

that it had bought six transponders.

TBS is operator of two of cable's better known services, the Cable News Network and superstation WTBS(TV) Atlanta. It is in the process of constructing a 100,000-square-foot motion picture and television production facility in Atlanta. TBS did not reveal any plans for its Hughes's transponder.

The agreement is subject to the approval of the companies' boards of directors. Moreover, the entire concept of selling transponders has come under the scrutiny of the FCC, which is considering whether the sale of transponders by Hughes and Western Union is legal. The FCC staff has received comments from many of the industry's satellite users insisting that it is not. The staff's opinion on the subject will become known in late September or early October when it presents its recommendation to the FCC.

Public broadcasting gets gift of 'Annie'

Columbia Pictures and Rastar Films are donating proceeds from movie premiere to help fund 100 PBS stations

The financially insecure public television industry expects to receive a much-needed shot in the arm next spring through the unprecedented donation of a major motion picture premiere to benefit more than 100 individual Public Broadcasting Service stations.

Columbia Pictures is offering the first showing of the film version of the Broadway musical "Annie" as a fund raiser for the system.

In a news conference last Wednesday (Aug. 19) originating from noncommercial KCET(TV) Los Angeles, participants described the effort as "the largest individual fund-raising event in the history of public broadcasting," capable of raising as much as \$5 million for the stations.

KCET President James L. Loper told a nationwide teleconference audience that Columbia Pictures decided to make the film available at the suggestion of "Annie" producer Ray Stark. According to Loper, Stark came to KCET with the offer after reading about the Reagan administration's planned budget cuts for public television.

"This exciting project is totally in keeping with President Reagan's budget policy," said Stark, "in which private sector commercial entities work with publicly funded arts groups to generate badly needed funds. We would be very hopeful that this alliance between Columbia and public television sets an example for the private sector in finding new ways to support PBS."

Under the agreement with KCET, which is coordinating the event for public stations, Columbia will provide prints of "Annie" for premiere in theaters in participating cities. Each station will develop a ticket price structure with the participating theater in its community. Net profits from the screenings will go directly to the stations. It is expected that some theater owners may charge for use of their facilities, while others may donate their services.

"We are delighted that Rastar [Rastar Films is producing the film] and Columbia can offer 'Annie' . . . as a revenue-producing entity for public television," said Frank Price, chairman and president of Columbia Pictures. Price said he hopes the studio's gesture will "lead to other areas of cooperation between the film and public television industries."

The film, which finishes shooting in early September, will have its premieres in Los Angeles, New York and Toronto in mid-May 1982, followed by openings in other cities in mid-June.

Sally Stewart, a member of KCET's board of directors and president of the station's volunteer fund-raising committee, called the project the biggest single fundraising event yet for public TV, and predicted it could become "a catalyst for future support of our entire industry." She said that 109 stations have already agreed to form their own coordination committees for the premiere, and that many plan to tie the screening in with other fund-raising activities associated with the movie. The KCET Women's Council, under Stewart's direction, will meet with station representatives from throughout the country in October to develop detailed fund-raising strategies.

During the teleconference announcement, "Annie" director John Huston joined cast members Aileen Quinn ("Annie"), Albert Finney ("Daddy Warbucks") and Carol Burnett ("Miss Hannigan") in expressing support for the concept, via videotaped interviews.

Monitor

Peacock plumes. NBC-TV has announced addition of three limited-run series to its fall prime-time schedule to fill hiatus created by writers' strike earlier this year. *Fitz and Bones*, airing Saturdays, 10-11 p.m., stars Smothers Brothers as unorthodox TV news-gathering team. Series will air from Oct. 24 through Jan. 2, and is preceded by *Fitz and Bones* two-hour made-for-TV movie on Oct. 19. Premiering on Oct. 4 and airing until Dec. 6 will be *Here's Boomer*, Sundays from 7 to 7:30 p.m., and *The Flintstones*, animated cartoon series, from 7:30 to 8 p.m. same evening. *Here's Boomer* concerns adventures of small dog. One-hour fantasy/adventure series, *The Powers of Matthew Star*, will take over time period on Dec. 6.

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Best yet. ABC-TV said its daytime programing for week of Aug. 3-7 achieved highest rating, 10.0 with a 35 share, that ABC had ever scored in "a normal viewing week." CBS's was put at 6.8/24 and NBC's at 4.0/14, giving ABC its biggest margin ever over both CBS (3.2 rating points) and NBC (6 points). ABC said it was not its highest daytime rating: during last week of last December it averaged 10.2 rating, but that was holiday week and included daytime broadcast of Sugar Bowl football game. For third quarter, July 1 through Aug. 7, ABC said its daytime programing is averaging 9.5/34, up one rating point from year ago.

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Waiting for TV. If ongoing negotiations don't crumble, public broadcasting audience could see television version of *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio's evening news and public affairs show, as soon as January. Logistics of show—now planned as one-shot, one-hour special—are being negotiated by noncommercial WETA-TV Washington and NPR.

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Spelling renewed. Hollywood producer Aaron Spelling has renewed his exclusive multi-year contract with ABC-TV, continuing 12-year association with network. Spelling will develop programing for ABC while remaining nonexclusive in other entertainment areas. Terms were not announced.

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Filing suit. Anita Clay Kornfield, author of "Vintage," novel published last year about families involved in Napa Valley wine industry, has filed \$100-million damage suit in U.S. District Court in San Francisco against CBS Inc., Lorimar Productions, and other principals involved in production of *Falcon Crest*, Lorimar-produced series scheduled to premiere this fall on CBS-TV. Suit charges CBS and Lorimar with infringement of copyright, breach of expressed and implied contract, fraud and misrepresentation. Kornfield claims her agent submitted "Vintage" to CBS and Lorimar last fall, and was promised \$1 million if book were to be used in developing motion picture or movie. Suit charges producers with breaking that agreement and seeks preliminary and permanent injunctions to halt production of *Falcon Crest*. Neither CBS nor Lorimar had immediate comment on action, filed by Kornfield's attorney, Melvin Belli. Series is set for 10-11 p.m. Fridays on CBS this fall.

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HBO sharing Spotlight's limelight. Home Box Office is to be reintroduced on Times Mirror cable systems from which it disappeared to make way for Times Mirror's stand-alone pay service, Spotlight. Back in May, HBO was bounced from 17 Times Mirror systems, though it stayed on MSO's southern California operations as second pay option. New agreement calls for HBO to be offered in 34 Times Mirror systems, with launches starting early next year. Some launches will be reintroductions, some first-time HBO appearances.