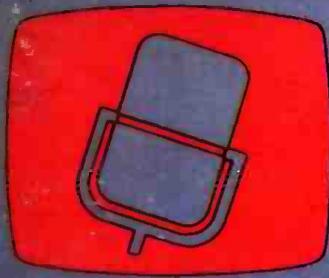


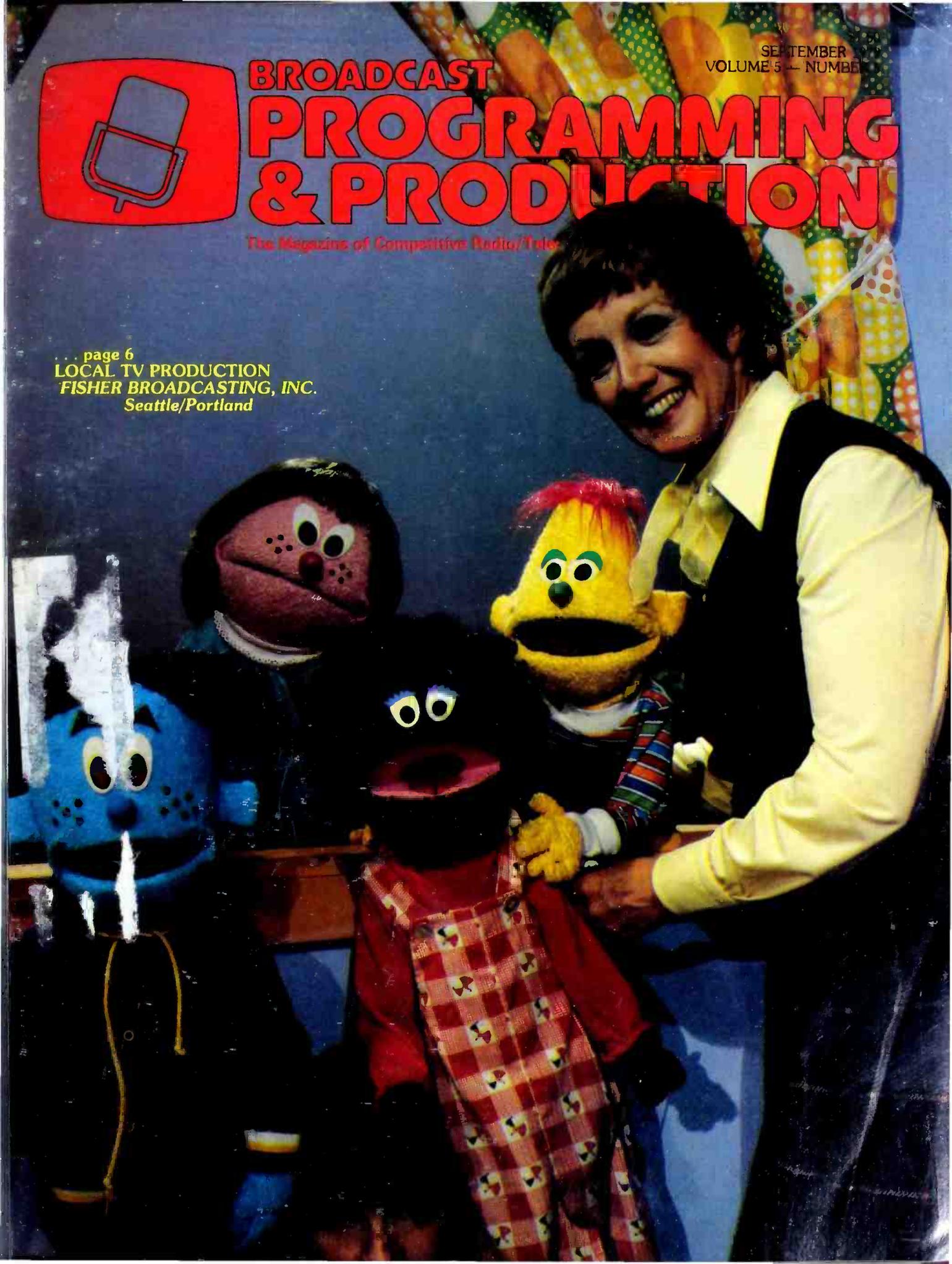
SEPTEMBER  
VOLUME 5 -- NUMBER



# BROADCAST PROGRAMMING & PRODUCTION

The Magazine of Competitive Radio/Television

... page 6  
LOCAL TV PRODUCTION  
FISHER BROADCASTING, INC.  
Seattle/Portland



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Marni Nixon, star of "Boomerang," KOMO-TV, Seattle, and friends: Norbert (yellow faced boy puppet), Melinda (red haired girl puppet), Libby (black puppet) and Rookie (blue puppet). Photo courtesy Fisher Broadcasting, Inc.

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# Letters

## **Superpowers & Borderblasters:**

from: **Chester F. Petersen**  
Palm Springs, CA

I have just been handed a copy of your magazine for March, 1979 by a local broadcast station.

With tears in my eyes I read your story on WLW . . . and rightfully so. In May I walked through my younger years of pioneering "wireless" in Indianapolis. WLW used to saturate my living room with the 500,000 watts.

While in Indianapolis, I visited one of the finest displays of early radio memorabilia and unbelievable library of radio books . . . the hobby of one of the top men at Mallory. This man is the historian of the Indiana Historical Radio Society, with 160 members whose motto is: "Preservation for Posterity." They publish a very small bulletin for the 160 members each month, and the September issue will carry some material I wrote about early wireless/radio.

I personally would like a photocopy of the April follow-up story to the WLW story for my file of memorabilia. With 33 years in the Hollywood scene, I have quite a pile of it — all the way to being the only sound man sent by NBC to cover the first Security Conference held in San Francisco, 1945.

Radio from 1914 all the way through the Golden Days was something I doubt will ever be repeated. It was new, exciting and a happy experience both in front of and behind the microphones. I know — "I was there." Who knows — perhaps there is more and even better to follow!

from: **Robert E. Richer**  
General Manager  
WNCN-FM Radio  
New York, NY

Just a note to tell you that I think the series by John Price on *Superpowers & Borderblasters* is sensational as well as being historic.

I hope that you plan to publish the entire series in book form.

from: **Scott Todd**  
Transmitter Operator  
KSTP-AM  
St. Paul, MN

Your fine articles on *Borderblasters* and high-power stations of the 30s and 40s makes being twenty-one years old rather anticlimactic.

I do have one question though, and that is how so many of the top radio engineers of that day cooperated with these crooks?

**San Diego Metro:**  
from: **Rich Wood**  
Program Manager  
Noble Multimedia Communications  
XTRA-AM and 91X-FM  
San Diego, CA

I read with interest your magazine's article

— continued on page 35

## station meeting minutes

by

**Howard W. Coleman**



### **YOU'D BEST TAKE CARE OF US!**

WAA Radio and TV General Manager Larry Ellis was the luncheon speaker before the Town Club, a service organization of business people in Everytown that meets monthly to hear current issues.

"You've done me a large favor," he began. "First of all because we at the stations very much want to tell you something about us other than what you see and hear through our facilities. Second, copies of this will go to my staff and serve as the discussion base for our next meeting.

"Your president urged me to be candid, and that I certainly will be. We are — just as your hardware stores and banks and restaurants — a business, incorporated in the wishful goal of making a profit. We, too, are examined and watched over by governmental regulatory agencies — including the time-consuming process of qualifying for periodic license renewals.

"Some years ago, I clipped a small item from a newspaper, and I keep it on my desk pad. It came from the time of the 1972 national political conventions, and it quotes Miami Beach police chief Rocky Pomerance, who is described as expressing this sentiment with a sigh: 'The police can't win — they just try to lose as gracefully as possible.'

"In broadcasting, without uniforms or weapons but equally exposed to the public, I sometimes feel that we are not far removed from that position. No radio or television manager has to be reminded that above all else he is licensed to operate his fiefdom 'in the public interest, convenience and necessity.'

"A wide variety of the body politic reminds the broadcaster of this in an equally wide variety of ways. Aspiring politicians and entrenched incumbents alike rumble about something called *equal time* — a claim based on Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act which says that *all* candidates for a given office must have equal opportunity to use a station in a campaign period.

"Every minority interest from the Unicycle League to the save-the-white-horse committee has a special interpretation of another FCC provision called the 'Fairness Doctrine.' This requires that if one point of view is expressed on the station — be it in spot announcements, editorials or discussion — the other side must also be heard.

"Challengers to the broadcaster's applied-for license renewal these days seemingly jog in the wings, swing from ropes just over the proscenium arch, and crouch in the orchestra pit. The florid statements of how, if just given your license, they could do the job better range from stand-off realistic to Fantasia at peak volume. One petitioning group sees better ways of serving that local interest while earning the projected 12 per cent after-tax return for itself. Another ignores the basics of salaries, overhead and the cost of operation while it simply claims that it can "Tell it like it is, right on," presumably with a camera fixed on a 16-hours-a-day dialogue between militant spokespeople knocking that thing called *The Establishment*.

"Church communications people of various denominations add to the clamor. While only a few have offered any programming of merit to the broadcast industry, many are eager and willing witnesses at any negatively-oriented hearing involving a license renewal. One, whose oft-quoted statement is 'All broadcasters are evil men, blood-suckers bilking the public,' is reputed to spend more time in Washington's congressional corridors than at his desk.

"Anti-church people are equally avid in watchfulness, ready to claim that *equal time* for any moment given over to religious offerings. Other than playing a few choruses of Gershwin's *It Ain't Necessarily So*, I sometimes wonder what it is they have to say!

"And there are the Boston ladies who want all commercials removed from children's shows — while at the same time asking laws that would require networks and stations to produce expensive 'quality' youth programming, and with the strong implication that *they* will judge what is 'quality' and what is not.

"And ecology campaigners, and public land developers, and PTA presidents and school administrators, and the ADA and the AL and the ACLU and the VFW and the DAR and all the rest: the message rings out like this — 'If you are broadcasting in the public interest and you honor equal time and you know about the Fairness Doctrine and (implied) if you want your license renewed, you'd best take care of us!'

"I'd like to close with this quote from a recent book, *Understanding Broadcasting*, by

— continued on page 35

# The Washington Connection

by

Clarence McKee



## RADIO DE-REGULATION: DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS

If all radio broadcasters are like many of those who attended the NAB's recent radio programming conference in St. Louis, they are ecstatic over the FCC's proposal to de-regulate radio by eliminating or at least substantially reducing or modifying present requirements in the non-entertainment programming areas of news and public affairs.

In announcing the new proceeding, the Commission found that, based upon current market data, it might now be possible to rely on competitive radio market forces to assure the same public interest benefits formerly sought to be achieved by the current rules and regulations on news and public affairs. So that all bases would be covered, the Commission proposed a number of alternative approaches for comment in addition to total elimination of the news and public affairs requirement, including:

- analyzing non-entertainment programming on a market-wide basis and taking action only if such programming fell below a "certain" level;
- requiring licensees to show, if their licenses were challenged, that they were serving the public interest utilizing market-wide criteria;
- imposition of quantitative programming standards for each non-entertainment programming category, such as a minimum number of hours per week for each category of programming or a specified percentage of time to be devoted to each category;
- imposition of quantitative standards, but measure adequacy of programming on the basis of each station's expenditures so that the FCC could then mandate a proportion of revenues or profits to be reinvested in non-entertainment programming; or
- establishing of a minimum fixed percentage of local public service programming that would have to be presented — including local news, public affairs and public service announcements or any other locally produced non-entertainment programming related to serving local needs.

Is the price of "de-regulation" worth having the FCC dictate to licensees how much of their profits must be reinvested back into public affairs programming? Is the price of "de-regulation" worth having the FCC, even if indirectly, inviting challenges to license renewals on lack of public affairs programming so that it could then determine how much news and public affairs programming was enough? Broadcasters who are sitting back feeling that they have been emancipated had better take a closer look at the radio de-regulation gift horse.

Of equal concern to radio licensees should be the lack of clear guidelines and standards which total elimination of news and public affairs programming would bring both for licensees and the Commission. Under the present structure, both licensees and the Commission, as well as citizens groups, have specific criteria and guidelines for determining if a licensee has met public affairs obligations. Under the elimination proposals, licensees would only know "how much is enough" after a license challenge and new FCC determinations, most likely on an ad-hoc basis, of what is sufficient based upon vague "marketplace" determinations. How will stations know what is expected of them? How will citizens' groups know how to proceed in judging public affairs programming of licensees? How will the Commission make judgements in the comparative hearing and petition to deny process?

Another interesting point raised by the proceeding is that the Commission does not propose to remove radio licensees from Fairness Doctrine obligations. Under the Fairness Doctrine, licensees are required to present diverse views on issues of local public importance. Therefore, on the one hand the Commission proposes to eliminate or substantially reduce non-entertainment programming requirements, while on the other hand it is maintaining the requirement to air certain kinds of public affairs programming under the Fairness Doctrine.

A major question for consideration in this proceeding is how the courts would react to the Commission's adoption of the proposed procedures based upon a marketplace basis of regulation. It was only recently that Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin scratched his "Re-Write" of the Communications Act in the broadcast area because of lack of support and much controversy. The Van Deerlin proposal used the marketplace standard in lieu of the public interest standard and was highly criticized by citizens' groups. Now comes the

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LOCAL TV PRODUCTION —

# FISHER BROADCASTING, INC.

## Seattle/Portland

### “Localism” = Top Quality, Creative Programming for Northwest Audiences

by Phil Dean

In a quiet, conservative manner, the stations of Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon, have been carrying out a policy of local programming for their operations, KOMO-TV/AM, Seattle and KATU, Portland, which has made the term “localism” synonymous with “quality” and “creativity.”

The dedication to quality local programming is generated right from the inner sanctums of top management. William W. Warren, President and Chief Executive Officer for Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., once known more familiarly to West Coasters as the Fishers Blend Stations, and his strong right arm, John F. Behnke, Executive Vice President and General Manager have long pursued a policy of developing outstanding local programming for their stations and in doing so have created not only a strong identification for their ABC-TV affiliates in the Northwest, but also a sense of pride and loyalty to their efforts on the part of the TV audiences in the Northwest region.

Mr. Warren equates a strong and innovative approach to local programming with community service and civic enterprise and the highly regarded local presentations of stations KOMO-TV/AM and KATU, are exceptional examples of this local policy in action.

That the approach has been extremely successful, there is little doubt. One such program, *Town Hall* on KATU, Portland, which is offered every Sunday night at 6:00 p.m., has become one of the most popular community discussion programs in the Northwest. Contrary to the generally accepted belief that “public service shows don’t draw audiences” the *Town Hall* program drew a 20-rating with a 30-share in the November 1978 Nielsen ratings and is consistently one of the top rated programs in the Portland market. In 1977 it was nosed out for a coveted “Iris” award, which is the top award given TV programs by those who should know best, the National Association of TV Program Executives, and was nominated again in 1979 — this time it won.

One of the most unusual aspects of the

success of the KATU *Town Hall* program was the speed with which it gained its lofty rating position. When it was first started in 1977 it looked as though it was going to follow in the path of most programs tarred with the “public service” appellation brush. However, thanks to an unçanny sense of what the Portland public was most interested in on the part of Chuck Gingold, Program Director for KATU, the program’s lively and illuminative subject matter soon caught the interest of the Northwest audience and *Town Hall*, within a two year period, became one of the most popular and most discussed community involvement TV shows in the Northwest.

The “localism” concept set by Fisher Broadcasting, Inc.’s Bill Warren, has had unusual and extremely beneficial success in the Northwest area according to Chuck Gingold, who earlier this year was elected President of the prestigious NATPE at its annual convention. “Syndicators have been forced, almost by design, to concentrate on the programs with ‘mass audience appeal’ which generally translates into fairly bland offerings. The Fisher stations in Seattle and Portland have concentrated on improving and upgrading our local efforts,” said Gingold. “We have given our local staffs their head and perhaps for the first time they have had a real opportunity to utilize their creative, artistic and technical talents. The results have more than supported our contention that local producers and directors, given the opportunity, can turn out local programs that are educational, interesting and above all, entertaining. The audiences have put their stamp of approval on the various efforts of our local talent and are asking for more.”

The “localism” emphasis fostered by the Fisher Broadcasting Company management is not of the Johnny-come-lately school. One of its most popular examples, as a matter of record, the *Exploration Northwest* program, celebrated its 20th anniversary on Friday, September 21, with a special hour-long presentation.

On October 4, 1960, TV viewers in Western Washington could catch Cornell Wilde visiting

the Anderson family on *Father Knows Best*, George and Gracie’s dilemma with a wall safe on *Burns & Allen*, Chita Rivera and Dick Van Dyke clowning with Carol Burnett on the *Garry Moore Show*, Hugh O’Brian defending Tombstone as *Wyatt Earp*, and Don McCune’s debut as host of a locally produced adventure series on KOMO-TV.

While the other programs are long gone, Don McCune celebrated his 20th season of award-winning outdoor adventure this fall with a one-hour presentation, *Exploration Northwest’s 20th Anniversary Special*.

Written and narrated by McCune, the anniversary special focused on the fascinating places and activities featured in *Exploration Northwest* over the years and the people who have shared those adventures.

The show began as *Expedition Northwest*, a once-a-month feature of ABC-TV’s weekly *Expedition!* series. The network program left the air after two seasons, but KOMO-TV continued the local edition as a weekly program, directed by Ed Lackner and filmed by Ed Sierer with Don McCune as host. Retitled *Exploration Northwest*, the program became the keystone of Channel 4’s early evening ‘adventure strip’ of travel/outdoor action shows.

“We were pretty elementarily equipped at first,” says McCune in his recollections of the early years. “One cameraman would do the entire show. We used to carry 100-foot rolls of film around in paper bags. And for a long time we used whatever camera was handy — usually a hand-crank Bolex or a Bell & Howell.”

The staff expanded during the 1960’s and production techniques changed with the switch to color film and the addition of sound cameras.

Despite changes in personnel and technology, the program concept remains unchanged, according to McCune. “It’s always been an outdoor-oriented program about local people involved in action adventures.”

Emphasizing that “the primary ingredient is people,” McCune spotlights some memorable characters — cowboys, seamen, prospectors,

hikers, trail riders, lumberjacks, bush pilots — featured in the stories of work and play in the Northwest.

Covering the Northwest "from the big sky above to the deep sea below," the *Exploration* cameras have recorded some out-of-the-ordinary experiences, such as smoke-jumping, mountain climbing, skin diving, gold mining, hang gliding, ice breaking and spelunking. These experiences were recalled in the anniversary special, along with the wide variety of transportation modes featured in past stories — antique airplanes, covered wagons, caterpillar convoys, tugboats, snowmobiles, dune-buggies, sailplanes, Model-T's, Tall Ships, bulldozers, canoes, rafts, hot-air balloons, bicycles, dog sleds and lots of horses.

