

Broadway musicals and plays but a slight interest in ballet or opera.

Under the Home Box Office formula, subscribers pay an added \$6 per month charge. Its programs are made available by the installation of a push-button converter supplied by the cable-system operator.

Another Service Electric system, in Allentown, Pa., began to carry Home Box Office's mix of features and sports events last week. Films being shown in February are "Mary, Queen of Scots," "Frenzy," "The Great Northfield, Minnesota, Raid" and "Silent Running."

Panagos fears take-over of cable by county

The founder and owner of the first cable television franchise granted in the metropolitan area of Washington says the threat of government ownership of cable television "scares me to death." John Panagos, whose Gaithersburg (Md.) CATV-Inc. became operative a little more than a month ago, told the Advertising Club of Metropolitan Washington at a luncheon meeting that the franchise authority of the Montgomery county council in suburban Maryland, acting as a result of a proposal for a county-owned and operated local cable system (BROADCASTING, Oct. 9, 1972), has authorized a \$200,000 feasibility study of government ownership of cable TV systems. Noting that he is currently one of 11 applicants for a cable-TV franchise in Montgomery county, Mr. Panagos made it clear that he would rather lose his franchise bid to a competitor than to see government operation of the system.

He cited the inherent danger to freedom of the press and the "staggering" financial burden to the county and its taxpayers as primary reasons for his fear of government ownership. "The county has enough to do in solving sewer problems, roads, schools," Mr. Panagos said.

Smalls talk. Lots of little things accomplished but no major action—that was the summary of the two-day board of directors meeting of the National Cable Television Association in New Orleans, Feb. 7-8. NCTA's dues committee, reporting work on a specific proposal for dues reduction, was directed by the board to have a firm plan available for the next board meeting in April. The board made clear that it favors a substantial reduction in dues at the bottom of the scale for small cable operators, while advocating an increase at the top.

The board also approved the concept of holding five meetings in Washington next spring with cable operators from five different regions invited in for briefings on legislative matters. Also approved by the board was a definition of a "small" cable system as one that has 3,500 subscribers or fewer and has a potential of no more than 5,000 homes.

Equipment & Engineering

Tightening up at Collins

A new division to incorporate all aspects of its broadcast operation has been established by Collins Radio Co., Dallas.

Steve Spence, who joined Collins in 1961 and most recently was director, computer services division, has been named general manager of the division that will handle marketing, engineering and manufacturing for broadcast products. John Haerle is to continue as marketing manager.

"The customer will benefit from the centralization," according to D. R. Beall, executive vice president of Collins. "And because the division will have complete responsibility for all engineering and manufacturing functions, we will be able to produce a better-than-ever product at competitive prices."

Mr. Beall also said the Collins booth

at the National Association of Broadcasters convention in Washington next month will include a new-product section, and that the introduction and delivery of other new products will be accelerated by the reorganization.

Technical Briefs

Selling by tape. Simpson/Reilly & Associates, Seattle station rep, plans to use Sony Videocassette recorders to make more effective sales presentations to advertisers for its station clients. Firm says it will employ tape medium in visual depiction of client's facility, to provide sponsors with air check of their spots from distant markets and to provide advertisers with personal message from station managers. Simpson/Reilly is regional representative with station clients in Washington, Idaho, Oregon and British Columbia.

Put off. Launch of Intelsat IV, commercial communications satellite to be



Together. District and federal officials were on hand Feb. 1 for the dedication of the new joint television tower and antenna for the Evening Star Station Group's WMAL-TV and Post-Newsweek's WTOP-TV, both Washington. The new 640-foot facility, which was put into operation Dec. 18, 1972, is located at 40th and Chesapeake Streets, N.W. It is credited with improving reception for a million viewers in the immediate area as well as adding 150,000 viewers in adjacent states. At the ceremony (l-r): Richard S. Stakes, executive vice president of Washington Star Station Group; Katharine Graham, president, Washington Post Co.; Larry H. Israel, chairman of the board, Post-Newsweek Stations; District of Columbia Mayor Walter Washington; John H. Kaufmann, president, Washington Star Communications Inc.; Senator J. Glenn Beall Jr. (R-Md.), and John W. Thompson, president of the Washington Star Station Group. The new facility is also being used by WMAL-FM and WHUR-FM, both Washington.

Know any funny stories you can't tell on the air?

Put 'em on tape or cassette and send 'em in! Contemporary new humor service pays \$25 for each joke used. Stories need not be original if you tell them great or add a fresh new twist. All risqué ratings needed: "G", "PG", "R", even "X". Audience: adult men and women. Ideal length: 30 to 60 seconds. Laugh all the way to the bank. Send as many as you can think of to: "Ever hear the one about...", Box 670 44, Century City Station, Los Angeles, California 90067. All jokes acknowledged.