cable or satellite packages. Kory Teneycke, Sun News Network's vice president, told commissioners that his channel wanted the same deal as CBC Newsworld and CTV News Channel: *"All we're saying is, make sure that people see our product. Make sure they see it for five years at a reasonable and fair price ... let's do that for five years, and if in five years, it hasn't worked, we're dead."*

On Friday, February 13, 2015 at 5 a.m. the programming died. There was no on-air announcement. In my area, Rogers Cable put up a super reading: "Sun News Network is no longer available at the discretion of the programmer."

Coincidental to the channel's demise a news release stated: After attempting to establish Sun News as a viable news channel in the Canadian broadcasting landscape and encountering a series of barriers to carriage, Sun Media Corporation regrets to announce today that it is closing the station. At the time of this release, Sun News Network is already off the air.

"This is an unfortunate outcome; shutting down Sun News was certainly not our goal," said Julie Tremblay, president and CEO of Media Group and Sun Media Corporation. "Over the past four years, we tried everything we could to achieve sufficient market penetration to generate the profits needed to operate a national news channel. Sadly, the numerous obstacles to carriage that we encountered spelled the end of this venture."

Sun Media Corporation spent months actively seeking a potential buyer but no party capable of taking over the channel was found. Therefore, in view of the financial losses, there was no alternative to closing Sun News.

"The closure is regrettable for the Canadian broadcasting system, which is losing a distinctively Canadian voice in the national news space, and also, most importantly, for all the Sun News employees who are losing their jobs. We thank all employees for their daily efforts and the talent they have contributed to the channel. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours," concluded Tremblay.

When Sun News launched in April of 2011, its on-air personalities included: Charles Adler, David Akin, Theo Caldwell, Jacqui Delaney, Krista Erickson, Ezra Levant, Brian Lilley, Alex Pierson and Heelam Verma.

Later that year, TVA Group requested that the CRTC revoke its licences for CKXT-TV Toronto (Sun's OTA signals) and its re-broadcasts in Hamilton, London and Ottawa.

Following that change, Sun News no longer received mandatory carriage nor its previous low channel position on BDUs in Toronto, Hamilton, London and Ottawa. Instead, the cable and satellite distributors no longer carried it as part of basic service.

Sun News Network did not have the news gathering resources such as journalists and equipment at its disposal as did CBC, CTV, Rogers and Global. Its tight production budgets with limited feet on the ground resulted in low production values at a significantly higher cost. The chronic lack of video footage didn't make for compelling television.

While its show with Toronto Mayor Rob Ford and his brother, called Ford Nation, drew outstanding viewer numbers, it had to be cancelled after one episode because it cost too much time and money to produce.

It became clear during the Let's Talk TV meetings that viewers are increasingly against paying for TV channels they don't want to watch. This created pressure on the CRTC to examine in detail which channels would receive mandatory carriage. Data released as part of the mandatory carriage application showed that while Sun News Network was available to 5.1 million households, it was attracting, on average, just 8,000 viewers at any given time.

With financial pressures generally mounting on local news stations—even for vertically integrated companies—a single station operator's chance of success was in question and might explain why a buyer for SUN News couldn't be found. When Postmedia announced last October that it was buying Quebecor's Sun Media Corp. and its 175 English-language newspapers for \$316 million, the TV channel was not included in the deal. And that would have left the channel without access to news content or branding.

A defining feature of SUN News was its aggressive and argumentative tone which resulted in a number of complaints to the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council. Most related to comments made by controversial host Ezra Levant.

Democracy benefits from having lots of media with differing perspectives. The network's closure means fewer journalists keeping an eye on Canadian politics. For this reason alone, the failure of Sun News Network is a shame.

