

Radio-TV programming

PERSONALITY PROFILE

Imus Focuses on 'New Humor'

CLEVELAND — Don Imus is a former railroad brakeman and he once worked in an Arizona Uranium mine and he considers Newsweek "really funny." This may not be exactly the best type of training and/or recommendation for a radio job, but Imus is part of a modern miracle in radio—the complete turnaround of a losing radio station—WGAR—into a winner. In the October/November ARB WGAR came up tied with CKLW for men and women 18-49 in the total survey area, 21,300. But WGAR leads in men and women 25-34 and 25-49. The reason, of course, is more than Imus; it's general manager Jack Thayer, sales manager Dick Janssen, program director John Lund,

and air personalities Joe Mayer, Bob Vernon, Chuck Collier, Norm N. Nite, and Ron Parks.

But Imus is now king in the morning 6-10 a.m. with 34,500 men and women 18-49. WJW has 32,100 in the same category, same time; WKYC's Jim Runyon has 22,000.

Imus, for all of his "radio" training, didn't happen just by accident. For his morning show on WGAR, "I have worked as much as six hours. Usually, I start in preparing the next day's show after I get off the air. I write most of it . . . that which I don't steal. In Palmdale and Stockton, Calif., when I was on radio stations there, I wing it. Now, I may wing it, but it's prepared."

WGAR is providing him with

the opportunity to present an entirely new concept in major market morning radio, Imus said. "It's what we call new humor . . . new humor that, aside from goofy phone calls and Bobby Darin world premieres, hopefully will set a new trend in radio humor . . . or I'll be out of a gig." (Imus recently tried to convince his Cleveland listeners that "Queen of the Hop," by Bobby Darin was a world exclusive on his show.)

Different Places

Imus said that he gets his ideas from different places. "One of the funniest places is Time magazine. Newsweek is really funny. But I don't use comedy sources and I don't watch TV besides the Rams football games and I don't listen to any other radio station. I used to listen to Robert W. Morgan when he was on KJY and I found I was sounding like him. Now, whatever I am, I'm me."

As for what's wrong with most morning personalities over the nation, Imus said: "All over America, radio listeners wake up to morning deejays that greet them with patented clichés, plastic personalities and phoney, smiling voices saying: 'GOOOood Morning World! Up and at 'em tiger! Let's eat our cereal and hit the freeway, where, by the way, folks, it's a mess!'"

Imus claimed that he never says good morning. "If not for my show's name—'Imus in the Morning'—you'd think the show was late night TV."

Imus got his start in radio at KUTY in Palmdale when he ran an on-the-air bid for Congress with the campaign: Put Imus on the gravy train, "but the voters chose Barry Goodwater Jr." At KJOY in Stockton, where he was fired after a year for using "excessive bad taste" on the air, Imus ran an Eldridge Cleaver look-a-like contest with a first prize of a year in jail or a \$5,000 fine.

As for his reason for not saying good morning on the air, he said, "We try not to get controversial . . . I mean, who am I to decide if it's a good morning or not. We relate to listeners without reminding them they should wear a coat or that they're late for work. Even in Cleveland, we know that we're up."

He tries to relate by appealing to emotions by using humor
(Continued on page 26)

Vox Jox

By CLAUDE HALL
Radio-TV Editor

Bill Sherard, former program director of WIXY in Cleveland, is now doing an air show on the progressive rock station in town—WNCR-FM. Besides Billy Bass from WIXY, the station also just hired Ron Thompson, who'd been at WIXY only about a week. Ron will do a duo show with his wife Kay on WNCR-FM. . . . WWDC in Washington originated the Johnny Holliday morning show from Holliday's home Christmas day, featuring Johnny and his wife and kids opening gifts and celebrating Christmas with friends dropping by (the friends included radio-TV personalities from other stations in town as well as sports figures). Great idea! If I were programming a radio station, I'd already begin making plans to do something like this next Christmas.

★ ★ ★

WAYS in Charlotte offered \$1,000 to the high school that collected the most bottles and cans, in an anti-litter promotion; collected over 3,000,000. . . . KYAK, country music station in Anchorage, Alaska, has been granted FCC permission to go from 25,000 watts to 50,000 watts clear channel. Staff includes John Robert Garland 5:30-10 a.m., Jim Myers 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Richard Lobdell 1-5 p.m., Scott Kaye 5-8 p.m., Don Byron 8-12:30 a.m., and Chuck Orr 12:30-5:30 a.m. Would you believe the station is also at 650 on the dial?

★ ★ ★

And would you also believe a letter from Morgan Tell, program director of WGLD-FM, Chicago: "It happened on the Indiana toll road as I was driving to this Chicago gig from Hartford. Part of the fun of this strange radio business is to change names from town to town. I've had several. On that Indiana four-lane, I decided to retire Morgan St. Germain. Rip. How does Morgan Tell hitya? Well, that's me. Now. It's great being back in Chicago. I spent the first 20 years of my life here. I left eight years ago to three months and I'm blessed.

★ ★ ★

And would you also believe a letter from Morgan Tell, program director of WGLD-FM, Chicago: "It happened on the Indiana toll road as I was driving to this Chicago gig from Hartford. Part of the fun of this strange radio business is to change names from town to town. I've had several. On that Indiana four-lane, I decided to retire Morgan St. Germain. Rip. How does Morgan Tell hitya? Well, that's me. Now. It's great being back in Chicago. I spent the first 20 years of my life here. I left eight years ago to three months and I'm blessed.

