

Radio

Buzz Bennett Back In Business Broadcasting Veteran In New Marketing Partnership

LOS ANGELES—"Whatever happened to Buzz Bennett?" is a question often asked these days at radio gatherings. The man whose career spans everything from dancing on teenage tv record hops, to jocking on legendary top 40 outlets (WEAM Washington, WTIW New Orleans, WMCA New York), to signing on Y-100 in Miami a decade ago, to publishing the now-defunct trade journal *Fred*, has been conspicuous by his absence.

Rumors said he was running an antique shop with his mother in New Jersey. "That's right," laughs Bennett from his Maui hotel room. "I did open a couple of antique shops for my mother after my father died two years ago." It's obvious, though, that Bennett was up to more than collecting relics.

Bennett, who has just announced his partnership with well-known promoter (everything from rock concerts to tennis pros) Jan Jacques in Los Angeles-based Buzzjacque Productions, has been collecting knowledge.

"I've been studying about video," he admits. "Reading magazines, learning about computers, terminology, creating with film. This venture is not an overnight thing. It's been in the works for about eight months." This venture is an audio/video company specializing in the marketing of recording acts "from the cradle to the grave," says Jacques, who sees the company as being responsible for recording a group, testing its potential, securing label deals and producing its video image.

Video is an area Bennett feels strongly about. "Radio never communicated with the record business," he asserts. "Now I see the same thing happening with film. Filmmakers often have no idea how to communicate with people in the record business.

"Video handled properly can break a record in a few days; radio can take months. I remember when I

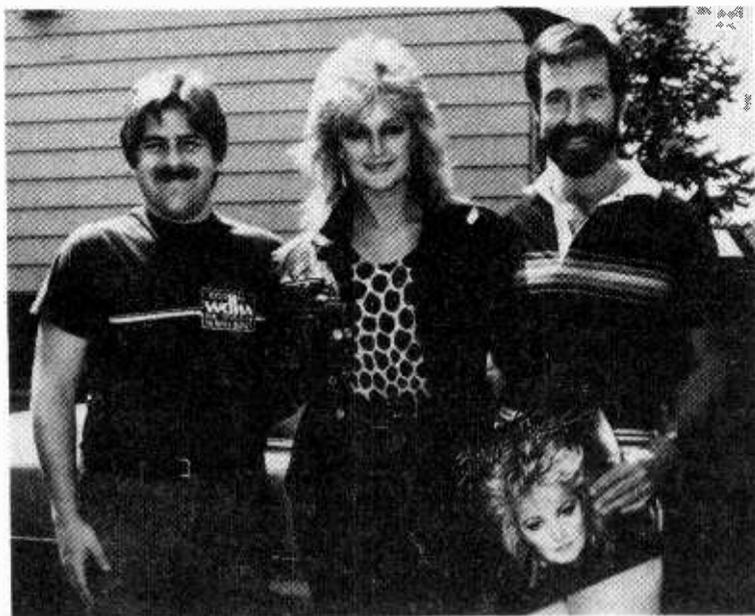
was dancing on tv, the tremendous impact we had. Anything we did, the whole city would be doing. I understood that power when I was a kid, but I also saw that when you were wrong, you were wrong a lot quicker, with a lot more impact.

"It's important to know how to use it (video). You're really dealing in truth. It's all exposed, and when it's not there, there's nothing left to doubt."

Another of the services the duo will provide will test market product. "Through Buzz's contacts, we've developed a network of non-reporting stations who will give the product the proper exposure," explains Jacques, who says the team's initial fee for the services is "\$2,500 in advance and \$2,500 after the test is complete.

"If a product receives the proper response, the right demographics, if our belief is confirmed, we then have tangible proof to take to the record companies," says Jacques. "That may not only enable an artist to get a label and a budget, but proof of performance like that should generate a decent promotion effort as well."

ROLLYE BORNSTEIN



BONNIE'S BODYGUARDS—WJHA Dover, N.J. PD Mark Chernoff, left, and general manager Robert Linder protect Bonnie Tyler from the perils of New Jersey after a recent live interview at the station.