—BD

Dialogue BROADCAST

Essential Reading

Christensen Communications Ltd. • 18 Turtle Path, Lagoon City ON • L0K 1B0 • howard@broadcastdialogue.com

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Volume 22, Number 38



Richard Costley-White



Ron Dann



A.J. Junop



James Kurtis



Pat Ellingson

REVOLVING DOOR: There have been changes at the top of *Blackburn Radio* in Southwestern Ontario. President Richard Costley-White moves to become chairman while VP Ron Dann succeeds Costley-White as president. VP John Weese is no longer with the company. Dann moves from VP operations for the Blackburn stations in Sarnia (*103.9 FM CHOK-FM/K106.3/99.9 The Fox*), Wingham (*101.7 The ONE/AM 920 CKNX/Classic Rock 94.5*) and London (*FREE 98.1*) while Weese had been VP operations for the radio stations in Chatham (*Country 92.9/94.3 CKSY/95.1 Light FM*), Leamington (*Mix 96.7/Country 92.7*) and Windsor (*100.7 Light FM/FM 95.9*)... A.J. Junop has been appointed senior creative copywriter at *Vista Radio's Vista Ideas Group*. For the last nine years he's been a faculty member at the *Vancouver Institute of Media Arts* and *Columbia Academy*. Prior to that he held roles as senior creative copywriter with *Standard Broadcasting* and as an on-air personality at various Ontario stations... Brad Schwartz, who has served in a senior executive capacity at *CTV, Fuse* and *MTV*,

has been promoted to president of *POP*, the rebrand of *TVGN*. It's an expanded role since he will remain as president of entertainment and media. *POP* is owned by *CBS* and *Lionsgate*... James Kurtis has been promoted to become the new morning show host/Music Director at *JOY 1250 Oakville*, succeeding the late Jim Leek. Kurtis begins March 2. He had been the swing drive announcer for





NAB2014 Award Winner

- Shipped Plug & Play
- Win 7 Pro - 2TB Desktop Only
- 4Ch WebStream Logger & Alarm
- Dual CH USB Card - Balanced

