

plant," said Packwood. And John Kerry (D-Mass.) agreed with Packwood's comments. He said it has only been six years since the Cable Act was adopted. Said Kerry: "I want to be careful that we do not ignore the delicate mosaic of this industry that is still developing."

Attendance by the senators was extremely good considering there was a key vote on the floor on clean air legislation. As Inouye commented: "This indicates we take this matter with great seriousness."

NAB made no bones about its desire to see its competitor reregulated. Fritts told lawmakers that unless cable is reregulated "the future of free TV is in jeopardy." Fritts also endorsed the staff draft on cable as an "outstanding piece of legislation." The draft includes must carry and channel positioning rights. INTV President Jim Hedlund also testified in favor of the draft. Hedlund, however, stressed that he was not out to "engage in gratuitous cable bashing," but that the only solution is to "change the structure of the cable industry."

Mooney and Hostetter were also joined at the witness table by Thomas Burchill, president of Lifetime Television. They attacked the so-called "mandatory access" provision and warned that it would have a harmful effect on the industry. As Mooney pointed out, "it is ironic that broadcasters are allowed to preserve their exclusivity but you deny us the ability to pursue the same kind of competitive strategy." —KM

## NBC reshuffles

After repeated hints that it might drop one of its movie nights, NBC is doing just that, at least for the time being. The network is pulling *NBC Monday Night at the Movies* and three series to make room for five new series. The schedule adjustments will affect three nights—Monday, Friday and Saturday. The changes are part of a spring tryout strategy to introduce a dozen new series over two months.

Monday night will consist of *My Two Dads* at 8-8:30, *Working Girl* (based on the movie) at 8:30-9, *Hunter* (which moves from Saturday, 10-11) at 9-10 and *Shannon's Deal* at 10-11. The new arrangement is up against CBS's all comedy schedule



'Carol & Company'

## FCC puts freeze on AM

In anticipation of a major overhaul and expansion of the AM band, the FCC last week imposed a freeze, effective April 5, on applications for new AM stations and modification to existing stations.

"This step is essential so that we may avoid compounding present difficulties with a continuing flow of new assignments based upon existing, possibly inadequate, standards," the FCC's two-page freeze order said.

At its April 12 meeting the commission is expected to launch a catch-all rulemaking aimed at improving the medium by cleaning up interference in the band. With the goal of AM improvement, it will also determine how to divvy up the 10 channels in the expanded AM band (1605-1705 khz), which, by international agreement, becomes available this summer. Some have proposed uncluttering the existing band by moving some stations into the expanded band.

According to the Mass Media Bureau's Larry Olson, the AM rulemaking will also encompass several proceedings proposing changes in the way AM signals are described and measured. "It's going to be a very broad, very comprehensive proceeding—another step toward resolving some of the problems of AM."

There are exceptions to the freeze. The FCC will accept applications for new stations filed in renewal challenges, applications filed in response to other applications filed prior to April 5 and applications for "minor changes necessitated by causes beyond the control of the applicant." —HAJ

and ABC's *Monday Night Movie*. All of the changes will take place on April 16. *The Hogan Family*, which gives up the 8:30-9 slot to *Working Girl*, has aired 21 of its 22 original episodes and will return in May. *NBC Monday Night at the Movies* will be preempted from April 16 to May 7.

The Friday night changes have *Hardball* returning, this time at 10-11, an hour later than when it aired at the start of the season. *Mancuso, FBI*, which had been on at 10-11, will return in May with a season-ending episode. The new Friday lineup, effective April 20: *Baywatch* at 8-9, *Nasty Boys* at 9-10 and *Hardball*, back from hiatus after creative retooling, at 10-11.

Saturday night is the night with the most change, as NBC introduces two new series, brings a summer tryout show back and moves one series to a new time period. *A Family for Joe*, which had been airing at 8:30-9, now appears at 8-8:30, followed by *13 East* which returns after a brief run last summer. NBC is keeping *The Golden Girls* and *Empty Nest* in their 9-9:30 and 9:30-10 time slots, but is inserting *Carol & Company*, starring Carol Burnett, at 10-10:30, and *Down Home*, starring Judith Ivey, at 10:30-11. *ALF*, which had been at 8-8:30, goes on hiatus, with all of its original episodes having aired. —SC



'Shannon's Deal'

## Cosby, NBC sign up for seventh season

Following weeks of negotiations to extract a signing bonus from NBC—reportedly as high as \$100 million at one time—for a seventh season of *The Cosby Show*, Bill Cosby, Marcy Carsey and Tom Werner have come to an agreement with the network, apparently without the bonus they sought. Neither the producers nor Cosby would comment on the deal's terms, and NBC issued a release from Brandon Tartikoff, president, NBC Entertainment, saying only that an agreement had been reached for a seventh season, and that "we are tremendously happy that they and their talented staff and cast will continue to entertain audiences for a seventh season." A statement from Cosby in a release issued through his agent, Norman Brokaw, read: "Bill Cosby is delighted that the Huxtables will be back for a seventh year and that there is no place that he would rather be."

One source said the agreement "was not a precedent-setting one," indicating that the producers and star did not receive the signing bonus which is not typically part of the renewal process.

Another source familiar with the terms of the deal said while the deal was not a precedent-setting one, "it is the biggest deal in the history of television for a half-hour series."

Although the producers and Cosby initially set out to get the signing bonus, which reportedly dropped to \$25 million, they were negotiating for some combination of a signing bonus, an increase in the license fees NBC pays for the show and a provision whereby the network will pay the cost of producing the show, an expense said to be in excess of \$1 million per episode.

—SC