

Successor for Neil Austrian as head of Showtime/The Movie Channel **was to have been made last Friday**, according to reliable source, but announcement was canceled at last minute. **Selection** by Viacom's new president and chief executive officer, Frank Biondi, is **expected this week**, with leading candidate still said to be Biondi's former Time Inc. colleague and VP, **Tony Cox**. At least one dissenting observer speculated that Biondi, who is very familiar with pay TV business, having run HBO, might not choose someone of Cox's stature to run day-to-day Showtime/TMC operations.

Memorial service for Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige last Wednesday (July 29) **delayed start of Iran-Contra hearings, causing them to run until about 8:30 p.m.**, well past evening news period. CBS News, which was carrying live rotation feed for other networks that day, took it in stride. *CBS Evening News* anchor Dan Rather, who has been anchoring hearings from Washington, handed hearings coverage to CBS News correspondent Bob Schieffer at 6 p.m. Rather then anchored 6:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. feeds of *Evening News*, as rotation coverage of hearings continued simultaneously via special satellite hookup, for CBS affiliates that wanted to carry hearings. CBS's coverage ended at 8:27 p.m. Lane Venardos, CBS executive producer of special events, said it was "the first time in our recollection, at least in the Eastern time zone, that congressional hearings were broadcast in prime time." WUSA(TV) Washington was one CBS affiliate that carried full coverage of hearings. It did not air its local news or CBS network news that evening.

CBS-owned **wbbm-TV Chicago** will move **CBS Evening News** from current **5:30-6 p.m. time slot to 6 to 6:30**, beginning Sept. 14. At 5:30, opposite ABC and NBC national newscasts, *CBS News* has placed third. In May sweeps, *CBS News* scored 5.3/12, compared to 6/14 for *NBC Nightly News* and 9.6/22 for *World News Tonight*. In new schedule, local news will run from 5 to 6. *Truth or Consequences* will run at 6:30-7, replacing second half hour of local news that had run from 6 to 7.

Mass Media Bureau of FCC last Friday approved application of **Gillett Broadcasting to spin off six TV stations into trust for four teenage sons of George Gillett**, while at same time Gillett group would own maximum number of TV stations, 12, permitted by FCC's multiple ownership rules. Licensee of six stations will be company headed by Lawrence Busse, current president of Gillett Communications, who will resign to run stations: WRLH-TV Richmond, Va.; WWMT(TV) Kalamazoo, Mich.; WEAU(TV) Eau Claire, Wis.; KOLN(TV) Lincoln and KGIN(TV) Grand Island, both Nebraska, and KOKH-TV Oklahoma City. Busse will own 100% of voting stock and 1% of

Emmy eligibles. In prime time Emmy nominations, announced by Academy of Television Arts and Sciences last Thursday, *NBC* won nearly twice as many nominations, 140, as its network competitors *ABC* and *CBS*, which each earned 75. *PBS* received 25 and *Fox Broadcasting* took five. Seven nominations went to syndicated programs.

Among individual programs, *NBC's* L.A. Law led with 20 nominations. *ABC's* Moonlighting and *NBC's* Golden Girls received 14 each, *NBC's* St. Elsewhere had 11 and *NBC's* Cheers won 10.

Fox will telecast the awards ceremony from Pasadena, Calif. Civic Auditorium on Sept. 20.

PBS led in news Emmy race, earning 35 of 111 nominations announced last Monday, followed by *CBS* with 32. *ABC* with 24, *NBC* with 18, and two syndicated programs (documentary from the *Cousteau Society* and *CBN* news segment) received one each.

Regular news and documentary series pulled in multiple nominations for all but *NBC*. Programs earning more than one nomination for *PBS*: *National Geographic*, six, and *Frontline*, four; *CBS*: *CBS Evening News*, eight, and *60 Minutes*, five; *ABC*: *Nightline*, seven, *20/20*, five, *Breslin's People*, two, and *Our World*, two.

Academy of Television Arts and Sciences will announce winners in New York. Sept. 7.

equity, while Gillett Family Trust will own 99% of equity. Trust has three trustees, including Gillett.

House Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations last week passed **lottery advertising legislation** that would permit broadcasters to advertise legal lotteries (including, for example, bingo and casino gambling). Under current law, only broadcast advertising of state-conducted lotteries is allowed. Representative Clay Shaw (R-Fla.) was considering offering amendment that would have outlawed lottery advertising unless it is permissible under state statute.

CBS's remake of *The Twilight Zone*, which premiered in September of 1985 and went off air earlier this year, is being **revived in co-venture between CBS International and major domestic syndicator** sources said last week. Venture will produce another approximately 30 episodes which will be packaged with episodes already in can from past two seasons. Syndicator will offer package to stations domestically, while CBS International will distribute it internationally.

Home Box Office Inc. said last week that **by September**, its new pay TV service, **Festival**, will be offered in cable systems serving more than three million homes. Among MSO's that are or will be carrying service: ATC Corp., Cable America, Comcast Cable Communications Inc., Enstar Communications, Hauser Communications, Insight Communications Co., Jones Intercable Inc., Media General, Post-Newsweek Cable Inc., Scripps-Howard, SCA Television Inc., TCA Cable, United Cable Television Corp., United Video Management Inc., Vision Cable Communications and Sammor Cable Communications.

Group W Television Sales, internal rep arm for Group W Television stations, has entered rep sweepstakes on two available stations in two largest markets—MCA's **wwor-TV New York** and Chris-Craft United's **kcop-TV Los Angeles**. *WWOR-TV* is currently repped by *Black Television*, but has been listening to proposals from other firms: *KCOP-TV* was repped by *TeleRep* until it became rep for *Tribune KTLA-TV* Los Angeles and all other *Tribune* stations.

President Reagan on Friday announced appointment of **White House staffer Elizabeth Board** to post of **special assistant to President for media and broadcast relations**. She succeeds Sue Mathes, who has joined Disney World. Board moves into her new assignment from job as director of White House television office. Before joining White House, in 1984, Board had worked for five years for *NBC News*.



Salary dispute between Lorimar-Telepictures and actress Valerie Harper, star of *NBC-TV* series *Valerie*, could lead to her replacement. Harper, who has four years left on six-year contract that contains automatic salary escalation clause, did not report to work last week for taping of first episode of fall season and was written out of script. Lorimar, which produces program in association with Miller-Boyet Productions, has contacted other "major stars" about replacing lead character in role of relative or friend, and is awaiting their responses, Lorimar spokeswoman said. She added that *NBC* was pleased with alternatives under consideration and has given assurances show would be on schedule "with or without her." As of Friday (July 31), Lorimar had not set deadline for Harper's return, but officials said even if she is replaced program will retain name *Valerie*. Harper's agent could not be reached for comment.

Randy Reiss was named **president of network television for Walt Disney and Touchstone Television, and executive vice president of Walt Disney Studios** last week. Reiss will be in charge of all Disney network television product. With appointment, Reiss also becomes member of newly formed broadcast board. Reiss recently