NEW YORK — WHOM air personality Freddy Baez has been found guilty of payola by a federal jury here in the Southern District of New York and could receive up to 11 years in prison and a \$14,000 fine. He was also found guilty of two counts of perjury relating to his testimony before a Federal Com-

munications Commission hearing investigating the case in 1966. Three other air personalities indicted were not convicted. WHOM is a Spanish language station here and U.S. attorney Whitney N. Seymour Jr. said the evidence showed Baez took money from a variety of record manufacturers between 1963 and 1966.

Chief witness was Joseph Maestre, who testified he paid Baez about \$30 a week to play his records during the first six months of 1964 when Baez worked at WBNX and then later when Baez worked at WHOM. Assistant U.S. attorney John Wing, who tried the case for the government, spoke of the reluctance of people in the record business to testify. One singer, Milton Irizarry, avoided subpoena service until midnight before the trial and had to be arrested. Irizarry supposedly paid Baez \$25 to get a record played.

Blessed with a talented staff of announcers and a general manager who is a human being. Progressive rock radio is the most exciting idiom of broadcasting today. I'm proud to be involved in its growth. P.S. Jon A. Holiday's letter to the editor (Dec. 12) was the last word on the Road to Radio. Right on."

★ ★ ★

Yolanda Parapar, a beautiful lady and music director of WIOD in Miami, has just celebrated her 10th year with Cox Broadcasting. My best and the best from the Billboard staff, Yolanda!

★ ★ ★

Frankie Crocker, former air personality with WMCA in New York, hosts a New Year's Eve show 10:30 p.m.-1 a.m. on WPIX-TV, New York. He'll be the deejay on "The Music Connection," a music package show. . . . Old buddy Jack Gale couldn't stay out of radio. He'll continue his Southern Hotline record news sheet, but also consult WPDQ in Jacksonville, Fla. The irony of the new job is that WPDQ's competitor in town is WAPE, owned by Gale's old boss, Stan Kaplan, who also owns WAYS in Charlotte. Gale helped set up the WAPE format, etc. Now he'll be vice president in charge of programming and out to knock WAPE if not out, then at least down.

★ ★ ★

Winning this year's Christmas Card Contest is a joint entree by Howard Solomon and Fred Neil, one of the most beautiful Christmas cards I ever saw in all my cottonpicking days. Appreciate all of the personal comments inscribed in most of them. . . . Scott St. James reports in from WPOP in Hartford. . . . Got a note from Cesar Augusto Quintero, president of a new radio station just on the air in Caracas, Venezuela. Think the station's name is Radioimp C.A., though my translator may have goofed. Anyway, congratulations, Cesar. I hope radio in Venezuela is just as intriguing as it is here.

(Continued on page 26)

Gaines Bows Consulting & Production Services

GALAX, Va. — All Media Services Inc. (AMS), to provide in-depth consultation and production services to radio stations, has been launched by J. Raleigh Gaines. A 15-year radio veteran under the air name of Bob Raleigh, Gaines has worked as air personality, program director, consultant, and group program director. He was recently group program director of the Smiles chain of stations.

With plans to establish an office sometime in March in Raleigh or Richmond, Gaines will provide the following services:

- Audience measurement to research not only the listeners but vital market statistics for station and agency use.

- Weekly comedy and adlib service (now in its third year and used by nearly 100 personalities).

- Creative commercial service; a production service providing tape ideas and ready-to-sell commercials, guaranteeing a given number of production pieces per month.

- Programming features; 165 sixty-second "The Black American" features available already, as well as 100 thirty-second features dealing with origins of myths, ideas, customs in the country.

- Jingles.
- "Weekend countdown," a three-six hour deejay program intended to be an alternative to hiring a part-time weekend personality.

- Executive digest, a bi-monthly digest of magazine and newspaper articles aimed specifically at the radio business.

- Handbooks and tapes to assist educating salesmen and production people.

- Promotion and sales tools. In addition, Gaines said that he would offer programming consulting "only to stations that

(Continued on page 26)

WKBN-FM to EL Background

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio — WKBN-FM, 50,000-watt stereo station here managed by J.D. Williamson II, switched to an easy listening background-type music service Jan. 1. The music is the Stereo Radio Productions Ltd. package which features music by such artists as Andre Kostelanetz, Percy Faith, and Mantovani with only eight minutes of commercials per hour in four clusters. The station is also expanding its news coverage in early morning and late evening hours.

Continental Radio Launches 'Tuna Show' Into Syndication

HOLLYWOOD — Continental Radio has just launched "The Charlie Tuna Show" into syndication, according to general manager Jeff C. Alan. Tuna is a top-rated air personality on KHJ in Los Angeles. The syndicated version of his show—a weekend version—starts in January on such stations as KNUZ in Houston, KLEO in Wichita, Kans.; KTKT in Tucson, WGEI in Indianapolis, WSGA in Savannah, and four other stations.

The show follows the same format as all Continental shows, allowing 6-8 local availabilities each hour, said Alan. It consists of two 3-hour shows each week, one for Saturday, one for Sunday. Shows are free except for handling charges. Shows contain the latest singles complemented with 25 percent album cuts and 25 percent oldies. Other shows available feature Jeff Alan, Chris Ericson, and Tom Roberts. Pepper/Tanner jingles are used.