Price: \$1995.00

LCD Monitor not Included



OAKWOOD BROADCAST INC. 1-800-665-0501 www.oakwoodbroadcast.com

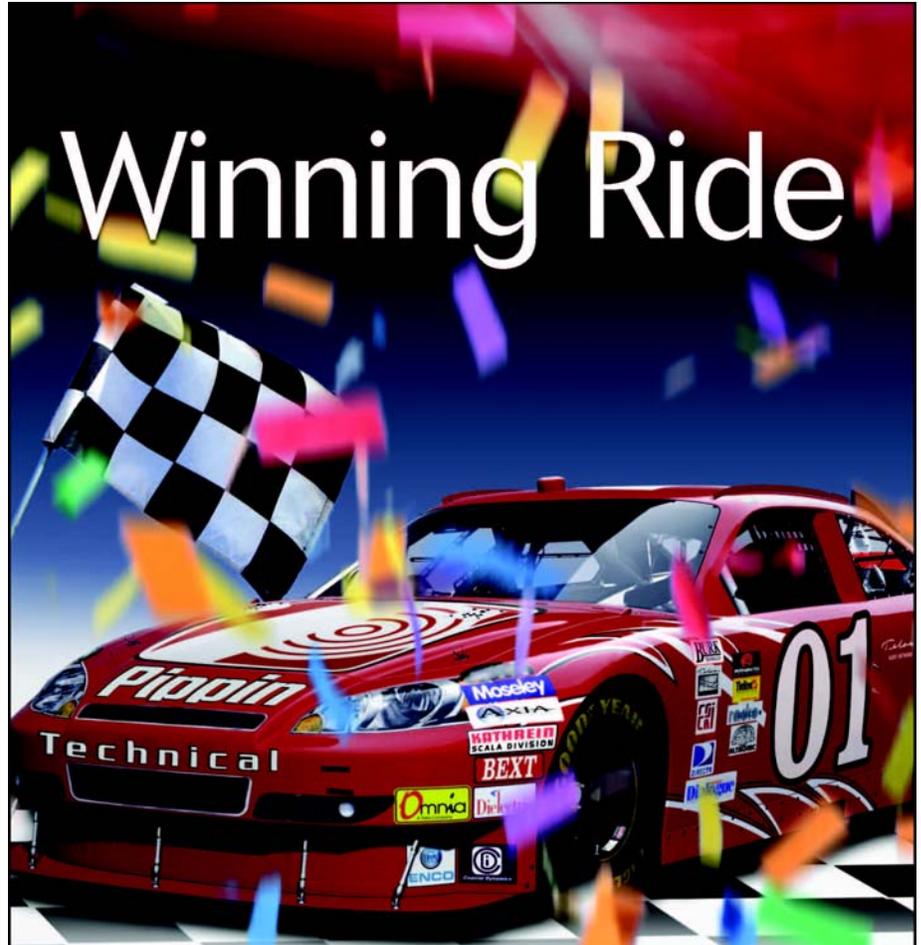


Brigitte Vincent Catherine Vidal

many years... Pat Ellingson, *TVO's* long-serving creative head of children's and parents media, will retire Aug. 31. She joined *TVO (TV Ontario)* in mid-1995 to help the start-up of the educational channel's venture into live current affairs programming... Jeanne Beker is now the style editor at *The Shopping Channel*. She also launches a new show March 12 on TSC called *Style Matters with Jeanne Beker*... Brigitte Vincent has been appointed VP, programming, for *Corus Entertainment's Historia* and *Séries+* channels. She succeeds Fabrice Brasier who is no longer with the Montreal office. Vincent has over 25

years of television industry experience and had been director of original productions and Canadian acquisitions at the two specialty channels since 2008. In one of Vincent's first moves, she appointed Catherine Vidal as director, original productions and Canadian acquisitions... Sylvia Augaitis, who joined *TVB* in Toronto as the senior communications officer in October 2012, left the bureau for a career outside the industry.

RADIO: 97.5 *The River (CKRV-FM) Kamloops* has moved to a Variety Hits format, "... best music from the '80s '90s and WOW!" It launched Feb 20 at 7 a.m. with a new morning show: Jeff Molnar and Heather Adams (*Jeff and Heather in the morning*). Molnar moved from Abbotsford. The WOW brand is unique to The River and saw research for its inception performed by Jeff Vidler and imaging/branding done by Matt Cundill, ex of *Power 97 Winnipeg*... The new *COUNTRY 89! (CKYY-FM) Welland* was launched this past week. The first song played was *Sun Daze by Florida Georgia Line*. The format brings local country music radio back to the Niagara Region after a decade-long absence. Rob Leclerc and Janel Steeper do mornings, Stephanie Mizzi is midday and afternoon drive is handled by co-hosts Marc Lefebvre and Katie Pansolin. Eryk Trickett does evenings and weekends. Country 89's sister station is *Giant FM* with a Classic Rock format. Giant FM was the result of



Winning Ride

Choose the Best Pit Crew in the Business

More and more radio stations are choosing team Pippin to solve their challenges large and small. Whether it's competitive pricing on the best brands, after sale service, or integrated systems and installation Pippin Technical is the Canadian broadcaster's first choice.



Call toll FREE 888-508-4677 • www.pippintech.com

rebranding from *Spirit 91.7* which aired Country music. It was owned by the late **Suzanne Rochon-Burnett**, a Métis business woman and a Member of the Order of Canada. She was the first Aboriginal Canadian to own a private commercial radio station: *CHOW Welland* (now *CIXL - Giant FM*)... More *KiSS* brands for *Rogers Radio* stations. On Monday, *SONiC* in Chilliwack, Abbotsford and Vancouver adopted the new ID. And *103.1 JACK*



