

stations and wireless operations."

UK satellite pay service **BSkyB has confirmed that it is considering an initial public offering** of its shares on the London and New York stock exchanges, possibly by Christmas. Goldman Sachs is lead manager in the offering, with Lazard Brothers as joint adviser. The deal could see News Corp. reduce its stake in the pay network to 40% while raising some \$7.8 billion. The funds would presumably help finance News Corp. owner Rupert Murdoch's Star TV satellite enterprise in Asia.

Global trading company Active International has formed a new children's TV syndication division, Active Entertainment, under former Bohbot Entertainment senior VP/GM Adrien A. Seixas. The division will seek to develop and market kids shows that meet the requirements of the Children's Television Act. Seixas is president of the new company, which is negotiating to launch three new shows in January.

Court TV has ended its affiliation with CBS Radio and signed an exclusive agreement with the ABC Radio Network to broadcast the audio portion of its coverage to its ABC Radio news affiliates. ABC will also carry a weekly court feature produced by Court TV correspondent Fred Graham.

Jed Petrick has been named to head media sales for the WB Network. Petrick, who has been VP, sales, The Baseball Network, is another Fox veteran joining WB. He spent five years there.

NSS POCKETPIECE

(Nielsen's top ranked syndicated shows for the week ending Sept. 25. Numbers represent average audience/stations/% coverage.)

1. Wheel of Fortune	12.6/224/98
2. Jeopardy!	10.9/217/99
3. Oprah Winfrey Show	8.8/239/99
4. Entertainment Tonight	8.2/173/93
5. Star Trek: Next Generation	8.1/239/99
6. Roseanne	7.1/183/97
7. Hard Copy	6.4/177/93
7. Inside Edition	6.4/171/94
9. Married...With Children	5.9/178/94
10. Wheel of Fortune—wknd	5.8/169/78
11. Family Matters	5.7/193/93
12. Baywatch	5.1/210/96
12. Imagination I	5.1/185/97
14. Cops	5.0/170/94
14. Fresh Prince of Bel-Air	5.0/152/86

Payback time

Don't get mad, get even. The Bell operating companies appear to be on the receiving end of that philosophy following their opposition to the Senate infohighway bill. Many Hill insiders think last week's virulent attack by House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell (D-Mich.) on Pacific Telesis is a sign of things to come. Dingell was furious with PacTel for an ad it ran in the *Washington Post* attacking provisions in the GATT treaty making pioneers pay up to 80% of the value for a personal communications license. Dingell, the author of those provisions, called a last-minute Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing to chastise PacTel for an "ignorant and vicious" ad. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jack Brooks (D-Tex.) has already stated his intention to make the RBOCs pay. And there are some in the Senate, like Commerce Chairman Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), who sponsored the scuttled bill, who are unlikely to look fondly on the local telcos next year. —KM

SAN ANTONIO

Changing partners

San Antonio, Tex.-based Clear Channel Communications is negotiating new affiliation agreements in Memphis and Mobile, Ala. CC's WPTV-TV Memphis is losing its Fox affiliation following Fox's purchase of WHBQ-TV in mid-August. In Mobile, SF Broadcasting's purchase of Burnam Broadcasting's WALA-TV pulls the Fox affiliation from CC's WPMI(TV). Dan Sullivan, president of CC's TV group, says the stations most likely will pair up with the ousted networks, ABC in Memphis and NBC in Mobile. "We're the only girl who doesn't have a date for the dance," he jokes.

NEW YORK

Oracle Set-Top Alliance

On Oct. 17, Oracle Corp. will announce its Set-Top Alliance program, which will provide a forum for a number of set-top vendors and companies developing both hardware and software for interactive television systems. Oracle said it will debut some interactive TV services—from movies on demand from HBO, to weather updates and forecasts from The Weather Channel.

Family movies

A game show network is not the only new cable network idea being kicked around at Family Channel parent company International Family Entertainment. Senior Vice President of Programming Paul Krimsier

says the company would someday like to launch a family film channel featuring general audience versions of top movies.

The doctor is in

Comedy Central has begun production on its first animated series, *Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist*, produced by Popular Arts Entertainment and software producer Tom Snyder Productions in association with HBO Downtown Productions.

WASHINGTON

Legal bills

Some attendees at last week's Federal Communications Bar Association party commemorating the commission's 60th anniversary suggested the organization change its name. Despite charging an entrance fee, the Mayflower Hotel party had a cash bar. That led to a call for the FCBA to change its name to FCCBA, or the Federal Communications Cash Bar Association.



Drawn for BROADCASTING & CABLE by Jack Schmidt
"Well, Senator, with a campaign fund of a million dollars, we can make you look poor."