Vox Jox

Dick Casper Named Fairbanks VP

By ROLLYE BORNSTEIN

With the sale of Fairbanks' WIBC/WNAP Indianapolis and KVIL-AM-FM Dallas to Blair completed, Dick Casper has been named vice president of Fairbanks Broadcasting, overseeing the chain's six radio properties (KCMO/KCEZ Kansas City, WKOX/WVBF Boston, and WJNO/WRMF West Palm Beach) from his KCMO office. Casper, who was GM of Bartell's KCBQ San Diego over a decade ago, most recently held a senior management post with Sudbrink Broadcasting, where he ran WLAC.

Speaking of Fairbanks, the speculation is over as to what Rich Brother Robbin will be doing with KCEZ. As of Monday (17), the station is mass appeal country, and mass appeal Johnny Dolan, an area personality for almost 20 years (KMBZ and WHB), will be doing mornings on the format, which is comprised of current hits and limited contemporary crossover oldies. Known as KC-95, KCEZ will become KCMO-FM, call letters which on the AM side were associated with a similar crossover approach 10 years ago, when GM John

WPLJ New York Decides To Let Carol Miller Go

By LEO SACKS

NEW YORK—Carol Miller feels that she made the most of her transition when WPLJ here switched to contemporary hits from a rock-oriented sound in June. So did program director Larry Berger, who says that Miller, a rocker at heart, gave it "the old college try." It came as a surprise, then, when Berger told her that he would not renew her contract when she reported for work last Monday evening (10).

Miller, who says she was shaken by the decision, was in the process of renegotiating a three-year pact which expired in mid-August. "We had been talking in good faith for some time," she says, "and Larry changed his position on my contract many times. Finally he said that I had too much of a rock image, that while it was a subjective decision on his part, I didn't suit the format, that I was out of my milieu."

Berger, noting that Miller has no experience as a hit-oriented air personality, acknowledges that he told her "she was out of her comfort

zone." Nevertheless, the programmer gives her "an 'A' for effort."

"It was a very difficult decision, one I lost a lot of sleep over," he states. "I like her, I was rooting for her, I was hoping it would work out. In the final analysis, though, it was in the best interest of the station that she pack it in. The eyes of the radio industry are on us, and I have to do, in my judgment, what's best for the station."

Miller, a Hofstra Law School graduate and alumnus of WMMR Philadelphia and WQIV and WNEW-FM here, concedes that the switch wasn't easy. "After working in a particular field for a long time, I had to adjust. But I committed myself in good faith to the new format, and after eight years of loyal service, a lot of fans and some fairly high ratings, I'm upset. It really took me by surprise."

Her replacement in the 6-10 p.m. slot is Peter Bush, who joined the station last month from WKCI New Haven, taking over for Marc Coppola in the 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. shift.

Patton and PD Stu Bowers tried a "countrypolitan" format.

★ ★ ★

Marty Greenberg is a man with clout. Not only did the former Belo Radio president land firmly on his feet as president/chief operating officer of Duffy Broadcasting, but he's relocated Duffy's headquarters to Dallas, where board chairman/CEO Bob Duffy (who doubles in that role at the rep firm Christal) has no stations.

As for where Duffy does have stations: Denver (KLIR-FM) and Portland (KCNR-AM-FM), with more locations soon to come. If you want to rattle Marty's cage with a congratulatory shake, you can do so as of Halloween at (214) 361-2932.

★ ★ ★

Jim Sumpter's had his eye on management since he joined First Media in Houston several years ago. Now he's achieved it, as the KFMK PD leaves the company (with no replacement named to date) to join Corpus Christi's KEYS/KZFM as GM.

Abell's Jack Alix knows how to live. After soaking up the Daytona

Beach sun for several years at WDOQ, he's enjoying the same ocean a bit further north as a principal and VP/GM of WVLC/WKPE Cape Cod. If the call letters sound new, they are. Until last week the stations were WKZE-AM-FM... Speaking of Abell, Mike Joseph may be furthering his relationship with the chain. Word is he's in Norfolk checking out the action at WNVZ.