FM Victoria became Top-40 *KiSS 103.1* on Tuesday. The first song played was *Uptown Funk* by Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars. The station will be running commercial-free music until March 3... After receiving an application for an FM licence from *Bayshore Broadcasting* in the Bracebridge-Gravenhurst market, the *CRTC* has issued a call for comments on that market's capacity and on the appropriateness of issuing a call for applications. The deadline for receipt of interventions is March 26... *Banff Centre Radio*, less than a year after it was launched, is releasing its licenses for two radio stations — English 101.1 and French 103.3. The arts institute's stations catered to tourists with ski and weather reports. Instead, the former OTA content will focus on podcasts. The final *Rocky Mountain Morning Show* airs tomorrow (Friday). According to Banff Centre Radio's Facebook page, the stations will remain on air, repeating old shows until the *CRTC* approves the application for revocation... At *Corus Entertainment's boom 99.7 Ottawa*, some re-jigging of on-air staff. The new line-up sees *Shock & Sharkey In The Morning* (Tom Schoch was in afternoons and Sandy Sharkey did evenings); Wendy Daniels is now in middays (she had been a co-host of mornings); afternoon drive is Pete Marier (ex morning co-host) and Heather Ray, formerly of middays, is now doing evenings... *Country 100.7 (CKBW) Bridgewater's* annual radiothon in support of the *Health Services Foundation of the (Nova Scotia) South Shore* raised just over \$150,000.00. The money will go toward building a cancer patient resource room at the South Shore Regional Hospital. CKBW staff went into the day hoping to raise \$107,000... *104.5 CJTT FM New Liskeard's First Annual Valentines Temiskaming Hospital CAT Scan Foundation Radiothon*, with a goal of reaching \$25,000, was wowed to raise \$37,400. The event, called *For the Love of Your Health*, was aired over a seven-hour period... *CFOS Owen Sound* alumni are asked to make contact with the station so they can take part in 75th anniversary celebrations. An open house is set for Monday, March 2 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. and anyone who has ever worked at CFOS is invited.

GENERAL: *CPAX (Canada's Premium Audience Exchange)* has added *Post Media*, *Yellow Pages*, *The Chronicle Herald* (Halifax), *DHX Television* and others that brings the number of premium sites on the exchange to over 100. The programmatic exchange service is operated by 11 media companies producing



Maintenance Technician - Grande Prairie

For Details on this Career Opportunity or to Apply,

Click [HERE](#).



THE ROSALIE AWARD

Is there an amazing woman in radio who has impressed you as a ground-breaker in our industry? If so, nominate her for The Rosalie Award.

There will be two high-profile events in Toronto where the award will be presented; the first at an exclusive invitational function to recognize this year's recipient followed by an award ceremony on the stage of Canadian Music Week's Gala event with Canada's broadcast industry.

NOMINATE AN AMAZING WOMAN!

[CLICK HERE](#)

University and the chance to win cash prizes totaling \$100,000... The *Slaight Family Foundation* will donate \$7 million to support seven Canadian non-governmental organizations. The funds will be split equally amongst *Stephen Lewis Foundation*, *War Child*, *Free the Children*, *Right To Play*, *Human Rights Watch*, *Partners In Health Canada* and *World Vision*...

T**ELEVISION:** Following an agreement between *Bell Media* and *CBS*, *CraveTV* has launched *The SHOWTIME Collection*. It features 600+ titles and 400 hours of premium programming... *Corus Entertainment's W Network* has two new online properties in *W Dish* and *W View*. *W Dish* delivers lifestyle and pop-culture topics while *W View* is a digital video hub for women... *Radio-Canada*, says the *Quebec Press Council*, violated journalistic principles in a 2014 TV news item less than a week before the provincial election about the husband of former *Parti Québécois* leader *Pauline Marois*. *Radio-Canada* said *Claude Blanchet* allegedly solicited \$25,000 to fund her 2007 leadership bid. *Marois* and *Blanchet* deny it. *Radio-Canada* says it will appeal the decision... *NBC Nightly News*, now anchored by *Lester Holt* in *Brian Williams's* suspended absence, has seen audience levels go up by more than half a million viewers on his second week filling-in. The other AmNets were up, too, but *NBC's* news package has not taken a big hit over the absence of *Williams*...