History and nostalgia have been integral parts of many *Exploration* stories, and McCune reviews some of that history, as documented in episodes about the building of the North Cascades highway, the Bicentennial Wagon Train, early-day logging, the Yukon Gold Rush and an ancient Indian village uncovered by archeologists near Neah Bay.

During its long run on KOMO-TV, *Exploration Northwest* has earned numerous awards for program excellence and outstanding individual achievement. Excerpts from some of the award-winning episodes reveal the creativity and diversity that have made the program a favorite with Northwest audiences.

The 20th season promises to continue this tradition. "We never run out of ideas," says McCune. "The challenge lies in finding the best way to bring those ideas to the screen."

Programs planned for the 1979-80 season include: Fishing for Big King Salmon on Alaska's Kenai river; a canoe adventure in Vancouver Island's Barkley Sound; fishing Oregon's Deschutes River; a North Cascades trail ride out of Stehekin; limited hydroplane racing off the Olympic Peninsula; a float trip on the remote Tatshenshini River; a black powder deer hunt in Eastern Washington; cross-country skiing on Mt. Baker; ski instructor training on Mt. Hood; an off-road car rally; the 1980 gold rush in Dawson, Yukon Territory; and the Six Metre national championship sailboat race in Shilshole Bay.

The stress on quality local programming generated by the management of Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., extends to all levels and all areas. Both KOMO-TV, Seattle and KATU, Portland, have magazine style local programs which consistently rank near the top in their respective time periods. *AM Northwest*, is the KATU entry in Portland and its potpourri of popular topics, lively and interesting guests and discussion of locally oriented issues has made it a consistent winner with the Portland audience.

Its sister show in Seattle, *PM Northwest*, is a sparkling entry which has also become a popular favorite of the Seattle audience. Perhaps the most outstanding facet of *PM Northwest* is the freedom of operation given the producer Jack Norman and his staff to initiate innovative entertaining and imaginative material for the program. Seldom does a program producer hear those magic words, "Expense is not a consideration where quality is concerned" and Jack Norman and his staff have done justice to the faith demonstrated by management.

The *PM Northwest* staff could compare favorably with any network special programming staff. It includes an assistant

producer, staff researcher, six reporters including a host/reporter, five photo editors, a news editor and a production assistant. It uses the most modern of technical gear and is equipped with the latest in ENG equipment. The *PM Northwest* teams spend most of their time in the field on remote stories and to insure a continuing high quality standard of excellence, Jack Norman sends out two camera crews for double takes and back-up. Most of the shooting is done with ENG equipment and the crews shoot three to four segments for each program.

"Quality is our principal product," said Jack Norman, "along with seeking out interesting and entertaining segments." Jack noted that



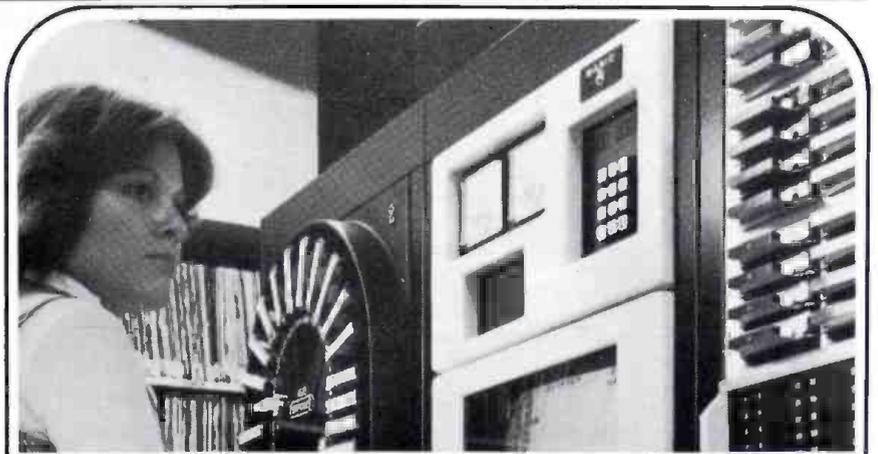
Jim Bosley with Author Ian Summers  
"AM Northwest" — Weekdays 9:00 a.m.

the confidence expressed by management in their unit "has generated a high level of competition in our staff. The size of the staff," he continued, "provides us with a freedom of operation. It further expands the opportunity of our staff to continually expose their creative and artistic talents and it provides a morale factor that is unique in our industry. The give-and-take of our staff at meetings, the constant probing of proposed story ideas for more interesting and entertaining themes and the knowledge that what the staff decides on is what will finally appear, makes it an interesting, and at times fascinating, challenge to everyone."

The theme of quality in its local presentations extends to every facet of the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc.'s operation. Its news operations in both Seattle and Portland carry out the "localism" concept thoroughly. Local news teams in Seattle, for instance, have learned to keep a suitcase packed in recent years in the event they have to cover a "local" news story originating in any part of the country.

"Local news has taken on a new look," says Jim Herriott, News Director for KOMO-TV's award winning News Department. "Our news teams have learned that the story's the thing, whether it's in Seattle or Tallahassee, Florida."

Fisher Broadcasting's commitment to in-depth coverage of "local" news stories has put KOMO-TV and KATU reporters and cameramen in some strange places for a Northwest based news organization. Reporter Ruth Walsh, KOMO-TV, for instance, has traveled to Utah, Colorado, and Florida to do background material for a five-part series on accused killer Ted Bundy, a native of Seattle.



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Her greatest coup during these travels was the first exclusive interview with Bundy from Tallahassee, Florida, where he was waiting trial.

John Sandifer, another member of the KOMO-TV news team, was assigned to Oakland to cover the trial of Pierce County Sheriff George Janovich who had obtained a change of venue for his trial from the Seattle area. John made good use of his spare time there when he obtained an exclusive interview with ex-Black Panther Huey Newton.

To Jim Herriott, local news is where you find it and in a recent assignment he shipped a news team to British Columbia to cover the roundup of a shipment of smuggled marijuana which had originated in Seattle. "We owe it to our viewers to give them the best possible coverage of stories we feel they are interested in." Thus, when the Seattle Super-sonics reached the finals of the NBA championships recently it was only natural that KOMO-TV send a reporter-photographer team to Washington to provide on-the-scene coverage of their games with the Washington Bullets.

"Local news isn't that local anymore," said Jim Herriott. "If the story originates in Australia and we have a local angle, we'll send some one to cover it." Jim also credits the news technological equipment improvements, such as the ENG cameras and remote vans that can originate live coverage, for the increased mobility of the KOMO-TV news teams. "Not too long ago," said Herriott, "the logistics of moving a news team would have been too awkward. With today's gear it's no tougher sending them around the country than it is sending them to one of the suburbs. The impact of local coverage in far away places has been a major factor in the Fisher Station's consistent prominence as news leaders according to Herriott and he advises his new news staffers to be "ready to move, anytime, anywhere, on a half-hour notice."

As for the news staff, they love the opportunity to travel to far-away places on a local-oriented story for usually it means they'll be working with the national press on what would probably be a national story.

Indicative of Fisher Broadcasting Inc's innovative approach to providing a complete news service in the Northwest is its *Northwest News Network*.

News viewers of stations KATU, Portland, and KOMO-TV, Seattle, may not be aware of it, but they are tuned into a unique news service created by Fisher Broadcasting which provides coverage of the top news stories in each of the cities when the situation warrants.

The two Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., stations are connected by a dedicated line and each station feeds its sister station its hour-long news programs over a monitor in the news room. If a news story in either city is considered of sufficient importance to be included in the news program of the other, the story can be integrated into the on-air news show either live or on tape. A reporter monitors the live pick-up in each of the news rooms at KATU and KOMO-TV to make a decision as to the possible use of stories emanating from Portland for the Seattle station or vice versa.

According to Chuck Biechlin, News Director of KATU, the dedicated news feed has proven to be an extremely popular service for both station's audiences. "It's really a Northwest news network feed," said Chuck, "and with the direct feed of the news programs

to each other's news rooms, we've been able to pinpoint major news stories of utmost importance to viewers in both cities and states."

With the interconnected news feeds coming into the Fisher stations at the same time the regular news programs are on, both KATU and KOMO-TV have been able to scoop their competitors on fast breaking stories in the other cities; stories the other stations wouldn't be able to carry until a later time. "It's another service we try and provide our viewers in the Northwest," said Chuck Biechlin, "and it seems to be appreciated."

Perhaps the area in which the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., stations and staff take the greatest pride is in their children's programming. A tremendous amount of thought, research and just plain TLC have gone into the creation of *Bumpity*, the children's show on KATU, Portland, and *Boomerang*, KOMO-TV's highly popular and unique program for pre-school children.

When station KOMO-TV, the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., outlet in Seattle, premiered



Sound man Danny Ibabao (L), photographer Allen Rosen (C) and reporter Elaine Heck set up equipment for shooting exteriors of pre-school building for story on KOMO-TV's "PM Northwest." Freelance photographer Roger Hagen (over car) prepares to shoot promos for the program.

its *Boomerang* children's program in January, 1975, its major concern was to put on a creative, innovative and dedicated TV show for the very young.

Four years later, the *Boomerang* program is looked on by its supporters as a "community resource" and the program has won so many awards that Producer Barbara Groce can't find space to put them all. In 1977, *Boomerang* won an Action for Children's Television Award, one of the most prestigious in the industry and, in 1978, *Boomerang* was again honored with the equally prestigious ACT Achievement Award, presented for the first time by that organization.

In addition the *Boomerang* program has collected 16 Emmy's for excellence in individual achievement and three Emmy's for excellence in program achievement. In 1976 the children's show was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the judges at the 12th Chicago International Film Festival for a special episode, *Hercules Dies*.

Barbara Groce, Producer of the program, noted that KOMO-TV's management had committed itself to the production of a weekly half-hour program of superior quality and stature, specifically designed for the oft-neglected pre-school viewer. To accomplish this, the proposed series was researched for

six months with local input from educators, psychologists, parents, child guidance experts and psychiatrists. A permanent panel of advisors was formed to aid the station in identifying the needs of preschool children and to help determine the emphasis and direction the individual programs would take.

*Boomerang* became an "instant hit" and as its popularity grew, its influence in the Seattle community expanded. On a monthly basis, program highlights are sent out to over 200 day-care centers and pre-schools so that teachers can plan classroom projects that tie into the programs being presented.

Since it's been on the air, the award-winning *Boomerang* has been expanded to twice a week, (in 1977) and three times a week in 1978. Also in 1978, under the sponsorship of the Seattle Center, the *Boomerang* talent has been making monthly appearances at the Center with children's audiences of 2 to 3,000 appearing for each of the Seattle Center performances.

One of the most popular assets of the *Boomerang* program is its talented star Marni Nixon. An internationally known singing-artist, actress and teacher, Marni was selected from 300 people who auditioned for the lead in the program. A nominee for a 1977 Grammy Award, Ms. Nixon also owns an impressive list of credits for classical, pop and educational recordings. Marni is backed up by one of the finest musical talents in the country — Stan Keen — whose credits include *West Side Story*, *Damn Yankees*, *Irma La Douce*, and *Hello Dolly*. He has composed a large number of original songs for *Boomerang* and he won an Emmy in 1978 for Musical Direction for A *Boomerang Christmas Special*.

That the management of KOMO-TV seems to have achieved its goal of developing a weekly half-hour program of "superior quality and stature" there is little doubt and *Boomerang* continues to remain one of the most popular and unique local children's shows on television anywhere.

Conservative as it appears to be at a casual glance, the operations of the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., are highly deceptive. The quiet, almost genteel atmosphere at both KATU and KOMO-TV conceal smooth running TV operations which utilize the ultimate in technological equipment and highly proficient and capable staffs that have the knowledge and capabilities to utilize the latest tools of the television industry.

It is no secret in the Northwest as to why the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., stations are so highly respected both by the audience in the area and the stations' competitors. The progressive and innovative management policies carried out by the two stations, all based on the validity of the "localism" concept and geared to provide the Northwest TV audiences with the finest quality programming in the public service, community involvement and civic support areas, has placed a stamp of public acceptance on the efforts of the two stations rarely achieved by commercial television.

These policies are backed up by an awareness of the changing aspects of the TV industry and a dedication to maintain the kind of service that has earned Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., its recognition. The stations were among the first in the country to recognize the potential of computer usage to increase efficiency and performance and are in the forefront of developing new ideas to further

exploit the potential marriage of computers for TV communications purposes.

From a business standpoint, the Fisher stations have also been among the leaders in innovative planning. Two years ago they created a Market Research Division, under the leadership of Phelps Fisher, one of only two such divisions set up by a broadcast group in the country and the division has created new parameters for assisting local, regional and national advertisers in reaching their target audience — the consumer. Again, the innovative thinking that is the hallmark of the Fisher stations, utilizes the magic of automation to provide a service for the Northwest advertisers that is unique in its total subjectivity.

The innovation that is almost expected from a Fisher Broadcasting station operation was made obvious during the exhibition of *The Treasures of Tutankhamen* last year in Seattle. KOMO-TV special projects manager Art McDonald, wanting his station to do something unique, contacted a freelance Seattle designer, Michael DeCoursey, who suggested an idea entitled *Tut Minutes*. Working with KOMO-TV photographer-editor Roger DuMars and Lee Boltin, a series of slides was taken of the Tut exhibit. The creative team then blended the transparencies with special effects to produce 20 one-minute pictorial essays covering the religious, historical, and social aspects of ancient Egyptian life and culture.

The *Tut Minutes* were an aesthetic and commercial success and when the exhibit moved onto New York, the *Tut Minutes* followed. They were shown on WABC-TV, New York, and when the exhibit moved to San Francisco they appeared on KGO-TV, the ABC-TV outlet there. Earlier this year the *Tut Minutes* were honored with an Ohio State Award for a commercial series.

One of the more outstanding characteristics of the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc.'s stations operation is the versatility and flexibility of the KATU and KOMO-TV staffs. When KATU became the origination point for an "occasional network" to carry the annual Portland Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade, in June, Chuck Gingold and Executive Vice President Tom Dargan decided to highlight the final telecast of the two-and-a-half hour parade, which was beamed to over 40 stations in the Northwest and Southwest, with a series of live remotes the week prior to the grand finale.

By any standards this was a major production operation and Roy Cooper, KATU engineering supervisor and Chuck Gingold went all out to prove that local TV programmers could produce network style quality with local talent and equipment. After estimating what equipment they would need for the local live origination, KATU found they would be short of equipment for the big event so Chuck Gingold put in an SOS to its sister station KOMO-TV and the day of the parade KATU was primed with a total of eight cameras set up at various locations including a crane which provided shots from 18 inches off the ground to eighteen feet in the air. Additional camera coverage was provided by KATU's ENG unit which concentrated on crowd interviews and sideline color. The parade was a major success and stations along the line receiving the coverage were enthusiastic in their thanks to KATU.

In all of their operational efforts the Fisher Broadcasting stations try and stay ahead of the

issues and events of the day. When the leading members of the People's Republic of China political party were in the United States early in the year, they ended their American trip in Seattle. KOMO-TV was selected as the host station for a series of television reports by the Chinese delegation that were beamed back to China via satellite.

The rapport that sprang up between the Chinese leaders and members of the KOMO-TV staff resulted in KOMO News Anchor/Reporter Ruth Walsh and Mahlon Brosseau, director of news photography, being named to accompany Governor Dixy Lee Ray on an official mission to the People's Republic of China in Mid-September.

The journey is a result of a personal invitation to the Governor to visit the People's Republic extended by Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping. The official invitation came during the Vice Premier's visit to Seattle in February of this year.

The mission was scheduled to depart Seattle September 15, and return September 27. The itinerary included stops in Peking and



Reporter Elaine Heck (standing right) discusses a bulletin board project with preschool students during a taping of an early childhood education story for KOMO-TV's "PM Northwest."

Shanghai and included a visit with Vice Premier Deng. The return was by way of Tokyo for visits with high government officials in Japan, and certain industrial leaders of that country.

The old saw that goes "if spring is here can summer be far behind" can be paraphrased to "if broadcast innovations are here can Fisher Broadcasting be far behind" — a fairly apt description of the foresight used by the Fisher Broadcasting stations in terms of keeping up with the rapidly changing technologies inherent in the broadcast industry.

The depth of research and pre-planning that goes into the television side of the industry is duplicated on the radio side at KOMO-AM, Fisher's radio station in Seattle.

Like its TV sisters, KOMO-AM's management prides itself on being in the forefront of new developments in the radio field. When Data Communication Corporation's "BIAS" (Broadcast Industry Automated System) Division came out early this year with a completely new automated system designed especially for radio stations, but still untested in the field, KOMO-AM was one of the first stations in the country to adapt the new radio service, which featured a number of original radio-designed services, and have worked closely with the Memphis-based broadcast

computer service firm to adapt the system to their operation.

The speed with which Fisher Broadcasting Inc. stations adapt to changing trends in technology, operations, area life styles and community interests are indicative of the planning that is carried through every facet of the Northwest area TV and radio stations.

The versatility of its programming policies allows quick reaction to changes in audience moods and programming interests. When the Ted Bundy murder trial was moved to Miami, a few months ago, KOMO-TV shipped Anchor-Reporter Ruth Walsh and cinematographer Rich Crew to Miami and arranged for satellite reports on a daily basis. As a part of each satellite report KOMO-TV news also offered in-depth feature pieces on the background of Bundy, a former Seattleite, for the benefit of the Seattle audience. Shot in Salt Lake City, Aspen and Denver, over a three-year period that journalist Walsh had covered the Bundy story, the features gave an original and comprehensive picture of the accused man.

When KOMO-TV's highly honored preschool program *Boomerang*, was scheduled for the 1979 season, its popularity indicated that the audience wanted more of it and KOMO-TV expanded the show to six days a week, a unique tribute to this type of program.

When the highly controversial Norman Lear offering, *The Baxters* was offered to KOMO-TV, the station snatched it up as a perfect vehicle for additional community involvement and discussion of relevant social issues.

KOMO-TV Station Manager Ed Lackner's comment on the reason for KOMO-TV to show the program summed up pretty thoroughly the type of thinking that has made the Fisher Stations such outstanding examples of community service. "This program," said Ed, "is part of KOMO-TV's continuing effort to provide diversified programming for our audience. It offers high quality entertainment while responding to vital social issues. And it accommodates public reaction, providing access to the local community."

This concentration on Fisher Broadcasting, Inc.'s basic policy of "localism" has generated a sense of dedication and purpose that permeates the working environment of KOMO-TV/AM and KATU. The kind of morale this has established is probably best shown by the respect the staff has gained with its competitors. Earlier this year for instance KOMO-TV's staffers won 20 of 50 awards presented by the Western Washington Chapter of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.

