

debut the following day, Jan. 14, at 8 p.m. The two programs will air back-to-back on the superstation on Jan. 27 at 2:30 p.m.

TBS also said last week that it has renewed its situation comedy, *Down to Earth*, for another 52 episodes and has also signed a deal with *Down to Earth* producer, The Arthur Co., based in Los Angeles, for the production of a new situation comedy, *Safe at Home*, which it will start shooting in January. The first new episode of *Down to Earth*, about an angel sent to earth to earn her wings by doing good deeds, airs Nov. 30. It debuted in March. Procter & Gamble is the full sponsor of the program.

An initial 13 episodes of *Safe at Home*, described as a sitcom with a sports setting, will be produced by Arthur, after which TBS has renewal options to order 135 additional episodes, in three yearly packages of 45 shows. Turner hopes to recapture its expenses from both sitcoms (each costing about \$100,000 per episode) by offering strips of each program in syndication as well as rerunning them on WTBS. As a first-run product, a new episode of each will be aired weekly.

Beaver numbers

The Disney Channel said last week that a special A.C. Nielsen telephone survey found the premiere of *Still the Beaver* beat all the other pay services within its universe as well as the three broadcast networks. The debut episode aired election night, Tuesday, Nov. 7, at 8-8:30 p.m., when network viewing usually dips as viewers turn away from election coverage. Disney said the show received a 17.3 rating and a 24 share in its universe, compared to a combined 7.6/12 for all other pay services during the same half-hour. NBC, Disney said, received a 13.6/19 during the same period, while ABC gathered an 11.2/16 and CBS a 9.2/13.

Country shift

The Nashville Network completed its transition to Galaxy 1, transponder 2, last week, from Westar V, transponder 9D. TNN had been on both birds since Feb. 14. The country music network, which is 20 months old, has a universe of more than 19.5 million homes, according to Group W Satellite Communications, which markets and distributes the advertiser-supported network.

Joining hands

Westinghouse Electric Corp. and two Japanese firms, Sanyo and Nissho Iwai, have formed a joint venture to manufacture and market a range of communications hardware to worldwide markets. Initially, the venture will offer two cable products for the North American market—a stereo adapter for cable subscribers, which will be available in February 1985, and a line of cable converters, which will be available for field testing in mid-1985.

Initially, Sanyo will develop and manufacture the venture's lines of products, while Westinghouse will have marketing responsibilities. Nissho Iwai will provide import-export service. Westinghouse, which already manufactures its own line of cable hardware (which it will display at the upcoming Western Cable Show), may get involved in that aspect of the venture at some

future date, said Romano Salvatori, director of special projects, Westinghouse. He will oversee Westinghouse's involvement in the new joint venture and said last week that the other two firms had not yet named the executives to represent their interests.

Must-carry hang-up

The Bay Area Interconnect, a joint venture of Gill Cable and Viacom Cable serving the San Francisco area, is having trouble clearing affiliates to carry the advertiser-supported, classic movie service it began offering several months ago. The problem: the must-carry load imposed on systems in the area, most of which have yet to expand beyond 30-channel capacity or less. There are 22

must-carry broadcast channels in the region, including four PBS stations. Thus, while BAI has had success in gaining access to just about all of the 550,000-subscriber universe on the interconnect with MTV, CNN and ESPN, the movie service has cleared only about 140,000 homes. (BAI also carries Lifetime, which has a universe somewhere in between.)

Until more systems rebuild in the area, said BAI President Jack Yearwood, "there's not much we can do." However, Yearwood said he's prepared to hang tough with the classic service while more systems upgrade, unless the interconnect's board of directors orders the service to be shelved. That hasn't happened yet, although board members have privately expressed concern over the clearance problem.

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