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Television and Digital Media winners from the *2015 Canadian Screen Awards* were announced Tuesday. *Bell Media* and *Shaw Media* had 12 awards each, *CBC* won eight, *TMN/Movie Central (Bell Media/Corus Entertainment)* shared five awards; *TVO/Knowledge Network* shared two while *TVO*, *Fresh TV*, *Rogers Media* and *Travel & Escape/Science Channel* (owned by *Blue Ant Media/Discovery Communications*) each won one award. Here's the breakdown:

Barbara Sears Award for Best Editorial Research - <i>History Channel Canada</i>	Best Original Music for a Non-Fiction Program or Series - <i>History Channel Canada</i>
Barbara Sears Award for Best Visual Research - <i>TVO/Knowledge Network</i>	Best Photography in a Documentary Program or Factual Series - <i>TMN/Movie Central</i>
Best Biography or Arts Documentary Program or Series - <i>TVO</i>	Best Photography in a Lifestyle or Reality/Competition Program or Series - <i>Travel & Escape/Science Channel</i>
Best Cross-Platform Project - Children's and Youth - <i>Fresh TV</i>	Best Photography in a News or Information Program, Series or Segment - <i>Global</i>
Best Cross-Platform Project - Fiction - <i>Bell Media</i>	Best Picture Editing in a Documentary Program or Series - <i>TMN/Movie Central</i>
Best Direction in a Documentary or Factual Series - <i>CBC</i>	Best Picture Editing in a Reality/Competition Program or Series - <i>CTV</i>
Best Direction in a Documentary Program - <i>TMN/Movie Central</i>	Best Production Design or Art Direction in a Non-Fiction Program or Series - <i>Slice</i>
Best Direction in a Lifestyle/Practical Information Program or Series - <i>HGTV Canada</i>	Best Reportage, National - <i>CTV News</i>
Best Direction in a Live Sporting Event - <i>TSN</i>	Best Science or Nature Documentary Program or Series - <i>CBC/Radio-Canada</i>
Best Direction in a Reality / Competition Program or Series - <i>CTV</i>	Best Sound in a Documentary, Factual or Lifestyle Program or Series - <i>TMN/Movie Central</i>
Best Documentary Program - <i>TMN/Movie Central</i>	Best Sports Analyst in a Sports Program or Series - <i>TSN</i>
Best Factual Program or Series - <i>History Channel Canada</i>	Best Sports Opening/Tease - <i>TSN</i>
Best History Documentary Program or Series - <i>TVO/Knowledge Network</i>	Best Sports Play-by-Play Announcer - <i>CBC</i>
Best Host or Interviewer in a News or Information Program or Series - <i>CTV</i>	Best Sports Program or Series - <i>Sportsnet</i>
Best Lifestyle or Talk Program or Series - <i>HGTV Canada</i>	Best Writing in a Documentary Program or Factual Series - <i>History Channel</i>
Best Live Sports Event - <i>CBC</i>	Best Writing in a Lifestyle or Reality / Competition Program or Series - <i>CTV</i>
Best Local Newscast - <i>CBC Toronto</i>	
Best National Newscast - <i>Global National</i>	
Best News Anchor, Local - <i>Global BC News Hour</i>	
Best News or Information Program - <i>CBC News: the fifth estate</i>	
Best News or Information Segment - <i>CTV: W5</i>	
Best News or Information Series - <i>CBC News: the fifth estate</i>	
Best News Special - <i>CBC News</i>	

The two-hour live broadcast gala will air Sunday March 1 on *CBC*.

SUPPLYLINES: *YANGAROO* and *Mediaocean* have partnered to bring Mediaocean users a solution to streamline their ad delivery and traffic management... Web designer *OpenRoad* of Vancouver says the responsive website it designed and built for *CBC Transmission* has won Best Broadband Website in the *2014 Davey Awards*.

WAB
WESTERN ASSOCIATION
OF BROADCASTERS

→ Registration Now Open!

Western Association of Broadcasters 81st Annual Conference

June 3-4, 2015, Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta

Radio matters

At mid-month, the North American Broadcasters Association (NABA)—an organization serving radio and television operations in Mexico, the United States and Canada—staged an event during probably one of the coldest days this winter.