The key to the success of the Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., stations in their dedication to offering high quality local programming is best defined in a comment made by Executive Vice President and General Manager John Behnke when KOMO-TV's award winning *PM Northwest* went on the air. "The scope of this new project," he said, "opens up an exceptional opportunity for the development of creative television and creative personnel — reporters, photographers, directors, technicians and engineers right here in our own broadcast area — who become involved in its production."

Obviously, the personnel involved in local productions have taken advantage of the opportunities offered and their response has made Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., the unique broadcasting entity it is today. ■

# NBC NIGHTLY NEWS — THE NEW LOOK

by Steve Ryan

On walking into the NBC Nightly News Office at Rockefeller Plaza in New York, one can't help thinking how quiet everything is compared to many local TV news operations. The anchorpersons (John Chancellor, David Brinkley, Jessica Savitch or Jim Hart) tap out their own stories on a manual typewriter in a corner next to the window. Next to them is a writer-editor who helps organize wire copy, collect data, and writes occasional stories. Four producers sit at desks facing each other in the central area of the room, while three production assistants who time and number script pages, take phone calls, etc., complete the circle of desks facing the producers and anchorpersons. From this central area where all the action seems to take place, the news room branches off into two wings where various production and copy assistants work. As the deadline for air approaches, the expected onslaught of "photogs," reporters and editors trying to put together stories that should have been completed ten minutes ago, never materializes. One doesn't hear the familiar cacophony of police and fire dispatchers, static-filled two-way radios barking out orders and locations. All in all things seem pretty calm.

## Daily Operations

NBC Nightly News is really a clearing house for news stories that are put together around the country and throughout the world. NBC has eleven domestic and fourteen foreign Bureaus which produce news stories in the field and then relay them to the New York office. The stories start coming in from the various Bureaus around 4:45 in the afternoon via satellite or telephone line feed (special telephone lines are used which can carry both audio and visual signals). As these stories come in they are seen on television monitors in the newsroom, while at the same time they are being recorded onto video tape for later transmission during the newscast. This is the first time the producers see the visuals for a news story, though the correspondent's script for the story usually has been transmitted from a Bureau to the New York office earlier in the day via telephone line using a Rapifax 100 wire copy transmitter. The various bureaus may be working on upwards of twenty stories, while only around ten to fifteen may actually make it on the air. The various Producers (Executive Producer Paul Greenberg, Senior Producer Bill Wheatley, Domestic Producer Lloyd Siegel, Foreign Producer Harry Griggs) look at the stories and decide whether they will be cut, aired as is, or dropped entirely. Stories are

rejected or changed for a variety of reasons. According to Weekend News Producer Bill Chesleigh, "Sometimes the pictures and words don't match at all, sometimes it sounds logical when you hear it over the phone, but when you see it all together, it doesn't work. You might reject it because of some technical aspect, the pictures are jumping or are too dark. You might see a story that belabors the point over and over again, that didn't seem that way when you first heard the script. But if the story is important enough, even though the film or video has problems, we would still use it."

Each day NBC News receives a feed from its London bureau via satellite. Stories from other European bureaus are often funneled through London or through Frankford which also can take stories from Eurovision (a consortium of European News agencies which share stories) and convert them to U.S. standards for transmission. Other overseas bureaus such as Hong Kong or Japan transmit stories via satellite when the need arises. But if a story can keep for a day or two or is feature material, it is shipped over by plane rather than fed over "the bird." NBC News also receives a ten minute daily satellite feed from Visnews, a private News service which collects and transmits to subscribers visual news stories primarily from foreign sources in much the same manner as wire services provide written news stories.

Visnews has a reciprocal agreement with NBC and even has offices in the same room as the NBC assignment desk and the NBC News Program Service. One of the television monitors in the news room will carry a "menu" of when the various satellites will transmit and what stories are scheduled.

As the stories come in they are recorded onto 2-inch quad or 3/4-inch video tape. Six 2-inch VTRs, including four Ampex 2000s with Editec capability and two RCA TR 70s, are set aside for the newscasts. "Some of the stories come in in pieces, especially those from satellite, and we have to edit them together in a hurry. Occasionally we will run in a little piece of audio on an ATR machine." Video Tape Supervisor Frank Weill adds, "We are flexible enough with three sets of machines that we can hold aside one set of machines for editing while the others service the air show." Stories may come in up to and even after 6:30. Since the newscast is rebroadcast at 7:00 p.m. for local stations (including WNBC-TV in New York), a story may be used in the 7:00 p.m. broadcast that wasn't in the 6:30 show. Also any errors in the 6:30 may be re-done and edited in for the 7:00 p.m. version. The first fifteen minutes of the 6:30 cast are recorded onto one 2-inch VTR, so that there is time to recue it by 7:00 p.m., while a second VTR records the second half of the newscast. RCA TH 100 1-inch VTRs are used to make archival



The NBC News Room — David Brinkley far right.

copies of the newscast.

News stories done on 3/4-inch video tape are edited on Sony BVU 200 and 200A VCRs using Sony BVE 500 and 500A editors and a Microtime 2020 Image Plus time base corrector. There are thirteen EJ (Electronic Journalism) editing booths, six of which are designated for Nightly News. These thirteen booths branch off from a spacious central area with additional VCRs for recording satellite and bureau feeds and for playback. Soon to be installed are 1-inch VTRs with CMX computerized editing. At present RCA TH 100 1-inch VTRs make all dub masters for the *Prime Time* show.

#### Producers

The producers seem to spend three-quarters of their time on the phone talking to various bureaus, reporters, news sources, the assignment desk. Correspondent Bill Jimenez calls in from Puerto Rico where he is putting together a package on the collision of two oil tankers off of Trinidad-Tobago. He was on his way back from Nicaragua to his Houston bureau headquarters when he and his crew were told to fly over the scene of the damaged tankers and oil spill. They got the visuals before running out of gas and refueling in Venezuela. One of the producers reading through recent wire service copy comes across a story that one of the tankers has sunk. Jimenez disputes this. Everyone hits the phones again to get more facts to confirm this new development. Someone eventually comes up with a Coast Guard spokesman who says the tanker hasn't sunk yet. After a lot of discussion the producers go with their correspondent in the field rather than with the wire service version. In the words of Weekend News Producer Bill Chesleigh, "... everyone uses the wire services because they have so many more reporters in the field than we do... but we trust our own reporters in the field to get the news." In the wire room there are over sixty different wire copy machines including AP, UPI and Reuters and offering different services such as sportswires, business wires, radio wires, Washington wires, AP "B" wires, and RCA Telex wires. One full-time person strips the wires and makes sure the proper divisions get their wire copy.

On a typical morning the producers begin by talking to their bureaus on a conference call. The anchorpersons may also participate. Each bureau in turn tells what it has, what it is working on, what is happening in its region. Up to fifty people may be in on the conference call. The producers and Assignment Desk Editors during the day constantly read wire service copy, newspapers, overnight reports from bureaus. Ideas for news stories can come from anywhere. The Assignment Desk, staffed twenty four hours a day every day by usually two domestic and one foreign editor, generates most of the story ideas and assignments. A producer may call a particular correspondent or bureau with an idea or with a particular approach to a subject, or he may work through the assignment editor who arranges for a story to be covered, or a correspondent or bureau may develop an idea and then clear it through the assignment editor or producer, or more often than not, an assignment editor may initiate the coverage. Executive Producer Greenberg explained to one correspondent how he wanted covered the story of a kidnapping of a little girl at Daytona Beach. "This poor, silly young kid just

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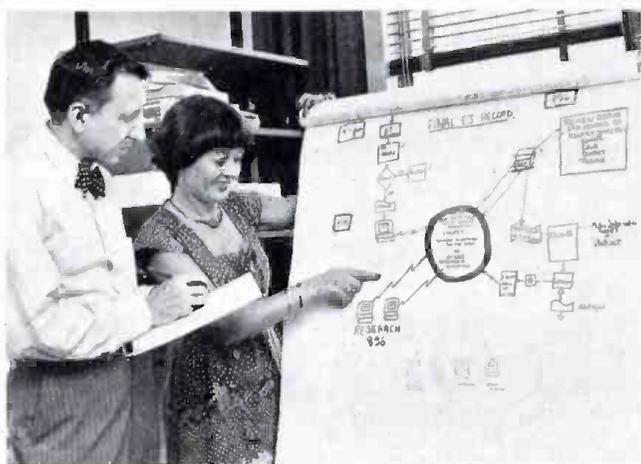


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# NBC NEWS — MICROFILM RETRIEVAL SPEEDS ACCESS TO STORED NEWS FOOTAGE



Sigmund Bajak, director of News Services, and Cynthia Gagen, NBC News archivist, discuss a flow pattern for their system. NBC says it is the only network in the U.S. to have a computer-assisted microfilm retrieval method.

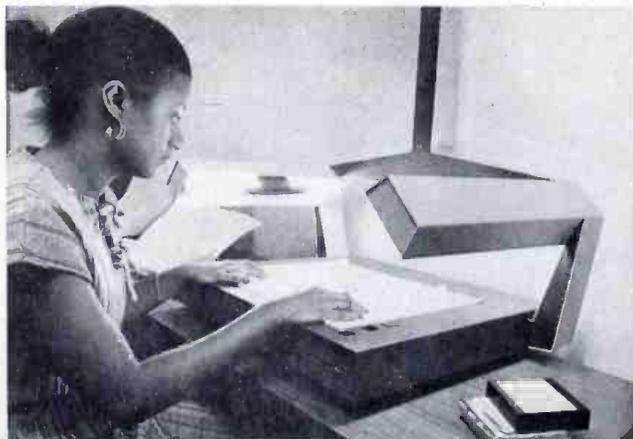
Retrieving records in the television industry is becoming as easy as turning TV dials. With advances in computer and microfilm technology at hand, television stations and networks are getting quick access to films and file information to help them produce shows that are timely and newsworthy — all at the touch of a finger.

When a news story breaks and film footage is needed at NBC-TV News in New York, quick access to the film library means the difference between a well documented newscast and a report left with large "holes." Instead of worrying about finding critical film footage when a late-breaking story develops, the editors of NBC focus their efforts on the story while a computer-assisted microfilm retrieval (CAR) system helps locate the film.

"Getting the film and background information to the newsroom immediately is critical for an effective news operation," say Sigmund Bajak, Director of News Services. "As a result, we rely heavily on modern microfilm and computer technology to locate some 250 million feet of news film and thousands of hours of documentaries."

Many times, editors will call on the news film librarians to locate footage for a show the same night. For example, on August 1, 1978, footage of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus was needed for a newscast on the House vote to repeal the American embargo on military aid to Turkey. Without immediate access to files on Turkey-Cyprus arms embargo, NBC News would have had an incomplete report.

In other instances, editors will need information for retrospective



Complete records of all stories and abstracts explaining the film story and additional information are microfilmed on the Recordak Starfile microfilmer. All microfilmed material can be called out by the computer which maintains a cross-index of seven categories.

stories, such as "One Year Later's," "Whatever Happened To's," and newsworthy anniversaries. In the files, the librarians have access to films and videotapes of newscasts, shows, news conferences, speeches and other footage applying to everyday news coverage.

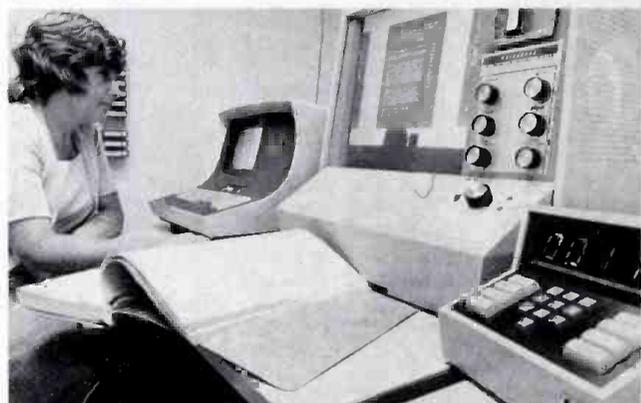
Known as "Sunshine" and developed by NBC in consultation with Eastman Kodak Company, the microfilm system consists of a Zyttron Micro 4000 computer with seven video display terminals, three hard copy terminals, and Kodak microfilm equipment.

Up to 56 difference items of information can be entered into the computer, which has two 200-megabyte disc packs capable of storing 400 million characters of information.

Each story is assigned a work sheet. This contains the film or tape identification number, date, title, place, reporter, cameraperson, program on which it appeared, technical information on story's length and the medium on which it was recorded, all the indexing terms needed to retrieve the story, an abstract of the story and a summary of the abstract.

The abstract not only tells what is on the film but also the background and additional information on the story. The information can be culled from other sources, such as daily newspapers.

Abstracts on videotape stories are completed by reviewers at NBC's studios in New York. Film stories are handled by reviewers at Fort Lee Film in New Jersey, where NBC stores much of its footage. Completed work sheets and abstracts are entered into the



Janice Godfrey, an archival services staff member at NBC News, reads a microfilmed abstract that explains the content of a segment of news film. The library has more than 250 million feet of film and thousands of hours of videotape.

computer, and data analysts in the library call them out for final verification. Once approved and validated, the information is generated into the catalog (a computer-based file) stored on disc, and is now displayable and searchable within the seven categories. The final sheets and abstracts are printed out on a hard copy terminal and are microfilmed. Generally, the library waits until it has a batch of 500 to 600 documents to microfilm at one time, which usually occurs twice a week. Microfilm is sent to Kodak for processing. There, it is inserted into plastic magazines and returned to the library for indexing, that is, cross referencing the cartridge and page number with the film reference number.

In some cases of a breaking news story, such as the death of Jomo Kenyatta, President of Kenya, NBC News Archival Services Library researchers found the information on the computer terminal and identified the film location and abstracts on a microfilm reader-printer. The researcher simply called in the storage locations that appeared on the reader-printer's viewing screen and had the film delivered to NBC studios. At the same time, printed copies of the microfilmed abstracts were given to the editors to start working on the story.

As a result of this microfilm and computer technology, NBC Nightly News viewers across the nation that night saw a 2:20 minute obit of Mr. Kenyatta's life including scenes from the Mau-Mau uprising during the 1950s; the 1963 independence ceremonies; and more recent visit with then British Prime Minister James Callahan. ■

took the car and the girl happened to be in the back seat . . . I wanted the story done from the viewpoint that this is the kind of thing a lot of people do. They check into a motel, leave the car outside, leave the keys in the ignition, and they do it in Holiday Inns across the country day after day, particularly at this time of year. And the family just about fell apart over this. So, I told the correspondent I wanted this at the top of the story, and I want to see the kid coming back, then the guy who was arraigned for the crime, and then I want to talk to other parents and ask them what has this done to you. Then I want to end up with the little girl playing in the surf. The correspondent says, 'Well, I don't know if it will play that way.' Let me tell you, it works that way. So, he did it and it was very successful." Normally the method of coverage of most stories is not laid out so explicitly. More often than not correspondents are left to their own devices since they are on the scene and can best analyze what is going on.

As we were talking Mr. Greenberg got a call from a correspondent complaining about something that was said to him. Obviously some ruffled feathers needed smoothing. After the phone conversation Mr. Greenberg talked about his rapport with correspondents, "Part of your job is being a coach, a rabbi, a priest, a dictator . . . some people see you in one light, that you are a despot, and other people find you kind of loveable. It is the way different people were treated, or the way different people reacted to being treated the same way. In terms of correspondents, some of them you love, some of them you hate. If you are human you react to them at different levels. To some of them you say, 'Look, I don't care what you think. Just do it.' To others you say, 'Come on, now.' And it depends on how short you are that day, how many times people have batted you around, how many times the line has failed in the house."

The Assignment Desk is located just off of the News room and is separated from it by glass doors and partitions. The NBC News Program Service which provides local NBC affiliates with news and particularly sports stories and the independent foreign news story supplier Visnews are also located in the same area as the Assignment desk. Here the sounds resemble more those of a typical local news room, but instead of police and fire radios, one hears what sounds like short-wave radio, telephone calls from overseas or from U.S. bureaus. The pace and pressure seem much more hectic than in the adjoining news room. Assignment Editors are a harried lot in every newsroom, but even more so when they have to coordinate the efforts of reporters, photographers, editors, satellite transmissions, logistics such as supply problems, transportation, shipping. "We are buried in paperwork here. That is the problem," as Assignment Editor Alan Statsky sees it.

Who finally decides what stories will play on a given day? Surprisingly there isn't a whole lot of disagreement. The most important news stories stand out by themselves. If there is any disagreement among producers, anchorpersons and writer-editors, it is more over which minor news story to carry or how high up in the newscast a particular story should be placed. As Executive Producer Greenberg explains, "Debates usually come over secondary stories, and a lot of times debate arises over what we should lead a broadcast with. Most of it (which news stories should be carried) is



An "E.J." (Electronic Journalism) editing room at NBC News. Weekend Sports Director Dick Schaap supervises the editing of a sports piece on Sony 3/4" BVU 200 editing machines.

pretty obvious." If there is any disagreement, "Theoretically I would have the ultimate say, if John [Chancellor] wouldn't get up and walk off the set." Jessica Savitch adds, "The Producer doesn't necessarily have the final say. You usually go for a third opinion. You saw that at one point I didn't want to use a piece on Congressional reaction, but [Writer-Editor] Sandy [Goodman] did, and [Producer] Bill [Chesleigh] and I argued against it. Usually you try to get a tiebreaker. I suppose if it ever came to an editorial decision and I didn't think something was factually correct or I didn't want to say something in a certain way, I would have the final authority. But if the producer says it is a choice of using this story or that, then it is really up to him. But these decisions are usually arrived at by consensus."

Once the producers talk with the bureaus they make up a tentative Routine Sheet of what stories are up for that day. Stories may be listed as "tentative," "definitive," or "possible." Towards noon the producers set up another conference call with all the bureaus. It is after this that the anchorpersons are assigned specific stories to write up or to write lead-ins and transitions for. "You are working on a deadline situation, but you try to be as easy about it as you can." [Jessica Savitch]. Then the producers will have an artists' meeting so that the graphic artists can get visuals together for the stories they think they will have. Around three in the afternoon there will be another conference call, this time between the New York and Washington producers and anchorpersons in order to put together the actual line-up of stories and visuals for broadcast.

#### Graphics

Usually the lead artist and two or three other graphic artists work on Nightly News visuals, though at any given part of the day all nine artists in the office may drop whatever else they are doing and cut and paste, set type, illustrate, make maps and graphs, pull file material, etc. NBC Graphics subscribes to AP and two other photo services as well as shoots its own slides and takes freeze frames from its video tape stories for slide material. Photographs are usually used rather than illustrations. "An artist's rendering becomes something that is editorial," according to Art Director Lee Satusland. With a photograph, "you can see it and understand it, you get the

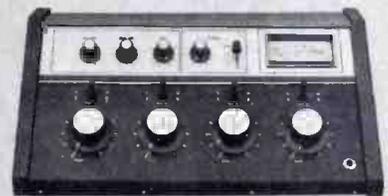
message very quickly, you don't have all day . . . like looking at a book or magazine. A visual is meant to be an introduction, a bridge. It's not meant to upstage the anchor (by being very complex and arty) or give the story away. It is support material."