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Hopefully Don Geronimo had an open return on his Chicago-to-Pittsburgh flight. The B-94 (WBZZ) afternoon man will get to use it. He's returning to the Windy City as resident night maniac on B96 (WBBM-FM), replacing Jeff Hooker, who as you know is joining Scott Shannon's Z-100 (WHTZ) New York as soon as his contract allows. Figure on Christmas.

WQUE-FM New Orleans' Chris Bryan segues over to the AM side of the Insilco operation as Phil Zachary's PD of soon-to-be 13Q. Prior to Bryan's post as MD he programmed Mobil's WABB-FM... Now that Selkirk has acquired Brampton's rocker CFNY (Toronto metro), Bill Hutton, Selkirk director of news and information, is upped to VP/GM of the facility, while PD Dave Marsden becomes director of operations and programming.

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The relationship between Bobby Ocean and KFRC San Francisco is history. For the time being, San Diego's Shotgun Tom Kelly (the only man we know who has an exact duplicate of the "Tonight Show" set in his garage, where he regularly films area jocks as guest hosts—the list includes Jack McCoy in a stellar performance) is filling in on Ocean's former 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. shift, while PD Gerry Cagle, who has upped Lanette Abraham to music assistant, looks for a permanent replacement. KFRC's Dr. Don Rose, by the way, marks an even decade of mornings at the RKO outlet.

Looking for a good morning gig? Give Robert John a call at FM100 (WMC-FM) Memphis. He's still looking to replace Terence McKeever... As for a duo that's found a good morning slot, Burd & Baker will soon be heard in D.C. (which has had a rash of morning madness recently) on First Media's WPGC. If the illustrious pair strikes an unfami-

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SERIOUS SCAM—Jerry Galvin, left, warms up for the national airing of his "Talk Back With Jerry Galvin," which until recently was a local program on WAIF Cincinnati. The show's executive producer, Jeff Kryz, awaits Galvin's latest scam.

JOEL TELLS ABOUT IT

WSIX Drops Country For Contemporary Approach

NASHVILLE—"It was just coincidence it happened to be the night of the CMA Awards," says WSIX PD and morning man Gerry House with a tongue-in-cheek chortle. "Are you accusing us of pulling a publicity stunt just because we happened to be changing format in the middle of the book?"

House is "accused" of the old format switch ploy, "Jock goes mad, refuses to play anything but the same record over and over." In this case it was Billy Joel's "Tell Her About It" that listeners heard on the country AM last Monday (10) for six hours. "The reaction was bigger than anything we imagined," says House. "We're still getting letters. They're calling the general manager immature, threatening to go to the FCC—it's amazing."

The format, which House describes as "just shy of contemporary hits," is really a return to the more contemporary approach WSIX had taken for several successful years until it abandoned personality AC two and a half years ago in favor of talk for a year and a half, prior to the switch to country last year. House, who remained PD through all the changes, was hoping to return to the original approach, and with the vast

country competition in the market, and WSIX's failure to score the kind of numbers it had in the past, House's point was made.

"There are five or six other AM signals playing country here. In fact, I dialed across the AM band one day starting at WSM, and I heard Rosanne Cash four times before I got to WLAC," he says. That competition, coupled with the fact that there is no real top 40 or AC competition on the AM band, made House wonder "why we hadn't done it before."

The AM-FM combo, which has just been sold by GE to Dennis Israel's New York-based Sky Media (which is also acquiring GE's flagship stations WGY/WGFM Schenectady), will still be well connected in the country arena. WSIX-FM, one of the first FM stations (if not the first) to employ a beautiful music approach to country programming, utilized by the Burns/Somerset "Continuous Country" format, continues to battle for the top position in the market, against such competition as WSM-FM and Mack Sanders WJKZ.

The staff on the AM will remain largely unchanged, with the exception of J.R. Russ, who joins the station this week from Buffalo's WECK.