But the keynote address was hot.

In her opening remarks, Julie McCambley, the conference chair and the director, radio production at CBC/Radio-Canada, welcomed delegates by noting that radio remains relevant, competitive and operating in an environment that's transitional. One of the goals of the Future of Radio Audio Symposium, she said, was to create a dialogue around challenges and opportunities.

FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai

FUTURE OF
RADIO & AUDIO
Symposium

February 19th, 2015

HOSTED BY

CBC  Radio-Canada



Keynote Address of FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai: The Future of Radio

Ajit Pai opened his talk with a look at Canada's significant and rich radio station history. The first scheduled radio program *in the world* was broadcast by XWA Montreal May 20, 1920. It was a concert by vocalist Dorothy Lutton who sang from the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company's factory in Montreal. Among those listening was the Royal Society of Canada. Its members gathered at the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa for the broadcast. Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden and future Prime Minister Mackenzie King were both present. The concert was such a hit that many Canadians quickly lined-up at stores to buy radios for their homes.

Hockey was to Canadian radio what baseball was to American radio. Hockey Night in Canada, he noted, began in 1931 on the Canadian National Railway Radio Network when it began airing Maple Leafs games on Saturday nights. According to one estimate, the program debuted to an audience of 100,000. But by 1934, it was drawing 2.5- to three-million listeners. In 1934, a survey found that what was then called the General Motors Hockey Broadcast had a 74 market share in Montreal, an audience that any radio or television broadcaster would kill for today, he said.

FUTURE OF RADIO AUDIO *Symposium*



Foster Hewitt—the father of play by play broadcast hockey

Broadcast News Moves to the Forefront

Canadians soon discovered that radio was good for far more than entertainment. The turning point was the Moose River mine disaster of 1936. FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai recalled that when three men were trapped in a Nova Scotia gold mine 43 meters below ground, Canadian broadcaster J. Frank Willis went to the scene to report. He broadcast two-minute updates every half-hour for 56 straight hours in North America's first live 24-hour news event.

When asked how he managed to do it, Willis responded: "You did without sleep. And you got your second wind, and then you got your third wind, and then you found yourself in a semi-comatose state. You were alert enough in certain ways, you could still do the old biz, you know, picking up any news that was going—but in the meantime, you were not physically well."

Willis's reports from the mine site became so popular that they were carried throughout the United States and even in the United Kingdom. One-hundred million people were said to have tuned-in to hear some of his coverage. Those broadcasts, he said, changed the perception of radio throughout North America. What had been thought of as a medium for entertainment also became a critical outlet for news reporting. That's probably why The Canadian Press in 1950 voted the Moose River mine disaster as Canada's top radio news story of the first half of the 20th century, beating out such events as D-Day and the Liberation of Paris.

Today, radio stations throughout North America are carrying on



J. Frank Willis interviews Billy Bedaux from Stellarton, NS after his ground-breaking broadcasts at the Moose River Gold Mine disaster.

“So to anyone who doubts this medium, who wonders why I’ve devoted a substantial amount of attention to radio during my tenure at the FCC, I have a simple two-word answer: radio matters.”

the legacy of J. Frank Willis. “From WTOP Washington to KBRW Barrow, Alaska. From KDKA Pittsburgh to WTAW College Station (TX) and to 680News (CFTR) Toronto” [which he visited the day before], Pai said local broadcasters remain committed to serving their communities and providing listeners with valuable news and information.

Radio Matters

In his view, the spirit of serving communities, more than anything else, accounts for radio’s enduring popularity. “But many people these days just don’t seem to appreciate the influence and importance of radio in the current media landscape. So let me mention a couple of statistics. Each week, over 91% of Canadians and Americans listen to terrestrial radio. Although we are living in the digital age, that’s more people than go online. And in both countries, the average listener tunes in for over 14 hours a week. So to anyone who doubts this medium, who wonders why I’ve devoted a substantial amount of attention to radio during my tenure at the FCC, I have a simple two-word answer: radio matters.”