But it's not always easy to get photographs on a breaking news story. "The whole secret to this business is long range thinking and planning. You start to figure out where stories are coming from, how long they will stay, when they are starting to germinate. It is like a sixth sense. We spend an inordinate amount of time researching, finding people who have photographs on a specific subject, getting research material. We are dealing constantly with getting sources (of graphics) in here in advance."

On an average day Graphics will produce 17 to 20 visuals in a newscast, but there may be upwards of 40 that started out in the Routine list. After the 3:30 meeting when the individual news stories are more or less set, the producers, " . . . are calling all the way through ('til air time) constantly updating, changing, rearranging, changing order, changing copy, changing visuals." To cope with these changes and the immediacy needs of news, NBC has put together a unique system of visual production, storage and retrieval, what it calls an "electronic slide maker." An RCA TK 76 video camera mounted on an Oxberry animation stand shoots a particular graphic display. This graphic is then stored electronically on a disk pack in an Adda ESP 200 frame storer. Each disk can hold two hundred different frames. Using a Chiron 2 character generator, typographical copy such as names, dates, etc., can be electronically superimposed over the original graphic. A

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Grass Valley Group 1600-IL switcher can color the letters, create wipes and double exposures, colored fields and a wide variety of other special effects which can then be added to the original graphic. Instead of a slide being processed, mounted and loaded in a drum projector, the Adda graphic with added special effects is then stored electronically on a disk frame storer and called up simply by dialing in the number of that particular frame. This process represents an incredible saving in time and effort over the old 35 mm or rear screen 5" x 7" transparency Vizmo system formerly in use at NBC where the film had to first be processed and letters or other special effects added later. Art Director Stausland adds, "What we are having to do is deal with faster and faster means of getting something that before took hours or even days. We are now dealing with minutes, we will be dealing with seconds."

Because of the dual channel or dual memory capabilities of the Adda frame storer, the artists have been using it to produce limited, 1/2-second animation. "It started out by someone asking, 'I wonder what would happen if I added another frame (using the sequencing ability of the Adda).' Depending on the number of moves you put in and the sequence of moves, they can be fairly smooth," according to Graphic Artist Ernie Hendrichsen. Satellite weather photos are routinely animated during the *Today* show. Animation is used for example to show a DC10 engine falling from the wing of the plane.

A computer system is in use to catalogue and retrieve the graphics. Each graphic is cross indexed as to subject, date, place, name and medium (for example — map) in the News Inventory Files system also shared by WNBC-TV, News Center 4. On typing the name "Carter" in the computer, the CRT screen or the computer print-out will list all the various graphics of Carter, such as "Carter Smiling," "Carter with Amy," etc. Listed with each graphic is a number telling where the visual is located. Any frame not currently in use on disk is put into what is called the tape library, consisting of a Sony 1-inch VTR on which frames are stored in one minute long sections. One tape can hold 50,000 still images, each of which can be almost instantly retrieved by simply dialing up the particular tape section. (A similar computerized cataloguing system is used for news stories.) Art Director Stausland calls these and other new technological developments her "electronic crayons." "The thing is to get excited by it (improved electronic technologies for graphics), get involved in it, and not feel that we are being deprived of our oil brushes and paper. Once you get yourself thinking that way, you can get terribly excited by all the possibilities. We are forging new frontiers."

### The Director

The relationship between producer and director on NBC Nightly News is somewhat different from that of a producer and director on SitComs or Dramas. The News Producer is responsible for all the visual material (news stories, graphics, still pictures) as well as the written script. The producer is also responsible for the timing of the show and must decide what is to be cut if the show is running late. The director is responsible for how the material is presented on the air. Director Walter Kravitz clarifies, "They (the producers) worry about the show editorially. I

worry about the visual aspect, the technical aspect of it. They present to me all of the editorial portions, all the scripts and stories they have assigned in the order they wish them to appear, and it's up to me to visually put them in that order by saying the first shot will be Jessica Savitch with a visual behind her. Then comes a piece of video tape that deals with the Washington story, then after that will be Jessica on a CU without a visual. They provide the visuals [graphics, still pictures], [but] I have veto power if I wish to say that the picture is not what I think it should be or is of poor quality technically. I have the prerogative to change that, since I am virtually the last person to handle the program before the home viewer sees it."

Since the newscast is essentially live, since breaking news stories or other changes are constantly occurring and since a network newscast is so complex and fast moving, the director is under constant challenges and pressures: "I try to make it seem at home as smooth as it can be without any kind of foul-



**The NBC wire service room. Over sixty different wire copy teletype machines provide information from AP, UPI, Reuters and include such services as the AP "B" wire, UPI Sports, UPI Radio, UPI Washington, UPI Business, AP and UPI New York Metro.**

ups, though they obviously occur with every newscast. There are constant changes even including on the air. When a story doesn't come in for whatever reason, technical or otherwise, you have to re-vamp the whole show. You have to be with it and don't let it throw you, still come up with a product that the people at home can say, 'Well, I just watched the news and I know what it was,' rather than, 'My God, look at all the mishaps, the film didn't come up, there was a misprint on one of the supers, or the tape didn't roll.'" Director Kravitz was then asked, "How come you aren't a chain-smoking neurotic?" "Well, I was. But I found out that it doesn't pay. Really in this business the cooler you are, the better you do. You may be churning on the inside, but if you can show to your crew and your staff a coolness, it makes a cleaner, cooler show too; because they feel there is no pressure, that you aren't edgy and ready to snap their heads off or, if there is a crisis, that you are not going to fall apart at the seams. But having done this so many times, for so many years [20], you roll with the punches."

Director Kravitz works primarily with a Technical Director, Art Wieder, who seated to his right actually operates the Grass Valley Group switcher with two Mix-Effects busses and a downstream keyer. The TD sets up special effects like chroma keys or color

mattes and punches up the various shots and video tape stories on the director's cue. On the director's left a Production Associate, Roberta Spring, calls for video tape and film rolls, counts down the end and out-cues of video tape stories and commercials so that the director can switch back to the studio in time. She also monitors very closely the actual running time of the newscast. Along with a production assistant who had timed out this particular show before air by adding up the times of the various news stories, lead-ins and commercials, they found that the show was going to run ten seconds too long. Ten seconds means an awful lot to a show that is very precisely timed. "When you write a one minute thirty second story, that does not mean one minute thirty-one seconds!" [Jessica Savitch]. During the newscast the Senior Producer, Bill Wheatly, usually stays in the control room. He, the director, the production associate, and the executive producer with whom he communicated by phone, tried to figure out how to cut some story shorter, drop a public service spot, shorten the bumper shot or cut copy to get back those ten seconds. Finally Producer Wheatly walked onto David Brinkley's set during a commercial break and arranged for him to shorten his copy.

Since part of the news show originates in New York and part in Washington, this arrangement makes necessary separate offices, studios, art departments, producers, etc. However, it is not as complicated as it might seem. When the director wishes to take Washington, it is simply a question of the TD punching the switcher button marked "Washington" and a Washington based director and producer then take over. "It is so old now that something like coming from Washington is almost like something coming from next door. The problems are almost non-existent." Director Kravitz continues, "We have, I think, something in the neighborhood of three special lines (from Washington) into this building alone. So, if one fails, there is always a backup. From the telephone company's end it never touches them. They are hard wired from Washington to here. We haven't experienced any difficulties at all other than a manhole cover blowing off in a rainstorm in Baltimore and taking out one of our lines. That is about the only thing that has occurred in recent memory. We just punch up Washington and let them do their own thing in the required amount of time, and when the other guy says John or Jessica or whoever, you switch back and continue on with the New York portion."

Ever since the Huntley-Brinkley report the co-anchors have been positioned on their different sets so that they appear to be looking at each other. Even though they are 265 miles away, one will turn to the other so that he/she is on his/her right and vice versa, while in reality in the studio when John Chancellor turns to David Brinkley, he is actually looking at a television monitor with the other's image. One problem with the old NBC Nightly News set was that each set was so similar to the other that viewers might sometimes forget that the news came from two different locations. The new Washington set has a Washington skyline to stress the fact that David Brinkley or the other anchors are in Washington. It is believed that for David Brinkley to actually be in Washington lends a certain credibility and authority to his stories. As Director Kravitz points out, "When Brinkley reports on the

White House or the Senate or on one of the hearings on the Hill, viewers feel that he knows what he is talking about. There is that authenticity of a Washington person doing a Washington story."

### The New News Set

Almost everyone agrees that the new NBC Nightly News set has several advantages over the old set which was so small that when Jessica Savitch would turn to Dick Schaap for Sports, she would have to be careful not to bump into him. Executive Producer Greenberg explains why the set was changed, "Part of the thinking behind the set is that everyone was very happy with our look on election nights. [But] our news set was not satisfactory. We wanted to take that election night look and utilize some of the colors, the feel of it for Nightly broadcast." Director Kravitz adds, "That achievement of being a little more airy is what the set is really designed to do. It gives you a feeling that someone like John Chancellor, David Brinkley, Jessica Savitch are not just some kind of puppets who are manipulated in the corner of some television studio in New York or Washington. Now they have a stage, if you will, to work from." John Chancellor has a magnetized map behind him while the backdrop in Washington is a Washington scene. "... John will actually go and point out, 'The oil spill occurred here off the coast of Venezuela,' and will relate to it by standing next to the map and showing you where this occurred. So, this map, besides being pictorial background, will also be useful in terms of introducing a major story and show on the map its relationship to the rest of the world." Executive Producer Greenberg continues, "This set is more versatile. We are able to change the dimensions of the graphic presentations so that they don't overwhelm the talent as much. The talent is larger, more important in the scene. On the other set not only was the talent smaller but you were shooting floor, shooting off of the set, shooting a lot of cyc. Now the talent is larger (sitting in a raised platform that dominates the middle of the set), the graphic is related to him. In the other set they were using inserts, punching them into the program. We weren't quite satisfied with the way that looked, so we devised our own system which is a combination of chroma key and compression (using a Quantel Digital Products Effects compressor). We do have in addition to that a place on the set for writers and wires. One of the problems with the NBC system here is leaving the newsroom and going to a studio to do the program. They work on it in the office and then they move. The way this thing is set up, you can bring the newsroom down here. The people on the left, one is the program editor, the other is John's producer-writer. The woman on the right-hand side is the program production assistant who is making a log of the programs. She sees all three networks, but she only really monitors ours. These people can swap from side to side which is why you need monitors on both sides." Jessica Savitch adds, "I like it much better. There is a phone, there is a typewriter if you need to write anything. There is much more room. I don't think it is as cluttered, as cramped. My knees aren't hitting Dick Schaap's (as on the old set). The lighting is better, there are better background colors, better flesh tones." But nothing is perfect. As Weekend Sports Director Dick Schaap points



Engineer Mike Madigan (left) and graphic artist Ernie Hendrichsen work on the Adda electronic slide maker and storer.



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out, "Any set that covers up Jessica's legs and exposes mine has something wrong."

Three RCA TK 44 cameras with Taylor-Hobson Varotal and Canon 16-160 mm zoom lenses on Fulmar pedestals are used in the studio. The two set areas in the background where there appear to be multiple monitors and display patterns are at present mostly non-functional paste-ups, but will be replaced later on by specific monitors and equipment. These two areas are separated from the main set area by large sheets of glass angled forward to prevent them from picking up light reflections from the Mole-Richardson set lights. The chroma key screen is a bright green and is not attached to the wall but is on a moveable stand to the left of the anchorperson. Chartreuse green is used for chroma keying rather than chroma key blue because of its good keying qualities, but also because there is little chance that someone will walk on the set dressed in that shade of green. The audio console located in a booth to the left of and facing the director's control room, is a Neve 36 channel audio console that is fully utilized perhaps only on election nights. The video engineer has a booth to the right of the director's control room.

### Anchors

NBC News is co-anchored by John Chancellor in New York and by David Brinkley in Washington. Jessica Savitch and Jim Hart anchor on weekends and when one of the regular co-anchors is not available. John Chancellor began his news career in Chicago as a newspaper reporter for the *Chicago Sun Times*. In Chicago he developed a reputation as a hard-hitting crime reporter, and worked his way up from the Chicago NBC affiliate to overseas correspondent and then Washington correspondent for the network. He at one time hosted the *Today* show and during the Johnson administration was appointed director of the *Voice of America*, the only working journalist so honored. He was the chief reporter and writer of *NBC Nightly News* from 1971 till David Brinkley rejoined him as co-anchor in 1976.

David Brinkley started in news as a writer for his home town paper, the *Wilmington, North Carolina Star-News*. He became director of several Southern offices of the United Press wire service before entering the army during World War II. After the war he worked for NBC in Washington covering the White House and writing and delivering newscasts. In 1956 he began his fourteen year team effort with the late Chet Huntley. From 1971 he did a special reports series "David Brinkley's Journal" till he began his current assignment in 1976.

Jessica Savitch ("the Golden Girl" as *Newsweek* labeled her) was the first woman anchorperson in the South at KHOU-TV, in Houston, Texas, at a time when women were not considered authoritative enough to do news work, let alone anchor. She then became reporter and anchorperson at KYW-TV, in Philadelphia, before coming to NBC where she is Sunday anchor in New York, then commutes back to Washington where she is a political correspondent during the week. She will replace both Chancellor and Brinkley if either are on assignment elsewhere, and she has filled in for both Jane Pauley and Tom Brokaw on the *Today* show.

Anchorpersons reportedly make salaries in the six figures range. Though all three anchorpersons would prefer it otherwise, they are nevertheless stars, as for example David



Feeds of news stories from satellites and from NBC bureaus are monitored and recorded here using RCA TK-70 two-inch quad VTRs.

Brinkley found out in 1964 when he was covering the campaign of then-Governor Nelson D. Rockefeller, and attracted bigger crowds than the candidate. Jessica Savitch warns the students she teaches at her alma mater Ithaca College (she takes a vacation week each year to teach a special course on Broadcast Journalism), that being on the air even at local TV stations will make you a celebrity. Having dinner with a date in a dimly lit restaurant, people will sit down uninvited, talk to you like they've known you for years, and be really surprised that you don't know them. "As an anchorperson you come into their homes every night. Naturally they think they know you." She remembers hearing someone say, "If that woman would fix herself up (speaking of her), she would look like Jessica Savitch." She tells how "... it ruins your day when people are disappointed in seeing that how you look in person isn't the same as on TV." Being a celebrity definitely impinges upon your privacy, while on the other hand it sometimes isolates you from your former friends who now think you are too important for them. "Sometimes no one talks to you because no one thinks you want to talk to them. You have to have a strong ego." But the answer to coping with these pressures is simply to "declare yourself a success and enjoy it."

The notion of an anchorperson as simply a pretty face or Ted Baxter type who reads copy fed to them just before the newscast, is a myth at least at the network level. If someone like John Chancellor is on an assignment in the field for most of the day, then a writer may do some of his stories. But in general anchorpersons write and type their own stories and lead-ins. "Having another writer is like getting into someone else's bathroom," according to Jessica Savitch. An anchorperson must read the newspapers, read all the wire copy and understand what they are writing about. Otherwise, "viewers will know viscerally if they are getting the goods." She follows her own advice to students, "Read all the copy on a subject first, then put it down and write the story yourself. You will do much better if you have read everything that has come over the wire, talked to people, gotten data. You are there to ask the questions that people at home ask." If a reporter doesn't understand, for example, what a prime interest rate of 11½% means, then certainly the people

at home won't understand either. Even an anchorperson should not be above calling bankers, scientists or other experts to get an explanation of difficult news items. "You will get believability when you believe in yourself and know what you are doing. It's of secondary importance to be first. The most important thing is to be accurate and reasonable." The function of an anchorperson is, "to put things in perspective, to add things. We have to know what facts a reporter has left out of where to get other sources. We don't manage the news, we react to it."

Anchors have writer-editors who work closely with them. An editor as well as the executive producer will read over every page of news script. "We are edited very carefully for content. We may argue back and forth [about a particular point]. But in general I don't have very many constraints," though Savitch admits that as a younger anchorperson, her copy is questioned more often than David Brinkley's. David Brinkley types his copy in lower case across the full page and never uses a teleprompter. John Chancellor and Jessica Savitch both use teleprompters and type their copy down the middle of the page leaving wide margins on either side. John Chancellor's copy is meticulously punctuated and grammatically correct. Jessica Savitch follows the broadcast news writing style of using three periods to indicate pauses, underlinings to show emphasis points, and a total absence of commas and other forms of punctuation except for the period. Heavy crossouts indicate deletions. David Brinkley may have sentences three words long. Their respective typing and copy styles are so different that if stories have to be changed from one anchor to another for some reason such as one story being dropped or its position in the newscast changed, someone has to re-type the script in the other anchorperson's style.

### Conclusion

In spite of the surface appearance of calm in the NBC news room, every newscast is the product of an incredible amount of time, effort, technical prowess, creative know how and anxiety on the part of an army of people. In Jessica Savitch's words, "If we let it appear to each other how tough it really is, then it would be almost too intense. Underneath there is a lot of tension, a lot of excitement and a lot of caring." ■



## THE SOUND AND THE FURY

Part I: Overstuffed Closets  
and Boiling Blood

© 1979 by John D. Price

Actor-sound man Ray Erlenborn, with CBS since 1937, is shown with mobile equipment used for numerous in-person sound effects demonstrations. Comedy/pantomime show evolved from the many demonstrations given for CBS studio tour groups.

(Photo from Ray Erlenborn)

**SOUND FX:** Boiling blood. . . Arch Oboler/LIGHTS OUT

**SOUND FX:** Confusion of struggle . . . exclamations . . . heavy breathing and a rain of socks and punches until the hand of every sound man in MBS aches like the toothache and is swollen twice its size . . . Carleton Morse/I LOVE A MYSTERY

**SOUND FX:** Door latch: Terrific avalanche of junk with bell tinkle . . . Don Quinn/FIBBER MCGEE AND MOLLY

When the curtain went up in the theater of the mind, believing was seeing. Much of that believability was created by a small army of people who could turn cryptic instructions such as those above into audio images of horror or pugilism or comedy.

They were called (with apologies to Ms. Ora Nichols and her female contemporaries) "the sound effects men." No show was complete

without one . . . or as many as seven. They clustered mainly around the network origination centers in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, with additional cadres at WXYZ, Detroit and WLW, Cincinnati. But even medium and small stations had some version of the big-city "FX" man, complete with various gadgets and an armload of 78 rpm disks filled with big-city sounds of crime, sin and corruption.

