

television spots as well as radio spots for each movie prior to its airing. In addition, stations will receive magazine and newspaper slicks and black and white still promotion photos.

The program "is the strongest promotional package we have ever put together," said Thurston, adding, the "promotional support given to stations who purchase this package will be second to none."

"This is probably one of the best packages ever sold," said Janeen Bjork, vice president, director of programming, Seltel, who saw the presentation on Wednesday, Oct. 12. "These are titles that will play in prime time, during sweeps periods," she said, adding, "at least 10 [of the titles] will play in sweeps more than once, they have a real encore value." Bjork said that Showcase I will probably "command more dollars than any other package in the last two years. The only other package that may come close," she said, "would be Paramount's Portfolio 13, which will probably include some of the 'Star Trek' and Eddie Murphy films." □

GTG hires 'ET' veteran for 'USA Today'

Formerly with 'Entertainment Tonight' and ABC's 'World News', Jim Bellows is brought in as managing editor of struggling GTG Entertainment program

GTG Entertainment has wasted little time in making changes in *USA Today: The Television Show*, after its much anticipated, but disappointing, launch. The company said last Tuesday (Oct. 11) that Jim Bellows, formerly managing editor of *Entertainment Tonight*, has been named managing editor of the *USA Today* show.

Bellows "will be in total charge of the content of the daily program," said Steve Friedman, president of GTG East, adding that, "planning and production meetings with the staff will begin immediately as he winds down his present duties, and he will come aboard full time in November." In his capacity as managing editor, Bellows will report directly to Friedman who is also executive producer of the program.

"We've had extremely positive reaction from our stations to the recent changes Steve [Friedman] has made in the show's format, and the arrival of Jim Bellows is another major step in the right direction," said GTG Entertainment President Grant Tinker.

Since its launch during the week of Sept. 12-16, GTG has pared down the number of stories presented during each show, moved the cover story to the top of each broadcast and has tried to make the show more interactive with the audience by incorporating audience polls using 900 telephone numbers.

Following his stint at *Entertainment Tonight* from 1981-1983, Bellows was executive editor of *ABC's World News Tonight with Peter Jennings*. Since 1986, Bellows has been director of editorial development at Prodigy, a home computer service. □

Original programming in works for AMC

Classic movie cable service to produce new series on Hollywood

American Movie Classics, in an effort to enhance its value to cable operators and add depth to its programming, will step up production of original series.

Josh Sapan, president of national program services at Rainbow Program Enterprises, said that AMC is currently developing two regular series to add to the channel's schedule of classic movies, which are linked by vignettes about movie stars, interviews and behind-the-scenes stories about the films. Rainbow (a division of Cablevision) and TCI each own 50% of AMC, which is seen in 11 million homes.

The new regular series on AMC will be an outgrowth of those "interstitial programming" pieces, which include *Classic Stories From Classic Stars* (interviews) and *Star Facts* (biographies), which average 20 minutes in length. AMC debuted *Classic Stories From Classic Stars* in July. And in September AMC added a "mini-documentary series," *Making of a Classic*.

Sapan said the new features will add another layer of depth to that programming. Development topics include a half-hour series devoted to the history of Hollywood during the 1930's, 40's and 50's.

Sapan said the new programming is not a result of any perceived deficiency or worry



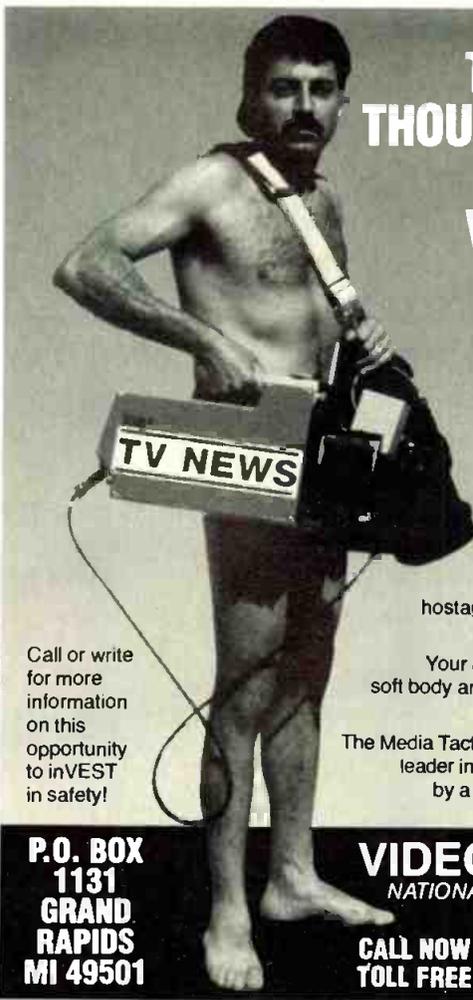
AMC host Bob Dorian

over protecting AMC's spot on the cable systems.

At the recent Atlantic Cable Show, Sapan said that Jones Intercable's dropping of USA Network because of Jones's stated dissatisfaction with USA's programming could be the "tip of the iceberg" when it comes to cable operators dropping channels over programming or rate disputes.

"I think that services which have the greatest definition" in their approach to programming offer consumers the "highest value," he said. In American Movie Classics' case that value is achieved with programming that is not aimed at garnering the highest ratings, but at providing subscriber satisfaction. Sapan continued.

Although AMC is technically considered a pay channel (it does not carry commercial



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