First and foremost, he said, radio matters during public safety emergencies. The very first section of the U.S. Communications Act stresses the importance of promoting [the] safety of life and property through the use of wire and radio communication. And when disaster strikes, he said, radio plays a vital role in supplying people with the information they need to stay safe and begin recovery efforts.

When the power goes out, when the Internet goes down, and when wireless networks fail, battery-powered radios establish a critical connection to the outside world. Residents in the Northeastern United States found that out as super storm Sandy made landfall in the fall of 2012. Radio listenership in the New York City market jumped dramatically, with audiences skyrocketing by 367%

along the Connecticut coast and 245% on Long Island. And just last month, as winter storm Juno approached the Northeast, New Jersey’s Office of Emergency Management listed the three most important items to have in an “emergency kit”: food, water, and a battery-operated radio.

Pai noted that local broadcasters’ commitment to serving their communities makes a critical difference. Consider the story of CHSL-FM, he said. “That station is located in Slave Lake, a small town of just under 7,000 people in northern Alberta—hence its





nickname of Lake-FM. In May 2011, a devastating wildfire hit Slave Lake, and Lake-FM gave local residents continuous updates.

“Lake-FM itself was eventually consumed by the wildfire, and the station burned to the ground. But the station’s personnel didn’t give up. Lake-FM continued to transmit vital information to listeners through Internet streaming and updates on the station’s website. And Courtney Murphy, the station’s news director, also called into a radio station in a nearby town in order to reach listeners in Slave Lake. Why did she keep going? Courtney explained, ‘I was just concerned about each and every person in Slave Lake and I didn’t even have time to think that the place I love and work at was burned to ashes.’ That epitomizes the ethos of broadcasters throughout North America. The Slave Lake wildfire involved the largest evacuation in Alberta to date, and one-third of the town was destroyed. But because of committed first informers like Courtney Murphy, there were no casualties among Slave Lake residents.”

What Now?

In Pai’s view, there is little debate about radio’s storied past and there shouldn’t be any dispute about radio’s present importance. But what about radio’s future?

“I, for one, continue to believe that radio will occupy a vital part of North America’s media landscape. Those who believe that broadband will prove to be a substitute for broadcast, in my view, are fundamentally mistaken. Broadcast and broadband are complements, not substitutes.

“That having been said, radio broadcasters do face some notable challenges as we head into the future, most pressing, in my view, are the problems facing the AM band. AM broadcasters confront the same basic difficulty in Canada as they do in the United States. Every day it seems harder to get a good AM signal, and we see the impact in the marketplace. In Canada, the decline in the number of AM stations has been especially dramatic, with many AM broadcasters converting their facilities to FM. In both countries,



Courtney Murphy, who is now doing middays at K-Rock 105.7 Kingston and is the community relations coordinator at Rogers Radio Kingston



AM listenership is down, way down and advertising revenue along with it. Today, the AM band accounts for only 10 to 20% of terrestrial radio listening. In the 1970s, it was roughly on par with FM.”

As part of the FCC’s AM Radio Revitalization Initiative in 2013, he said, the U.S. regulatory body is exploring ideas for solving the band’s long-term challenges. As an example, he cited all-digital AM tests being conducted by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). Pai said the initial signs are promising. There is also the question of moving to synchronous AM transmission systems, improving AM signal quality through the use of small cells. AM revitalization in the U.S. is one area where the people on either side of the political divide are coming together, he said, to advance the common good.



The Threats to AM/FM Broadcasting

Audio consumers have more choices than ever: Satellite radio, Pandora, Spotify, Rdio, Rhapsody, Slacker, iHeartRadio, and so on. Each of them, he said, didn’t exist a generation ago. And when it comes to the hunt for advertising dollars, the rise in competition isn’t just from other sources of radio. A plethora of outlets for digital advertising are now available.