They were at their best when we didn't know they were there.

The museum and archives of the Pacific Pioneer Broadcasters in Hollywood store many mementoes of radio's golden age. The RCA Model 44 microphone that followed Bing Crosby from show to show. Alan Reed's home aircheck disc recorder. Linecheck transcriptions by the thousands. Ampex tape recorder serial #1, and reel upon reel of that magnetic ribbon that heralded both a new era in "live" radio — and the end of the era itself.

But there are few reminders of the sound

effects men. Not until one comes to a dusty grey cabinet about the size of an overfed spinet. There is a matching speaker, mounted on a swivel base. A squeaky set of hinges (themselves worthy of a minor inner sanctum) allow the cover to be folded back, revealing three felt-covered turntables, four pickups complete with steel needles and thumbscrew chucks, and a small panel of controls.

Surround the battleship grey cabinet with a bewildering array of doors, water tanks, temple blocks, ratchets, twangers and boingers, guns, berry boxes, telephones, gravel and sand boxes, coconut shells, gongs and bells, mallets and hammers. Add an equal number of devices too specialized to bear any generic name.

For sounds not reproducible, add a file of disks, labels bearing such exotic titles as:

- "Battle sequence, in canyon, rifles and revolvers."
- "Footsteps with chain dragging."
- "Steam operated factory whistles - 11 cuts."
- "Car starter motor as battery gradually weakens."
- "Streamlined train approaches and passes."

Put all of this in a studio with the likes of one Ray Erlenborn, and you have a good chance of turning Freddie The Freeloader into Red Skelton's finest hour.

Add a Gus Bayz (sound effects) and a William Spier (director) for a tale well calculated to keep you in . . . *Suspense!*

Combine a Gene Twombly with radio's eternal tightwad, and only then may Benny visit his vault.

But subtract that strange mixture of artist, performer and technician — the soundman — and even a simple fenderbender on a busy street loses respectability. Not to mention Red Ryder's shootout with the rustlers, or (perhaps radio's most famous catch-sound) Fibber McGee's hall closet.

This is underlined when one reads yellowed pages from bound script-books that sleep in the PPB museum. The mirth of Fibber and Molly driving the Wistful Vista fire truck is reduced to mere words. The shiny sixteen-inch transcription, revolving lazily on its turntable, reveals Jim and Marian Jordan breathing the life of Fibber and Molly into those words. But the nimble hands and feet of their soundmen add the final touch of engine, bell and siren. Now, we can see the tree-lined streets of small-town America, the white facade of the Elks' lodge, and the mailbox on the porch of 79, where Mr. Wimble waits to talk of "Sweetieface, my big old wife."

They helped make radio's golden age more than just a gilded facade. If you're over thirty-five, some of your coziest memories of time spent by the big console linger on because of the sound and the fury — of the sound effects men.

Ray Erlenborn's days as a sound effects technician at CBS are behind him. His "retirement" allows him to pursue a second career in acting, but he occasionally applies his talents to a project with a special sound-effect challenge: the sizzling shrimp in a steakhouse commercial, for example.

Ray has maintained the core of a lifelong accumulation of sound effects equipment, and uses his gadgetry in a show that is either "sound effects with pantomime and comedy" or some other combination of the three.

He knows of what he speaks. When the big comedy programs started moving from New York to Hollywood in the mid-thirties, Ray was jack-of-all-trades at such L.A. stations as KHJ and KFI. But the big New York radio shows were moving west to tap the Hollywood talent pool. At one point he found that he could double his salary as director of the Pennzoil News Review on KFI by becoming a sound effects man for a show on the Columbia web. In no time at all he joined the small circle of CBS soundmen, headquartered in the basement of the then-new Columbia Square on Sunset Boulevard. Pennzoil was replaced by Joe ("Wanna buy a duck?") Penner. His days of shouldering betwixt actors at the single carbon mike to add his sound business were already ancient history as radio blossomed.



Ed Bailey, later to become a producer for *Truth or Consequences*, and other Ralph Edwards shows, is shown doing sound effects for *Lights Out* in Chicago during the late thirties. Boiling blood was accomplished by blowing through straw into Coca-Cola syrup. (Photo by NBC engineer Bob Jensen)

Perhaps it was Ray's effervescent personality, or his sense of comedy from exaggerated sound. In any case, he was soon supplying sound for Burns and Allen, Eddie Cantor and for three years, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, when Coke brought them to you (*live*) from the Pasadena Playhouse.

He is perhaps proudest of his long association with Red Skelton, which lasted through the big TV years.

"Red's 'Silent Spots' were full of sound," remembers Ray. "I soon learned to throw away the script. I made 'idiot cards' which gave me general cues, but even then Red would never do a bit the same way he rehearsed it."

Often the star would test his soundman's alertness. He would exit a railroad car (clickity-clacks up), then enter the next car (clickity-clacks under), only to whip the door open again. Ray would be ready, and the train noises would whip up once more, even though Ray was up on the stairwell behind the audience with one eye on the monitor, the other on the stage . . . and Skelton.

When the season was over, Ray would emerge from the stairwell and accompany Red on his summer tours from Vegas to Miami Beach, supplying effects from his vast library of cartridge sounds.

(Erlenborn, like many other soundmen, uses MacKenzie Repeater cartridge equipment, a device using special metal cartridges. It preceded regular broadcast tape cartridges by several years, and has become something of a standard among soundmen.)

Although much of Ray's effects repertoire is now on tape, he maintains his full inventory of "live" FX props for use on the lecture circuit. A partial list includes:

- Coconut shells and gravel-box: They really do make the best horse noises. A board across the side of the box serves as the planks of a bridge. Gravel flies in several directions as Ray's "horse" out-gallops the posse. He is quick to note that this is a four-legged animal. A quick review of several westerns revealed several three-legged mounts, which reflected on the dexterity of their creators.

- A door: Ray's is rather small, but authentic in sound. It has a

standard knob and latch, plus several locks and other bits of door hardware. Atop it is his own brand of

- Squeaker: Plainly showing its age, this device may be as old as the innermost sanctum itself. By applying more or less pressure, its sound may range from the screen door of a mountain cabin to the drawbridge of a castle, or even the groaning of a four-master in heavy seas. With the door and the squeaker, Ray can lead you instantly into a chamber where only horror awaits.

- Marching feet: A platoon of wooden pegs, bound into close-order formation by leather thongs and attached to a common handle, can be raised and lowered almost together, but not quite. Striking the board beneath with different intensities can bring you dejected convicts on their way to the lockup, or swaggering brownshirts conquering Poland all over again.

- A barker: This tiny device startles us with a voice so loud and sharp that Fido would come running. Nothing more than a small tin can with a leather diaphragm tightly stretched over one end, it has a string tied through the center of the skin. The string is impregnated with rosin, as is a small pad of cloth folded about it. A sharp tug while holding the pad tightly produces a "bark" of magnificent proportions. Slowly drawing the pad along the string brings a protesting nail out of heavy wood — or a ghostly whine worthy of *Escape*.

- Ratchet (or tick-tack): This is one of many sound-exaggerating devices borrowed from vaudeville trap-drummers. Cranked in various ways, it could parody a clock being wound, or machinery gone awry.

- Berry boxes: They were actually peach-boxes, long before such things were transformed into plastic imitations. Held close to the mike and crushed, they yielded a delicious crunch. "We bought them by the gross," says Erlenborn. A leftover remnant crushed does justice to fingers caught in a door, or a nose being tweaked.

- A glass-breaking machine: Whether the brick was to be thrown through the window, or the Mean Widdle Kid was to drop Mommy's best vase, this device did yeoman service. A tall narrow wooden frame was covered with wire mesh. At the top, horizontal slots accepted one to three plates of window-glass. Only a hammer was needed to send the fragments crashing to the bottom. Again, the CBS sound effects department stocked cheap glass by the gross to



Fibber McGee's sound effects men in Chicago included Kurt Mitchell (left) and Bob Graham. (Photo by NBC engineer Bob Jensen)

accommodate crime and violence as well as high and low comedy.

- Temple Blocks: The standby for horses hooves in musical selections were far surpassed by coconut shells where reality was needed. In radio, these conveyed a rap on the noggin — or several noggins of different sizes or densities. Ray needed a new set recently, and found that the traditional models, hand-carved in Korea, are no longer available. His shiny machine-made replacements sound as good and look OK for radio.

- Brake Drum: Basic tool for loud clangs, dinner bells and, with the

rim damped, metallic clanks.

- Clock chime: Indispensable for the tolling livingroom mantelpiece. Ray admits that, in a fast moving drama at midnight, his clock-chiming mallet moved faster than any real clock. Such were the liberties of radio sound.

- Boing-Twanger: Easily the most fascinating gadget in the collection, this resembles a rough one-string guitar, with only a flexible piece of lath for a neck. This is clamped to a table. When the string is plucked vigorously, the sound box waves up and down as the neck (and string) flex. Most often remembered as following Smilin' Ed McConnel's words "Plunk your magic twanger, Froggie!"

- Guns: Basic staples, especially in the crime shows, these were loaded with blanks and fired *only* on the dead side of the mike. Bob Jensen, thirty-eight-year veteran of NBC engineering circles, recalls fondly the torn tinfoil ribbons of RCA 44s if this rule was not observed. Since most mikes had figure-eight patterns, the dead side put equal pressure on both sides of the ribbon, while maintaining an "on-mike" sound to the gunshot.

Actors sometimes had to cover the dud blank. Versions of the stories, real and apocryphal, run something like this:

THUG: It's all over now, copper. This is where you get yours!

SOUND FX: (Misfire/click)

THUG: But . . . I won't make it this easy. You can wait for the real one . . . enjoy this moment . . .

SOUND FX: (Click. Clack! Click.)

THUG: Wait. There's a better way. This knife was meant for you, copper. Take this!

SOUND FX: BANG!

"We had our blanks loaded for us by a Mr. Stembridge at Paramount Studios. He seemed to have the best firing rate." Although the weapons were "fixed" to prevent "unauthorized use," they were also registered at the Hollywood Police Station.

- Phones: Standard inventory called for a phone, mounted on a box which contained a battery, bell and buttons for both external ringing and telephone line effects. The receiver would just be held close to the mike for the latter. Some directors required a French (or other local) ring, which they claimed was different from a West Coast Ma Bell.

- Disks: There were two kinds. Commercial pressings, which could be heard on any local wavelength or at any little theatre, bore many brand names: Standard, Silver Masque, Gennett, and Major — the latter distributed by the venerable Thomas J. Valentino Company of New York, whose slogan spoke for the trade:

"A cat's meow, to a lion's roar.

A pistol shot, to a world war."

They were used at the networks mainly for continuous backgrounds: restaurants, ballparks, oceans, airliner interiors. The scope of the operation could be judged by how far disks went in supplying effects which a real pro could perform "live." Disks also had the drawback of two sides, and a fast-moving soundman could be responsible for:

ANNCR: Let a Lyon guard your goods!

SOUND FX: Baa-a-a.

Custom discs were used when a particular effect was too chancy — or required too many soundmen — to be done live. Erlenborn remembers fondly the laboratory effects pre-recorded to simulate those in the film *The Man In The White Suit*. Picture several grown men, grouped around a mike in the recording studio, bleating, blipping, bubbling and blatting on a collection of devices. The original acetate has gone to tape and to cart many times by now.

Effects disks grew to giant collections as the war years wore on — catalogued and cross-indexed for easy reference, but mainly remembered in the minds of their creators.

Disks could be cued in several ways.

Tightest and most positive was the backcue. The disk would be monitored through the soundman's earphones until the effect desired was heard, then backed up ever so slightly. The turntable was started while the disk was slipped, then it was let go as the pot was whipped up. Very tight cuing was possible, but this method was very hard on discs when crystal cartridges with steel needles were part of the FX console, as was often the case.

Then, an arrow could be drawn on the edge of the label, and the exact number of turns to audio marked on each cut ("2 1/4"). By positioning the needle opposite the arrow and rolling the table just shy of the indicated turns, a tight cue was possible without back-cuing.

Sometimes a grease pencil was used to fill several grooves in the vicinity of the wanted sound. Playing the disk from that point several times would make the needle clean away the pencil mark.

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With big 78 rpm grooves and visible needles, spotting the first clean groove needed was relatively easy. This method was good when the effect was located far into a continuous cut.

Various types of guides were used. The soundman would indicate that such-and-such an effect occurred at "95" on the scale. Positioning a stop at that number, then moving the arm to the stop and lowering it into the groove below gave a close if not perfect, cue.

Disks could also be used at other than their intended speeds, since most FX tables ran at any speed from twenty to 110 rpm. A baby crying, slowed to thirty or forty rpm, became a creature from the black lagoon. Before recordings of jet airplanes were available, effects for futuristic scripts were made by running a waterfall recording from about sixty to the highest speed possible, while varying the level to simulate takeoff.

Early on, sound effects consoles were not fed directly into the studio mixing console, but just picked up by the (usually) one mike assigned to sound from their own speaker. The soundman could then hear the audio mix in the studio atmosphere itself. Later, recorded effects were fed direct, and the soundman could hear the mix off the program bus — when his cans weren't busy cuing up the next disk.

Each man had his own "stash" of effects that were his favorites — or favorite creations. Hence "we would have to practically hijack effects from the New York guys" when a show moved West, even on the same network. Often, listening and duplicating was an easier way to get what was needed.

Perhaps the record number of soundmen used for a single program belongs to "Man With a Gun," which used only narration music and effects. Ray remembers up to seven busy men on that show.

Ray maintains that his timing was often more important than the purity of the effect itself. "You'd see a joke coming, and know that it would need something. In retrospect, you'd know the perfect bit would have made it better, but it was back down in the basement."

Hearing the cue and waiting just a split second, vs. "biting off" the cue perfectly, often made the difference between a chuckle and a belly-laugh from the audience. A comedy soundman's timing could be as important as that of his star.

But if you goofed, a Skelton might "cover" for you and ad-lib a really good bit based on your blunder.

Radio tried very hard (and often very successfully) to carry the listener along in an envelope of sound. Paul Carnegie, one of up to five soundmen on such Detroit-originated shows as the *Lone Ranger* and *The Challenge Of The Yukon* remembers the mike "following" a performer through a door. The on-mike door would open, but the off-mike door would close behind the moving actor. (Paul sometimes doubled as the "second dog" when Yukon King got into a fight.)

Ray would keep the boom-swivel well-oiled so the effects mike could be swung toward a ringing phone as the actor approached it in the script.

The pesky sounds required special resourcefulness. Autos just never sounded, in real life, like our ears wanted them to sound. Some of Ray's best auto effects were recorded laying in the back of a station wagon with a mike close to the tail pipe — a position occupied by few passengers. Since a car

stopping could not be timed out, the turntable was slowed to a stop while the squeak of brakes (or the screech of tires) was applied from a second disk.

NBC's sound ideas seemed to be more grandiose than CBS'. Splash tanks were huge, and doors had chambers that looked like small rooms behind them. The drive was for authenticity. Ray feels it might have been to impress the agency man as much as the listener.

Did all this paraphernalia get trucked to every studio? "Most of the time," says Ray. "You had to be ready for the comedian who loved last-minute change." Almost as important was the ability to fake it while on the air.

Erlenborn was also well acquainted with several types of radio directors:

"I want exactly this sound!" Carried away by the details of his craft, this man felt that sound should be one hundred per cent factual. A fabrication, sounding better given the limitations of microphone, network line and



Sound man in action — Ray Erlenborn, with utensils, is shown with cast for *Scattergood Baines*, popular CBS serial drama. Dave Owens (director), Jean Vanderpyle (seated), Jane Morgan, "Dink" Trout (Pliny Plckett), Tommy Cook, Maurey Webster (the announcer), and unidentified girl, and Jess Pugh, who played "Baines," are shown from left to right. (Photo from Ray Erlenborn)

radio receiver, would be dismissed simply because it wasn't factual.

"I want the scratch of a match on a cake of soap." There are some sounds that just can't be made to connect with a listener's ears or brain. They must either be exaggerated or skipped entirely.

"Can you make it bigger?" Ray's sound effects lab includes two giant cymbals. Crashing them together approaches the threshold of pain. "Can you make that bigger?" asked the director of one comedy show.

"I don't like the script." Al Pearce (and His Gang) took this prize. He would return from a fishing trip as dress-rehearsal time arrived... and veto the efforts of his writers. A frantic search through past shows would bring back an old faithful. That blur in the background would be Ray E., collecting past sound effects from record libraries and shelves in the sound department.

Each sound man seemed to have his forte, his basis for fame among the small circle of his contemporaries. There is still a recording of "Erlenborn's Famous Water" at CBS. The original tape was cut for a Skelton sketch called "Freddie In The Park." You may remember Freddie's fight with the water fountain — while each passerby got a decent drink from the appliance, Red's character had

every sort of aquatic mishap, all to the accompaniment of "Erlenborn's Famous Water."

Tourists to Hollywood lined up to watch the Johnson's Wax Program (with Fibber McGee and Molly), and one drawing card was, of course, the closet door. Lucky were they who traveled the breadth of the country for a Tuesday when it was part of the script — perhaps one out of every two or three programs. The soundman in action was as funny as the gag itself.

Jim Murphy, Virgil Reimer and Gene Twombly are all listed as soundmen for the Jello Program (starring Jack Benny), and sound played an important part of this series. Remember, if you will, the long trip to the vault: the reverberating footsteps, the heavy locks on the squeaking doors, and finally the cacophony of horns and klaxons when the final door was opened. The sounds of Benny's Maxwell were created by the antics of Mel Blanc, though Erlenborn remembers duplicating those while Blanc was recuperating from a near-fatal auto crash.

Eight-hour days and radio did not come together until the later years of Ray's career. His CBS day might start at 5 a.m., supplying a rooster crow for the Hancock News, plus explosions and other newsy noises. After a score or more of programs, his day might end with *Nightcap Yarns*, a midnight mystery show.

Up to twenty people staffed the CBS sound department as World War II approached. They scheduled themselves, and managed to include a modicum of freelance work at Radio Recorders and other studios where syndicated shows such as *Red Ryder* and *Hopalong Cassidy* were transcribed. The pay was three dollars hourly, then five, then twenty-five. Now, commercial work may bring eight times that amount, less the preparation time for sounds that each director wants to call his own.

As radio matured, some conditions were bettered, some worsened. Writers and directors made more and more last-minute changes. Soon actors (and soundmen) might not have the final script page until the last commercial was in progress. "Thank God for actors like Lurene Tuttle and Les Tremayne, who could make a cold script sound like a well-rehearsed one," says Ray. Earlier, last-minute changes were just not allowed after the dress rehearsal.

Decisions by committee increased. The sole director divided like a dictatorial amoeba into associate directors, executive producers, multiple writers, account executives. Each had their notions, preconceived, and their say in the final mix.

The days were shorter, but the work was not quite the fun it had once been. Finally, with most of the great comedy-variety programs leaving the air (aural and video), Ray found door openings and telephone rings on soap operas dull fare.

The exceptions have been fun — all the animal voices for the film "Dr. Doolittle" with Rex Harrison, for example. Mrs. Erlenborn verified that Ray's elephant trumpeting has emptied a restaurant in a matter of seconds.

Now, Joe, George and Gracy, Eddie and Red are off the air. Ray Erlenborn has very little fury but a lot of sounds. His second career as an actor offers a challenge, but the sound days at Columbia Square and Television City are gone. ■

# Market Memorandum: TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG METRO

by Phillip O. Keirstead

"I think this market has more beautiful music shares than any market in the country."

A country music program director points out one of the qualities which sets the Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida market apart from others.

The Tampa metro — at the halfway point on Florida's Gulf Suncoast — is booming. Some say the Bay area is the second fastest growing metro in the United States. The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce puts it this way: "The Tampa Metropolitan Area is growing at a rate of 200 persons per day, averaged out over an eight year period, bringing the estimated 1978 population totals to 1,598,500, a gain of 585,906 persons."

The population is expected to hit nearly 1.9 million persons by 1985.

No wonder more than one general manager is anxiously awaiting the first 1980 census figures, expected to be available in 1982. General Manager Monroe Berkman at WSOL and Program Director Woody Garcia at WYOU are waiting — knowing in their hearts the 1980 census will indicate a much larger population base for their Latin-programmed stations.

Everyone knows the 1980 census will mean a new, improved data base for Arbitron, which now classifies Tampa as the country's 22nd metro market.

Another population characteristic which has an important bearing on the Tampa market is the area's high median age. According to a station source, the median age in Hillsborough County (Tampa) is 32. In Pasco County (the north coastal communities) it's 54 and in Pinellas County (St. Petersburg/Clearwater) it's 52. (The Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce releases figures saying the Pinellas County median age was 49.4 in 1977, up 1.3 years over 1970.)

In Pinellas County, the fastest growing population group is those 65 and older. The next fastest growing segment is persons 15 to 24 years old.

Another station source says the overall median age for the Tampa metro is 41.

No matter whose figures you use, it's clear the dominant demographics in the Tampa metro are higher age-wise than most large markets.

One variable is the area's enormous tourist influx, especially in Pinellas and Pasco counties on the Gulf Coast. The 1977 figures for Pinellas County estimate 2,941,700 people visited the area. During the winter months the shoreline communities swell to near bursting with "snowbunnies" from Canada, the upper midwest and the northeast.

Currently, it's estimated good music has 30% of the Tampa market, followed by country and rock (or contemporary or Top-40, depending who defines the term).

In the spring Arbitron, beautiful music and country were the winners.

According to veterans in the market, Tampa/St. Petersburg was asleep as little as three years ago. Now, it's becoming intensely competitive. The current atmosphere is one of big-money station sales, nationally-known group operators moving into the market, personnel turning over rapidly and pay scales starting to reach competitive metro levels.

## The Stations

In an effort to sort out the crowded airwaves in the Tampa metro, BP&P relied on Arbitron's basic list of 22 stations, based on the April-May, 1979 sweep.

For our purposes, BP&P is reporting on Tampa metro stations located in three counties: Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco. These contain Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and a number of smaller communities such as New Port Richey, Dunedin, Largo and Indian Rocks Beach.

The 22 Arbitron reported stations covered in our report include:

WAZE - 860 kHz, 500 watts days  
WDAE - 1250 kHz, 5 kw  
WFLA-AM - 970 kHz, 5 kw  
WFLA-FM - 93.3 MHz, 100 kw  
WGUL-AM - 1500 kHz, 250 watts days  
WINQ - 1010 kHz, 50 kw days  
WJYW - 100.7 MHz, 100 kw  
WLCY - 1380 kHz, 5 kw  
WOKF - 95.7 MHz, 100 kw  
WPLA - 910 kHz, 1 kw days  
FT authorized  
WPLP - 570 kHz, 900 watts (special authority)  
WQXM - 97.9 MHz, 100 kw  
WQYK - 99.5 MHz, 100 kw  
WRBQ - 104.7 MHz, 100 kw  
WSST - 800 kHz, 250 watts days  
WSUN - 620 kHz, 5 kw  
WTAN - 1340 kHz, 1 kw/250  
WTMP - 1150 kHz, 5 kw

WWBA-AM - 680 kHz, 1 kw days  
WBA-FM - 107.3 Mhz, 100 kw  
WWQT - 1470 kHz, 5 kw days  
WYNF - 94.9 MHz, 100 kw

Stations physically located on the southerly boundary of the Tampa metro must compete with facilities in Bradenton and Sarasota which are not reported in the Tampa book.

## Beautiful Music

Beautiful music is the dominant format in the Tampa market. It's commonly thought the format appeals to the area's significant older audience.

WWBA-AM/FM in St. Petersburg programs news, information and beautiful music.

According to vice-president and general manager Bill Dutcher, the two facilities do not simulcast, except for one Saturday morning public affairs program.

WWBA-AM places greater emphasis on news and information. The station is affiliated with the CBS Radio Network. WWBA has all-news blocks from 6 - 9 a.m., 12 - 12:30 p.m. and 5 - 5:40 p.m.

The local news staff numbers four, augmented by *Tampa Tribune* sportswriter Tom McEwen and WWBA sports director Clint McElroy.

Throughout the day the station does CBS News on the hour and *Wall Street Journal* reports on the half hour.

According to Dutcher, the success of the stations' music formats stems from careful local production of the music tapes.

He said: "We do our own music service. All of the music is programmed by [the company president and Dutcher]. It is very carefully quality controlled. I have a studio that I do nothing but record that music in. I mean I do all of the recording of that music."

Dutcher says all the music is put on reels. His approach is the "random select" method, permitting changes in the order of selection. Many program services use the "matched flow" approach, which means any one segment always plays in the same order.

WWBA uses a live announcer on AM, although newscasts are pre-recorded shortly before air time. Dutcher says this results in a more polished presentation.

WWBA-FM is closer to the traditional beautiful music station. Of the two, it has the larger audience. Dutcher says the music mix is brighter on AM, although he says the FM mix is not "background music."



The Hillsborough River truly divides the old from the new in downtown Tampa, Florida. In the foreground is the University of Tampa, whose minaret-topped administration building was once the Tampa Bay Hotel. Across the river, the First Florida Tower dominates the business center and stands as the tallest building on Florida's west coast.

The FM format calls for 13½ minute clusters with 60 seconds of news at the top of the hour and 30 seconds of weather at the bottom. There are never more than two commercials back-to-back and never more than 2 minutes to a break.

The WWBA stations have just moved into new studios. Dutcher says the move involved buying \$250,000 worth of new equipment. E-Z Way of Tampa put up the new tower. The AM transmitter is a Gates and the FM is by McMartin. The microwave link is by Micro-Control. The studio renovations include a new Cetec board.

WJYW, (JOY-101), uses the Shulke syndicated service, augmented by live announcers for news and weather.

According to general manager Arnold C. Kaufman, JOY-101 aims at the 25 - 54 and 35 - 64 age brackets. The format follows the old WPAT formula with live breaks on the quarter hour.

WJYW was spun off and held by Robert W. Rounsaville when he sold WDAE-AM last April.

Kaufman is enthusiastic about the Shulke format. He said: "I've just seen some figures for a similarly programmed Shulke station, WLYF, in Ft. Lauderdale, and they are looking extremely powerful and have taken number one in that market." According to the latest Arbitron, WJYW's performance was very good, although not number one overall.

The music at WFLA-FM is also produced in-house. A live announcer and light chatter is used from 6 - 9 a.m. and 3:30 - 6 p.m. Otherwise, the station is fully automated.

The WFLA stations are in the process of moving to a new building. The tower was moved and a new transmitter installed about two years ago, so the focal point of the current move will be new studio equipment.

WGUL in New Port Richey uses TM Productions "1,000" beautiful music service.

The station only covers 5% of the Tampa market, but it makes the book by being extremely effective in its Pasco County market.

General Manager Thad Lowrey says: "I guess we made it by pretty well dominating that area. We have been here for several years and have worked diligently to involve ourselves in this West Pasco, North Pinellas community."

Lowrey said: "Our music format is the TM-1000 series and we pretty well follow their recommendations in programming."

He added: "Our format is geared specifically to the retiree. Over 60% of the people here are over 55. That's the most rapidly growing segment of the population, and it has been since 1962 when the population boom began here."

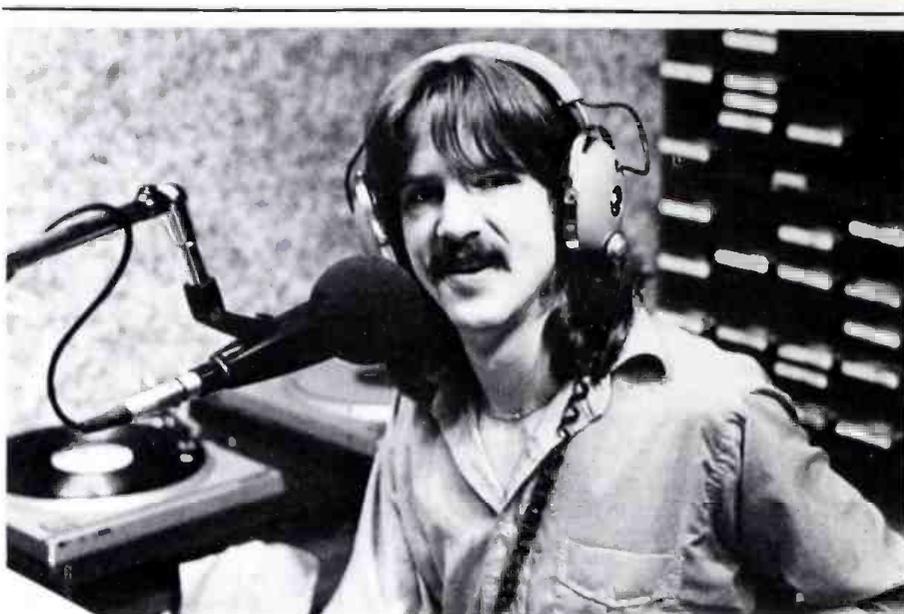
The station is semi-automated. The music is on reel, but live announcers do news, time checks, etc., during music hours.

About 5 hours a day is devoted to news and telephone participation.

WGUL does three half-hour news blocks a day, at 9 a.m., 12 noon and 5 p.m. The on-line discussion program runs from 9:30 a.m. to noon, and "Open Line Classified" runs from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Lowrey said: "I think our strong point has been our telephone participation program over the years." It has been on continuously for 13 years.

The call-in show features guest personalities, especially if they relate to senior citizens.



98/ROCK afternoon personality Chris Taylor.

WGUL-AM/FM has been under the same ownership since 1962. It was recently sold and the deal is pending FCC approval. The new owner will be Ralph Johnson, a former executive with Rounsaville.

#### Country

For the past 5 years WSUN, SUN-country Radio has dominated the country market. The veteran was recently jostled from that position by WQYK, an FM-er.

WSUN program director Gary Kines commented for *BP&P* on the battle of the country giants: "I think it's a combination of reasons as to why it's taking place," he said. "One, I'll put at the top of the list, I can't define because they picked up 3 shares and we lost one. So where did the country audience come from? I don't know. Two is the fact that we probably rode along a little bit too long with our heavy commitment to news in non-critical dayparts. In other words, the news audience was not there. It was two or three years ago, if you're to believe the ratings. But there are two or three stations here that used to have above average news performance in the afternoon that have cut back. We have also in the last month.

"Qualify has to be another factor. Sharing on the FM band with a lot of the beautiful music listeners now having accessibility to an FM country makes it easier for them, I would think. The other would be our number of interruptions to theirs. They probably have a 7 or 8 minute commercial load and we have 14."

Kines has a great respect for the new competitiveness of FM in the Tampa metro. He said: "With each book it's maturing. In the sense with other markets, no. But there again, the market wasn't as mature as other markets its size. Depending on what you read, Tampa/St. Pete is about the 21st ADI, which puts it a couple of notches below Miami and Atlanta and by no means is it as competitive or as alive as those markets, although it's quickly becoming that way."

WSUN is "modern country with a heavy news base," according to Kines. The station programs 23 hours of news a week, mostly in the morning drive, which features a half-hour

block from 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

Kines says his morning personality is almost an anchor, switching among features, sports and news. At midday the station becomes more laid-back, playing low-key music in head-to-head competition with the good music operations.

The area's high median age doesn't bother Kines. He said: "Those demos, at least we find out, accept country music."

He says country and beautiful music are sharing more and more artists.

Kines says his research has shown that when his listeners leave, they usually move over to beautiful music.

Although down in the metro ratings, WSUN has a wide following due to its coverage. The author is sitting in Tallahassee, 260 miles to the north listening to SUN-country Radio.

WSUN experimented with the Sears Radio Theatre for three months, and although there was some increase in audience, the program was dropped. Kines says nighttime is a music battle.

WSUN has two new Collins boards and a new transmitter.

The FM which has Gary Kines worried is WQYK.

Program Director Joe Patrick says the format is: "... more music, condensed news and information, and the stress on news and information is put on the morning drive where it is needed. We're basically a music-oriented radio station with stress on one-to-one personality. The guys on the air are allowed to be themselves in the best manner that they can present within the framework that I have set up.

"Mostly if they have something to say they say it and try to tie it in with what is going on in the listener's surroundings and try to relate to the marketplace itself."

The station uses live jocks and locally-originated music on cart and disk. The format calls for one album cut per hour 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. and two album cuts per hour overnight.

Patrick said: "Nighttime programming is targeted to exposing new music because with the FM listening audience, they're with you a longer period of time."

The target is ages 25 - 54 with females dominant.

Patrick calls his formula "contemporary country, sprinkled with traditional country."

He looks for what he calls "power artists." He explained: "Kenny Rogers is very, very mass in his appeal, he's got a lot of crossover exposure. He's done rock and roll at the beginning of his career, switched over for the main part to country right now. His stuff has crossed over."

Patrick says FM is on the rise in Tampa, but not in drive times. "We, of course, are not as strong as an AM facility in drive times. In this market when you're programming to 25 to 54 year olds they are not as quick to go out and buy an AM/FM stereo to put in their car or buy a new stereo component system for their apartment or their house as . . . somebody younger, because they have the money and they're not putting braces on the kids' teeth or buying a new station wagon."

He added: "You have a lot of people that are already set in their ways. Atlanta, Houston, they're 27, 28 median age, so you get a different sound . . . a different game you have to play."

Unlike WSUN, WQYK does not put an emphasis on news. Patrick said: "We have researched the wants of news and we're giving people as much as we feel that we can without changing the sound of the radio station, changing away from music." WQYK has a two-person news staff.

"Stereo Country" radio moved into a brand-new facility in May, 1978. There's an Auditorics slide board in master control. Patrick says all the cart machines and jocks' mikes are pre-set, only the turntables have slide faders. He added: "Everything's set up so the DJ's mike overrides the music."

The carts are by ITC, the turntables by Technics. Patrick says the station's audio processing equipment makes QYK "louder than anything in the market."

The next move is to increase the antenna height from 300 to 700 feet above average terrain. To accomplish this WQYK is moving its antenna to the top of St. Petersburg's First Financial Building at the end of this year.

Another country competitor is WPLA in Plant City. Plant City is in east Hillsborough

county. Right now the station's strength is in its locally-oriented programming, aimed at Plant City and Brandon. However, the station is adding nighttime power and moving its transmitter site 5½ miles closer to Tampa.

General Manager Al Berry says WPLA features talk and news in the morning and adult country music at other times.

The morning show, called "This 'n' That," has news, classified ads, discussion and in general, is a potpourri. Berry says the program is sold out five days a week.

WPLA keeps a local flavor, concentrating on doing more for its local audience. The counter-programming includes obituaries and high school football, something which doesn't get much attention from metro stations.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, another talk show, called "Conversation" runs from 10 to 11 a.m. It is a telephone talk show based on current events in the area.

WPLA has recently completed a new master control studio, equipped with a Collins board, carts by Spotmaster and Gates turntables. New audio processing equipment has also been added. The key units are a MAP-II audio processor and allied equipment by Gates.

The station is using a new Marti STL to get its signal to the transmitter.

Unique to the area is an agreement under which WPLA leases its towers from the National Tower Company in Brooksville, Florida. The leasor is responsible for repainting, replacing tower light bulbs and guy wires, and providing a new tower quickly in case one of the existing sticks comes down.

There is another un-rated country operation in north Tampa, 8 miles from downtown and 20 miles from St. Pete.

WHBO, a 250 watt daytimer on 1050 is unique in that it is using a new automation package from Live Sound, Inc., of Hollywood, California. The package includes the music and voice tracks by three top Los Angeles jocks, Jason McCall, Jerry Mason, and Larry Mack. Operations Manager Jim Genovese says the integration is so good even he can't tell the sound from "live." He says the computer is programmed to sense trouble and bypass a track if it doesn't seem to be correct for the music or time period.

## UNIVERSAL SOUNDS UNLIMITED NEW YEAR'S PROGRAM



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509-328-0766

for additional information circle no. 8

The music is pulled from *Billboard's Top 100* with a heavy push on the Top-40 country tunes plus six oldies per hour. The package was tailored to WHBO specifications to meet the taste of an older audience.

The automation package is a product of SMC Sonomag, of Chicago. Other new equipment includes a Revox deck, SMC carts, a Sennheiser mike and a Spotmaster board.

### Rock

The terms used differ, but for the sake of our report, we are including stations which play contemporary "pop" music aimed at a younger audience under the heading "rock."

WQXM, (98-Rock), is an album rock station. General Manager Jim Johnson says the station uses live talent and disks to target at the 18 - 34, 18 - 49 male and female audience.

News comes from NBC's new network, "The Source." Local news is read by staff announcers, augmented by one fulltime newperson.

WQXM has completely rebuilt the control room, installing a Collins board, ITC carts and Technics turntables. New ITC carts have also been added in a production room.

General Manager Pete Schulte at WRBQ, Q-105, calls his format "mass appeal contemporary." The priorities are, number one, 18 - 34 and number two, teens and 35 - 49.

Live talent is used, but the personality of the DJ is de-emphasized, according to Schulte.

There are three people staffing the newsroom. However WRBQ has an unusual philosophy about news. The 6 to 10 a.m. programming is 10 to 20% news. Then from 10 a.m. to midnight, there is no regularly scheduled news. News is broadcast overnight.