“Accompanying this rise in competition has been a profound change in consumer expectations,” Pai said. “Consumers, especially younger ones, increasingly expect to hear their preferred content when they want on the device of their choosing. Broadcasters can no longer just sit back passively and expect their audience to come to them. Rather, to meet consumer demand, they need to be more aggressive, to package their content in different ways and deliver it through a variety of means. Internet streaming and podcasts are good examples of radio broadcasters reaching out to meet listeners where they are.

“Mobile, of course, is a large part of where consumers are these days. In less than a decade, smartphones and tablets have gone from being something of a luxury item to indispensable parts of our daily lives.”



Where consumers go, said Pai, advertising dollars will follow. A recent estimate saw mobile advertising growing quickly, from just 2.6% of total media advertising to 26.4% in over just six years. Assuming that trend continues, a mobile strategy is a must for anyone counting on that revenue stream.

The FM Radio Chip

Virtually every smartphone sold in North America today contains an FM chip. But unlike in Europe, that chip isn't activated in most phones. "In fact, on occasion it's affirmatively deactivated. I find this perplexing. As a consumer, I would love to have the functionality of being able to listen to FM stations over the air through my smartphone.

"Activating FM chips would have a public safety benefit as well. Last year, the head of FEMA (the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Authority) spoke about the benefits of having active FM chips in smartphones when disaster strikes. Without it, he said, if the wireless network goes down, 'your smartphone becomes a brick'."

As an FCC commissioner, he said, he sees this as a matter of smart spectrum policy. North Americans are witnessing an explosion in mobile data use with no end in sight. Wireless carriers, especially in urban areas, are in a constant battle to avoid network congestion. Among other things, they have an insatiable appetite for more spectrum. Last month, for example, the FCC concluded its most successful spectrum auction ever, garnering over \$40 billion for what's called AWS-3 spectrum.

"Given all of this, streaming FM stations on consumers' smartphones using cellular networks just doesn't make much sense. All of that data is unnecessarily using spectrum and contributing to network congestion when consumers instead could be using their phones to listen to that same content over the air with an active FM chip. For these reasons, I'm glad that the market is beginning to move in that direction. In the United States, for example, Sprint offers a wide array of devices with activated FM chips.

Virgin Mobile and Boost Mobile also provide this option. And last year, BlackBerry rolled out a software update that activated the FM chips in many of its smartphones.”

Pai said that if there is consumer demand for activating FM chips, he’s optimistic that progress will be made toward getting this functionality as a result of commercial negotiations and competitive pressure.

Regulatory

Government should be on the side of innovation, he said, and shouldn’t stand in the way of future technologies. It should give the private sector room to engage in bold experimentation and permit those technical experiments to be made permanent when they prove themselves. But at the same time, Pai said regulatory bodies must exercise an appropriate degree of caution when it comes to making across-the-board changes to the industry. Whenever possible, change should come from the bottom up rather than the top down. As an example, he cited Canada’s unsuccessful attempt to transition AM and FM broadcasters to Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) in the L-Band. It serves, he said, as a sober reminder that markets will not necessarily evolve as regulators envision.

On content, Pai wants a hands-off approach. The government has no place in the newsroom or in a station’s editorial decisions. Neither should regulators try to shape programming. “The marketplace of ideas will always work better than government-managed debate, and radio broadcasters are in the best position to know what their listeners want to hear.”

Pai, in closing, went back to the examples of outstanding service to community: “In 1936, J. Frank Willis didn’t stay up for 56 straight hours during the Moose River mine disaster at the direction of a government regulator. Nor did the law require Courtney Murphy to continue reporting during the Slave Lake wildfire in 2011 after her station had burned down. No, Willis, Murphy and countless other broadcasters throughout North America have risen to the challenge during important events because of their determination, fortitude and spirit of service to their community.

“And I have little doubt that radio in each of our countries will continue to deliver so long as regulators allow broadcasters to do what they do best.” With strong AM and FM bands in Canada and the United States well into the future, he said—giving due respect to Tim Hortons—is “a real double-double!”

—BD