Schulte explained: "With our appeal to the younger adults and maybe the older teens, primary appeal, we don't emphasize news. We leave that to the other heavy news stations."

Schulte anticipates buying some new equipment next year.

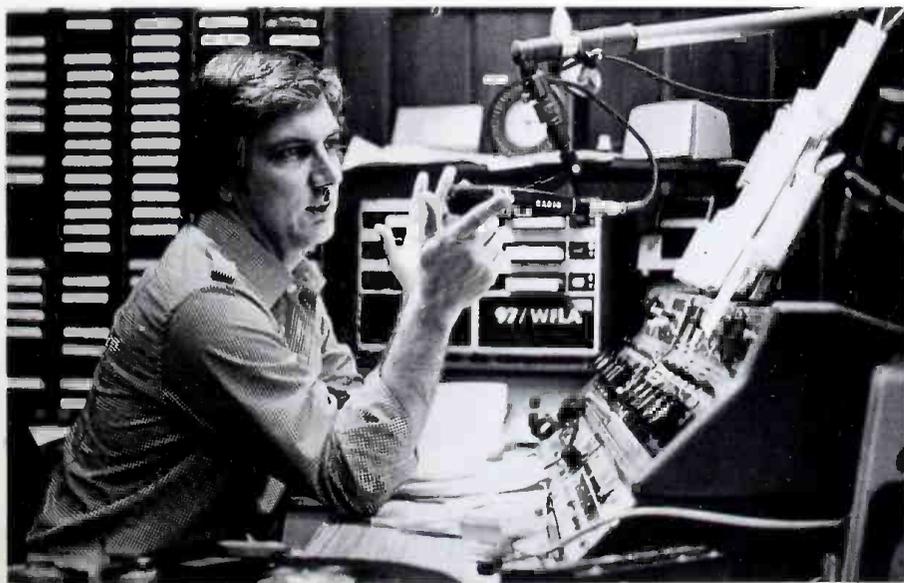
WYNF also aims at "mass appeal contemporary." Program Director Mark Elliott told *BP&P* the target is 12 - 34 men and women. He said: "We're kind of pretty close to your traditional Top-40 radio station." He said WYNF tries to take the cream off the top of music which appeals to young people. He likes his jocks to have personality, but there should be no heavy talk or jokes.

Elliott added: "It's easier to identify with you if they know you . . . the way you relate on the air as being real. If that particular day you don't feel good, you talk about the fact that you don't feel good. If you just bought a new car, you talk about getting a new car."

Or, said Elliott, you might say the jocks are: "conversing, not announcing."

WYNF has a one-person news department and takes network news from ABC-FM.

In the immediate future the transmitter will be moved to Riverside, Florida, in east



97/WFLA morning show announcer, Jack Harris.

Hillsborough county. The antenna will be boosted from 300 to 1300 feet above terrain.

Within the next year the WYNF studios will be moved. The station was purchased last year by Taft, which recently closed the purchase of WDAE and so the two recent purchases must be separated from their old partners and relocated to a single new location. The result will mean WYNF will return to its allocated city, Tampa, from its current location in St. Petersburg.

Elliott says the station expects to buy 100% new equipment when the move is consummated.

WLCY is an AM rocker, owned by the same company (Southern Broadcasting Division of Harte-Hanks) as WRBQ.

Program Director Jan Jeffries says the station is undergoing a re-direction of its programming.

"This station was a very teen oriented radio station," he said, "and our FM, Q-105, is very teen oriented, or has been. It's your basic Q-Rocker and we just didn't think it would be wise to run both stations at each other."

He added: "What we are now, hopefully, is personality Top-40. We've hired a very good morning team that's been very successful elsewhere."

The morning team is Burt and Kurt out of WJDX in Jackson, Mississippi.

Jeffries said: "We feel that our morning team is the best in the country. Kurt Kilpatrick is as good as Rich Little, and that's quite a statement, but he is . . . Bob Burton is a former programmer at WSGN (Birmingham) before I was there, also at WJDX. He put them into phenomenal numbers in Jackson. He is a very good straight man, his timing is terrific with Kurt and the two work just super well together . . . and Kurt, when he does those voices of people that we've all heard on radio and TV and in the movies, you really think that you're listening to that person."

Jeffries expanded on his programming philosophy: "I really think," he said, "that the AM radio stations, especially Top 40's and the contemporary MOR's are waking up to the fact that 'hey, personality is back,' and we've got to have it to be competitive in the market, especially like this with so many FM rockers, or just FM stations, period."

"At some point in time I would like to have this station sounding in such a way that it's so much Tampa/St. Petersburg radio that if you were to tape the radio station and take it outside the market, it would sound foreign in say, a Louisville or Atlanta, or somewhere like that."

WLCY has beefed up its news department, adding two people to raise the news staff to three. ABC Contemporary news is used on the overnight and excerpted for daytime use.

The latest Arbitron wasn't kind to Tampa Bay rockers. Jeffries said, in talking about his new format: "We went on the air Monday prior to the Thursday that the book started. And so we expected to dip somewhat in the book, as did all the Top 40 stations here in the market."

"We fell 2 points," said Jeffries, adding that his sister station, Q-105 also experienced a sharp dip.

He said: "It seems that beautiful music and the Disco came up pretty well . . . and country music did very well."

Talking about equipment, Jeffries said: "We're building a brand new radio station. We bought a Collins power rock AM transmitter." In addition, WLCY has purchased 3 BMX

consoles from Pacific Recorders, ITC carts, MCI 4-tracks and Technics turntables. Also new is a Moseley microwave link and an Orban Optimon AM.

Jeffries says the station has spent \$58,000 on the control room and \$48,000 each on two production rooms.

WAZE is playing "rockin' gold." Operations Director Frank Ferreri says the station mixes four current Top 30 hits with all-gold, using the syndicated package, "Rock 'n' Roll Roots," produced in Arlington, Virginia. All announcing is live.

WAZE operates as a local station inside a metro area, aiming at 20-45 year olds in upper Pinellas County, in the communities of Tarpon Springs, Clearwater and Largo. Currently the 500 watt daytimer is seeking fulltime authority at 1,000 watts, which would result in the purchase of a new transmitter.

WOKF, the FM partner of WTAN, is pure Disco. The station went Disco on February 14, 1979, dropping an automated Century 21 "Z" format.

The station built a new studio, installing two custom Quantum boards from California. A third Quantum board is on order for WTAN. Other recent purchases include ITC carts and Technics turntables.

A number of other Tampa Bay stations are playing Disco, but as part of their overall mix.

#### Middle-Of-The-Road

Not all the stations BP&P has lumped under MOR prefer to go by that name. Some point to the heavy information content of their programming. But all included under MOR augment their information with music.

Last April 13 one of the nation's major chains, Taft took over one of Tampa Bay's dominant MOR's, WDAE. Taft inherited a station with a long history in broadcasting and a recent history of turmoil.

Program Director Vance Dillard calls the format "adult contemporary" which he defines as "information and entertainment for adults, 25 to 54." Specifically, WDAE aims at a 32-year-old female and a 35-year-old male.

The AM drive has a high concentration of news, sports, information and traffic reports. WDAE has its own helicopter and pilot/reporter.

"Our morning personality is an anchor," says Dillard. "He can inject his own personality in between the records, the reports and everything, but his job is to call on the different elements we provide in the morning . . . and make it all kind of flow together."

"Our basic goal in the morning," he says, "is to let people know we know what's going on."

"One thing that I try to tell my jocks to do or try to get them to do is to be topical, everytime they open the microphone they should be saying something about Tampa Bay and the radio station and our involvement. You know that can be anything from the weather that day to some kind of promotion that we have going on."

Dillard concentrates on image artists, from the current Anne Murray to the current Donna Summer, mixed with some oldies, plus an occasional country artist.

From 6:30-8 p.m. WDAE carries a sports talk show. From 8 to midnight, it's Talk of Tampa Bay, which is targeted to the 25-54 age bracket.

Dillard says the talk shows are topical to the current work ethic in Florida. "Most of the people that are in Florida are here because of the sunshine, and not necessarily because of the great opportunities for a career here, or for the great amounts of money that they're going to make. That just isn't here for a lot of people."

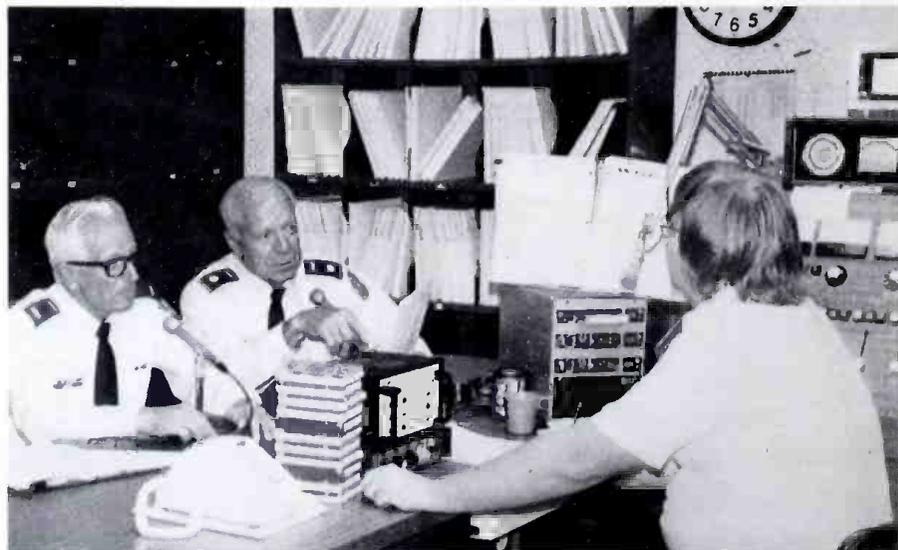
"Having somebody come in and talk about a book that nobody's read is not going to get you any ratings."

Friday nights the station calls the talk show, Desperate and Dateless. From 8 to midnight WDAE helps people find compatible date-mates.

The news department has been stepped up from five to six people, augmented by a sports director and his assistant.

The day Taft took over WDAE audio processing equipment, including an Optimod AM, was put on line. A new electronic delay has been put on line for the talk shows. The new Harris transmitter has been maximized for output and WDAE has ordered two McCurdy boards.

Over at WFLA, Program Director Jim Ashberry says his station is a "MOR personality" operation. The target is 25-49, 25-54.



WGUL "Open Line" host, Matthew Johns, with guests from Civil Air Patrol.

Ashberry said: "We've been doing that for years. And then again, it's an older market, there's no question, there's already too many rockers here and they're not all of them doing that well anyway."

WFLA emphasizes personality all day. "Our morning man (Jack Harris) basically owns the market," said Ashberry.

The station carries a heavy load of play-by-play sports including Braves baseball, Rowdies soccer, and Monday night football.

The news department has a staff of five. WTAN runs an adult MOR format, according to Assistant General Manager Bob Clark.

The music is aimed at 35-plus, and is heavy on Manilow, Streisand and Glen Campbell. A four person news staff produces 5 minutes hourly, backed up by a 5 minutes from AP Radio.

### Information

International Broadcasters is trying to carve a news/talk market with renamed and revitalized WPLP.

Program Director Don Watson says the station goes all-news in drive times, and talk at other periods.

The all-news blocks are 6-9 a.m., 12-12:30 p.m. and 4-6 p.m. The local news staff is augmented by news and sports from Mutual, which recently changed to WPLP from WWQT.

Watson says the morning talk period is female oriented, while the p.m. talk show is more general. From 6-8 p.m., WPLP broadcasts a sports talk show, followed by a general talk show from 8 to midnight, and Larry King from Mutual.

The station is putting emphasis on anchor personalities, with Chicago, Detroit and Pittsburgh veteran Bob Dearborn anchoring in the morning, well-known Tampa radio/TV personality John Eastman talking in the afternoon, and Chicago and Houston veteran Watson anchoring in the p.m. drive.

Currently WPLP is operating at 900 watts under special authority from the FCC as the result of an interference problem from Cuba.

WWQT, Newsradio 1470, is unique in that it's believed to be the nation's only automated all-news station. The automation was built specially for WWQT by Control Technology Corporation in Ft. Lauderdale.

The station has recently moved to new studios and put a 3 kw FM, WHBS, on the air. The automated FM is playing "foreground" MOR, mostly vocals and uptempo instrumentals from a new syndicator, Southcott Productions of Van Nuys, California. The automation for WHBS is also by Control Technology and the transmitter was custom built.

WWQT's automated news operation was covered in detail in the March, 1979 issue of BP&P.

### Other Formats

WTMP programs "contemporary soul," which according to General Manager Jim Rhinehart, is made up of basic rhythm and blues, jazz and Top 40 with very little Disco, plus a smattering of gospel.

Rhinehart is riding herd on the technical expansion of WTMP, which he expects to bring new audience.

"I don't know of a market the size of Tampa that doesn't have a 24-hour Black-oriented format," said Rhinehart.



**WYQK "Cash Call" winner (center) receives \$1,800 check from Joe Patrick (left), program director, and Ron Michaels afternoon drive personality.**

He added: "I think this is virgin territory for good sophisticated Black programming." Rhinehart would like to put WTMP in the market's top five.

To do this, WTMP is adding nighttime power, using a brand-new 6-tower directional pattern for the 2.5 kw post sunset power.

Rhinehart is certain he won't go Disco to accomplish his objective.

"The monotony of it is not going to bring the kind of demographics a station needs to be represented nationally."

WSST is a religious station, selling to local and out of town groups in 15-minute blocks. Station Manager Bob Hensler says the station's success comes from its excellent coverage, despite its 250 watt daytime power on 800 kHz. WSST is involved in a class action suit against ASCAP and thus does not broadcast ASCAP records. Ninety per cent of the programming is religious talk or preaching.

The station recently bought an Innovonics Multi-Band Processor to enhance its signal.

WINQ is also a religious station. Station Manager Les Crist says WINQ runs pre-recorded religion from 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and then programs MOR Christian music.

The station recently purchased a new Ramko master control console and a Spotmaster console for the production studio.

WYOU at 1150 kHz, with 10,000 watts days, programs 100% Latin American music. Program Director Woody Garcia says he mixes Disco, salsa and ballads. WYOU also runs two half-hour soap operas and one comedy half-hour on weekdays.

The station has a two-person local news staff. From 7 to 8 a.m. WYOU runs a continuous news program called the "Radio Clock." A solid half-hour of news is broadcast from 12 to 12:30 p.m., and another hour of news is scheduled from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. During other hours the station does five minutes of news at :55.

WSOL, at 1300 with 5,000 watts days,

combines religious and Spanish programming. From 6 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. the station programs religion. From 12:30 p.m. to sign-off the programming is bi-lingual Spanish, featuring a bi-lingual announcer and highlighting English and Spanish Disco numbers.

WSOL broadcasts the Dallas Cowboys' games in Spanish from Mutual, and plans to pick up the new Spanish International Network Radio Network early in 1980.

General Manager Monroe Berkman estimates there are 200,000 Spanish-speaking people in Hillsborough county alone. WSOL has applied for full-time operation. Berkman plans to have all studios converted to AM stereo by this fall. He has purchased new Technics turntables, and a Microtrak production console. A ten-pot stereo console is on order from Collins, and the station will be adding ITC cart machines, Ampex ATR-700 reel-to-reel recorders, and an Optimod AM.

WTIS, at 1110 kHz with 10,000 watts days, follows a religious format running religious block programs in the morning and modern religious music in the afternoon.

General manager Lynn Voth says the station has purchased new audio processing equipment.

WRXB, at 1590 kHz with 1,000 watts days, programs rhythm and blues mixed with Disco. Program Director Jim Murray says the mix is 80% rhythm and blues, 20% Disco.

News is provided by the National Black Network.

The station has a new RCA transmitter and new Pioneer tape decks.

In some ways Tampa/St. Petersburg as a radio market resembles a Doberman puppy — big and fast growing, but still stumbling over its outsized feet.



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# NEW PRODUCTS & SERVICES

## COMPACT SMPTE TIME CODE READER FOR TV BROADCAST EDITING

A half rack mount SMPTE time code reader for TV broadcast editing applications is being introduced by Datametrics, Inc., of Wilmington, Massachusetts.

The Datametrics Model SP-733 Edit Code Reader accepts SMPTE time codes from a VTR or other source; translates; and displays the time for off-line edit decisions, coding verifications, or other purposes. Measuring only 1 3/4" (h) x 9 1/2" (w) x 13" (d) (excluding connectors), the five pound unit reads codes at 1/20 to 40 times recorded speed.

Sensing either "drop-frame" or "nondrop-frame" format of the input SMPTE code, the Datametrics Model SP-733 operates in forward or reverse mode. Requiring 110/220 VAC, 50/60 Hz, the unit features an 8-digit LED display indicating decoded time, and 3 panel lamps denoting format, direction, and validity.

The Datametrics Model SP-733 Edit Code Reader is priced at \$1,950.00. Literature is available on request.

**DATAMETRICS, INC.**  
340 FORDHAM ROAD  
WILMINGTON, MA 01887  
(617) 658-5410

for additional information circle no. 10

## RGB-TO-NTSC ENCODING SYSTEM FOR COMPUTER GRAPHIC DISPLAYS NOW FROM LENCO ELECTRONICS

An RGB-to-NTSC color encoding system that enables computer graphics or alphanumeric information to be displayed on standard commercial color television monitors has been introduced by Lenco, Inc., Electronics Division.

According to Robert Henson, sales manager, the CCE-850 Encoder is specifically designed to encode high-resolution RGB colorgraphic computer displays, regardless of scan rates.

Henson stated that the CCE-850 Encoder may be used with any computer graphics system when NTSC video is required for video taping and/or distribution. An additional feature includes a color reference test pattern to allow for proper NTSC color monitor alignment.

The CCE-850 Encoder system is completely self-contained and measures 1 3/4" (h) x 17" (w) x 8" (d) as a table top unit. Provisions can be made for rack mounting, if required, Hensen added.

List price of the CCE-850 system is \$1,595,

FOB Jackson, Missouri. Delivery is 30 days. Complete technical information is available on request.

**LENCO, INC.**  
ELECTRONICS DIVISION  
300 N. MARYLAND STREET  
JACKSON, MO 63755  
(314) 243-3147

for additional information circle no. 11



## MICRODYNE INTRODUCES NEW RECEIVER FOR SATELLITE TV SYSTEM

Microdyne Corporation has introduced a new 24-channel receiver for satellite receive only ground stations. Designated the X-24, the receiver features complete frequency agility as well as automatic polarity selection as standard features.

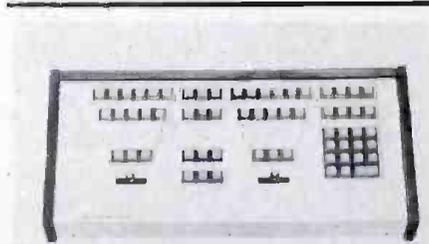
The frequency synthesized 24-channel receiver can be tuned manually using front panel controls or remotely via a BCD interface to provide a wide choice of remote tuning methods including computer control. Unique threshold extension circuitry, a standard feature, insures optimum FM demodulator C/N performance. An internal coax switch automatically selects the properly polarized antenna feed when any one of the 24-channels is selected. This eliminates the possibility of a cable switching mistake and allows both vertical and horizontally polarized inputs to remain connected to the rear panel.

Additional capability is available with an optional rack mount Audio Subcarrier Demodulator. This 1 3/4" high unit provides up to four subcarriers ranging from 4.5 to 7.5 MHz for processing slow scan video, high fidelity audio or other software items offered by the programming sources.

Microdyne Corporation (OTC NASDAQ—MCDY) is a supplier of satellite television earth terminal systems, satellite television receivers, and general purpose telemetry receivers. The corporation maintains its headquarters in Ocala, Florida, and operates plants in Ocala, and Cumberland and Rockville, Maryland.

**MICRODYNE CORPORATION**  
491 OAK ROAD  
OCALA, FL 32672  
(704) 687-4633

for additional information circle no. 12



## NEW VIDEOMEDIA EDITING SYSTEM

A new single event, frame accurate, low cost editing system is now available from Videomedia.

The new system, called the Mini Z, is the "little brother" to the powerful Z6 system introduced late last year.

While the system is a single event editor it retains many of the attractive features of its predecessor such as bi-directional shuttle arms, auto search, cruise control, auto tag and edit — rehearse, perform and review.

The system is reported to be designed for speed, economy and accuracy. With the Micro-Loc (Patent Pending) option it is "dead lock" accurate and offers a numeric display in either SMPTE format or pulse count readout. The Mini Z incorporates a complete data readout with all editing parameters displayed and continuously updated as the editing session progresses. A full compliment of error messages prompt the operator through each sequence calling attention to illegal or illogical commands.

The operating program of the Mini Z is designed as a software package to allow for ease of updating, as new features or options are developed. Detailed specifications are available.

**VIDEOMEDIA**  
250 NORTH WOLFE ROAD  
SUNNYVALE, CA 94086  
(408) 733-6500

for additional information circle no. 13



## QRK / REK-O-KUT MEDALIST TURNTABLE

The new Rek-O-Kut Medalist variable speed DC turntable, manufactured by QRK Electronic Products, Inc., has been selected as the official turntable for Figure Skating at the 1980 Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid, New York, by the Ice Skating Committee.

The Medalist is reported to be the first new turntable designed and manufactured for the professional user in the U.S. since the original outer rim drive table was introduced by QRK in 1944.

The turntable utilizes a DC motor with variable speed controls and an LED direct speed readout on the front panel. Speed is adjustable from 15 rpm to 80 rpm by an electronic speed control. The turntable includes a Rek-O-Kut S-320 tone arm. (Note that the Medalist is identical to the QRK Galaxy DC turntable except it has a flat platter and the Rek-O-Kut Medalist label.)

**QRK ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS**  
1568 N. SIERRA VISTA AVENUE  
FRESNO, CA 93703  
(800) 344-2181

In California: (209) 251-4213

for additional information circle no. 14

## ORBAN DUAL SPRING REVERB

Orban Associates, Inc., announces a significant product improvement to their Model 111B Dual Spring Reverb. This compact, professional-quality reverb is now

being delivered with six springs per channel instead of four.

Based on component advances, this improvement provides lower flutter, higher echo density, and a smoother, more natural sound according to designer Bob Orban. It is anticipated that this sonic improvement will further increase the 111B's acceptance among professional users as the reverb of choice.

All of the standard Orban signal processing is retained, including the exclusive "floating threshold" limiter to minimize "spring twang" and a versatile equalizer with quasi-parametric midrange and shelving bass sections. This processing ideally complements the new six-spring arrays.

The product improvement is being provided at no increase in cost.

**ORBAN ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
645 BRYANT STREET  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107  
(415) 957-1067

for additional information circle no. 15



### MICROWAVE ASSOCIATES PORTABLE ENG RECEIVER

A new 2 GHz portable ENG Receiver is now available from Microwave Associates Communications. The unit, called the MA-2P, is designed as a companion to both the MA-2CP and the MA-2EP portable microwave transmitters previously introduced. The MA-2P features frequency agility over 21 channels in the 1990 to 2110 MHz band. Either 12 VDC or 115/230 VAC source voltages may be used. Selection is made by substituting power cables.

A low noise preamplifier is included as a standard feature and provides a receiver noise figure of 3.5 dB. The user may select either one or two audio subcarrier demodulators as well as either a 20 MHz or 12 MHz IF bandwidth for the desired degree of selectivity.

The unit may be used as part of a portable microwave repeater system for special events coverage or as part of an aircraft repeater system.

The MA-2P is housed in a lightweight weather resistant, cast aluminum case. Plug-in modular construction is used throughout. Front panel metering functions are provided for power supply voltages, local oscillator operation, discriminator and AGC level. Audio output impedance is 600 ohms balanced in three switchable ranges, 0, +9, or +18 dBm.

**MICROWAVE ASSOCIATES  
COMMUNICATIONS**  
BURLINGTON, MA 01803  
(617) 272-3100

for additional information circle no. 16

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The unit provides local weather conditions, access to weather conditions across the country, computer-transmitted map overlays to define the display and memory ability to store and recall weather conditions of interest. Four ranges are selectable: 60 to 240 nautical miles, instantaneously.

The System reportedly has the highest radar read resolution in the industry as well as 256 line by 512 line interlaced color video display.

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for additional information circle no. 17

#### CETEC NEW FM EXCITER; AUDIO CONSOLE SERIES

Cetec Broadcast Group is introducing its new 690PLL FM transmitter exciter and the new Series 2000 stereo audio console.

Model 690PLL is a frequency-synthesized phase locked-loop exciter with output power from 3 to 15 watts. Stability is rated at  $\pm 300$  Hz (with  $\pm 100$  Hz typical). Frequency range is programmable in 100 kHz steps. Automatic frequency control has 100 KC channel spacing, with a frequency range of from 88 MHz to 108 MHz. Model 690PLL is compatible with all FM transmitters and with all available audio processing systems.

Series 2000 audio consoles are all solid state, and available in five mixed (14 inputs) and eight mixer (20 inputs) models. Mixers are of printed-circuit board modular construction, with dual audio buses. The Series 2000 consoles are designed for reliability and economy in both initial cost and operation.

Cetec Broadcast Group also features JSCP Series B circularly polarized FM transmitting antennas and System 7000 radio automation (including recently announced Level II firmware).

#### CETEC BROADCAST GROUP

75 CASTILLIAN DRIVE

GOLETA, CA 93017

for additional information circle no. 18



**NEW HARRIS MSP-90  
TRI-BAND AGC AUDIO PROCESSOR**  
The Broadcast Products Division of Harris

Corporation has designed an audio processor for both the discriminating listener and the broadcaster interested in consistent quality signals. It's the Harris MSP-90 Tri-Band AGC audio processor — the latest development in the Harris MSP-90 series of modular audio processing equipment introduced in 1978 and reportedly the first true RMS sensing Tri-Band AGC amplifier ever offered to the broadcast industry.

With the MSP-90 Tri-Band AGC, the broadcaster is reported to now have an opportunity to increase his coverage area through a louder signal, improved modulation, and with low distortion.

The MSP-90 Tri-Band splits the audio into three bands. Filtering is phase coherent and gentle, 6 dB per octave. The unit is a true Automatic Gain Control amplifier system, meaning it totally eliminates swish up. LED metering simultaneously indicates compression in all three audio bands.

The MSP-90 Tri-Band actually calculates the RMS signal power, making it possible to maintain the timbre of musical signals while simultaneously increasing loudness.

A mono MSP-90 Tri-Band AGC conveniently fills one MSP-90 mainframe — only 3¼ inches of standard rack space. The stereo version fills two mainframes and occupies seven inches of rack space. Both are fully compatible with MSP-90 limiter modules and may be operated at the studio or transmitter site.

#### HARRIS CORPORATION BROADCAST PRODUCTS DIVISION

P.O. BOX 4290

QUINCY, IL 62301

(217) 222-8200

for additional information circle no. 19

## News

#### "REMEMBERING: THE SEVENTIES" PRODUCED BY RADIO WORKS

Plans have been completed by Radio Works, Newport Beach, California, to release what is reportedly the "ultimate" end-of-a-decade radio special — a twelve-hour, chronological musical review.

Entitled "Remembering: The Seventies," it's being put together under the direction of Gary Theroux, whose previous broadcast works have included "The Golden Years," "Elvis: A Three-Hour Special," and the epic, fifty-two-hour "History of Rock and Roll." For "Remembering: The Seventies" he's brought back history engineer Jim Pierce, along with technical consultant Pete Perkins.

The special is said to be unlike other "wrap-up" shows since it is not a countdown — but, instead, a step-by-step review of the most significant musical milestones of a decade. "Remembering: The Seventies" moves chronologically, recalling each event in order, just as it happened. Excerpts from interviews with original artists, writers, and producers highlight the program, which concludes with an awards presentation, and a breath-taking musical montage, which features every number one record, in order, beginning in January, 1970. The special is being called "the broadcast event of a decade."

More information is available by contacting Mark Charger at Radio Works, 460 North

Newport Boulevard, Newport Beach, California 92663. Telephone: (213) 466-1935.

#### BP&P COLUMNIST COLEMAN JOINS ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Howard W. Coleman, associate director of the Lutheran Church in America's Department of Press, Radio and Television, left the PRT staff in New York at the end of July to become assistant professor at Arkansas State University. Coleman's column, *Station Meeting Minutes*, is featured regularly in *BP&P*.

His appointment to the faculty of the university's College of Communications, was effective in mid-August. His primary work will be in the newly established graduate program of the Radio and Television Department of the college, at Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Mr. Coleman, 57, was elected to the LCA's former Commission on Press, Radio and Television in 1966 and served until becoming PRT associate director in June, 1969.

Prior to his appointment with LCA, he was press relations director for the A. C. Nielsen Company from 1964 to 1969. Before joining the Nielsen Company in New York City, he was employed in broadcasting in Chicago, Minneapolis and Lansing, Michigan. He is a founding member of the Broadcasters Promotion Association and is a member of the International Radio/TV Society.

#### MUTUAL'S 45TH ANNIVERSARY

As it aims for the star — Satellite Westar 1 — the Mutual Broadcasting System celebrated its 45th anniversary as one of the nation's major broadcasting networks on September 15th.

When it began operations in 1934, Mutual was the fourth of the major U.S. radio networks — the Red (now NBC) and the Blue (now ABC) of the National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System (now CBS) being the others. Mutual was different; instead of being established as a network and then buying radio stations, it was formed and owned by the four big stations that put it together — WOR, New York; WGN, Chicago; WLW, Cincinnati and WXYZ, Detroit. The network was a mutual endeavor by the four big independents . . . hence its name.

Though media historians classify the '30s, '40s and early '50s as radio's "golden days," they were golden only in the anniversary sense. As the calendar flips toward the '80s, satellite program distribution proposed by Mutual promises a new golden age for radio.

As of June 30, 1979 there were 8,537 radio stations on the air in the United States, according to FCC statistics, including commercial AM and FM stations, as well as educational FM stations. Approximately 950 of those stations (as of September 15, 1979) are MBS affiliates — a number that grows constantly. The number makes Mutual the largest single commercial radio network in the nation.

#### DON PERRY ENTERPRISES EXPANDS

Don Perry Enterprises, Inc., has announced addition of newer, more modern equipment to the expansion plans of their in-house film scoring facility, The Sound House.

Under the construction design of Westlake Audio, the decision to add a new automated MCI console has been made. Also included in the currently growing building are plans to

convert the existing recording room into a musicians' lounge, offices and storage area. Also to be added will be a small overdub and mix-down studio.

Tagged as the industry's "one-stop-music-shop," Don Perry Enterprises, Inc., 8961 Sunset Boulevard, Beverly Hills, California, is the only complete music production and packaging service available to producers and advertising agencies. Telephone: (213) 278-8961.

**Letters**

— continued from page 4

on the San Diego market. It never ceases to amaze me how people in our industry read rating information. It is encouraging to know most of us can be number one in the same market.

As Program Manager for Noble Multimedia Communications, programming and sales agency for XTRA-AM and 91X-FM, I was particularly interested in a comment made by Mr. Dene Hallam. He indicates that "... There's XTRA-FM, which is 91X-FM, which didn't show in the book." I'd like to know which book he's talking about. Perhaps someone snipped some of the important parts out of his copy of the ARB. My copy shows XTRA-FM (91X-FM) with a 4.8 total persons 12+, Monday through Sunday, 6 a.m. to Midnight. This would place 91X sixth in the San Diego market. It also shows his station with a 2.9. Sour grapes? If that is what is meant by not showing, what could our client do if we tried even harder? I recall our Program Director, Gene Knight, and his staff being quite happy with the way 91X didn't show.

I might also mention that XTRA-AM had a 5.2 in the San Diego book and is the only San Diego marketed station to show in the Los Angeles book. XTRA-AM is fourth in San Diego.

I am extremely thankful that our advertising agencies read the ARBs more carefully than Mr. Hallam does. If he doesn't believe my figures, I'll be happy to show him my copy.

from: **Jeff Salgo**  
**Program Director**  
**KMJC Radio**  
**San Diego (El Cajon), CA**

To put it bluntly, I was outraged at your magazine's coverage of the San Diego market.

Our station was totally excluded because, as Mr. Larkin explained, we were not licensed to San Diego.

This is absurd! We are one of the highest rated stations in San Diego. Our transmitter is right next door to KCBQ — we are less than 20 miles from downtown San Diego.

In doing a Los Angeles roundup would you skip KRLA, the highest rated adult contemporary station in the market because it was licensed to Pasadena? Obviously you would.

I want no part of such an amateur effort at covering an industry. I am embarrassed to receive your publication.

Cancel all our subscriptions immediately.

**Station Meeting Minutes:**

from: **Jim Farr**  
**General Manager**  
**KKUB Radio**  
**Brownfield, TX**

In reference to *Tweaking Noses and Kicking Over Cans*...

You left out two very important elements of the "go" mode.

- 1 - It creates an extreme amount of believability in the listener or viewer.
- 2 - It's an awful lot of fun!

**Station Meeting Minutes**

— continued from page 4

Eugene S. Foster of Brooklyn College: "Those who feel broadcasting is shortchanging the public and who see little response to their demands raise the intensity of their criticism to the point where it bears little resemblance to reality. They would have us believe that broadcasters are evil and appreciate nothing but profits and that the broadcast schedules contain nothing but pap at the best and deliberate attempts to destroy society at the worst."

"Broadcasters respond by implying that radio and television are the greatest contribution to our society since the writing of the Constitution."

"Obviously the truth lies somewhere in between and those who would understand must learn enough facts to have confidence in their own judgement."

In his memo to the WAA station staff circulating the luncheon speech, Ellis said the following:

*Question: How do we take care of them? They range from sincere individuals and groups with unique problems, through the middle ground of standard organizations protecting the status quo to local militant thrusts and on to outside pressured-and-backed agitation.*

How do we build a solid public affairs program, both in concept and personnel, to anticipate and to meet these pressures and demands? And find a rationale to report the costs and justification of same to our board of directors?

**The Washington Connection**

— continued from page 5

FCC with an apparent attempt to do administratively what was considered unfeasible legislatively. Certainly such action would invite litigation if carried to its conclusion.

At the present time there are at least three Commissioners who most likely would not support such a drastic total deregulatory move: Tyrone Brown, Abbott Washburn and Joseph Fogarty. As Commissioner Washburn said in his Concurring Statement on the Public Affairs portion of the Notice:

"I am concerned that doing away with these guidelines could generate serious problems for the Commission... [it] would unquestionably face strong legal challenge in the courts, especially since numerous citizens' groups have found the guidelines to be important benchmarks for gauging broadcasters' efforts."

Therefore, radio broadcasters, do not count your de-regulatory chickens before they hatch. When all is said and done, and when the election is over next year, the odds are that some form of news and public affairs requirements will remain. The final proposal will probably resemble one of the alternative approaches now being proposed, and most likely will result in the Commission's mandating a fixed percentage of news and public affairs programming.

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**PASS FCC EXAMS**

The Original FCC Tests-Answers Exam manual that prepares you at home for FCC First & Second class Radio-telephone licenses. You get the complete set of 15 newly revised multiple choice examinations—covering all areas tested on the actual FCC exam. Also included—helpful study tips, short cuts, and "Self-Study Ability Test." These updated FCC Tests-Answers take the mystery out of preparing for current FCC exams. Practical proven Material. \$9.95 postpaid. Unconditional Moneyback Guarantee.

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for additional information circle no. 24

# The Technics isolated-loop system. It's the one big difference between their decks and ours.



Every one of Technics four open reel decks has one thing in common: The performance of Technics isolated-loop tape transport system. And that means performance that's compatible to professional open reel decks costing thousands of dollars more.

By isolating the tape from external influences, our isolated-loop tape transport system minimizes tape tension to a constant 80 grams. This not only provides extremely stable tape transport and low head wear, it also reduces modulation noise and wow and flutter to the point where they're detectable on only sophisticated testing equipment.

Electronically, our line of isolated-loop tape decks are equally impressive. The reasons are as simple as their IC full-logic transport controls, highly accurate microphone amplifiers, FET mixing amplifiers and separate 3-position bias/EQ selectors.

And you'll get all this technology whether you choose the two-track RS-1500, the extended playing time of the 4-track RS-1506 (shown above), the convenience of the

4-track RS-1700 with auto-reverse or the studio features of the RS-1520.

There's also an optional full-feature infrared wireless remote control (RP-070). With it you can get your hands on all this sophistication from up to 20 feet.

All four decks hit the competition right between the reels. Because all four have: **FREQ. RESP.**: 30-30,000 Hz,  $\pm 3$  dB ( $-10$  dB rec. level) at 15 ips. **WOW & FLUTTER**: 0.018% WRMS at 15 ips. **S/N RATIO**: 57 dB (1506 & 1700) and 60 dB (1500 & 1520) NAB weighted at 15 ips. **SEPARATION**: Better than 50 dB. **START-UP TIME**: 0.7 sec. **SPEED DEVIATION**:  $\pm 0.1\%$  with 1.0 or 1.5 mil tape at 15 ips. **SPEED FLUCTUATION**: 0.05% with 1.0 or 1.5 mil tape at 15 ips. **PITCH CONTROL**:  $\pm 6\%$ .

Technics open reel decks. A rare combination of audio technology. A rare standard of audio excellence. Cabinetry is simulated woodgrain.

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