WRMR Returns To Country Format

After a year as a Music Of Your Life station, WRMR/Washington will return to its previous Country format. The station will reappear for WPXK call letters with its sister FM once again becoming WPXK-FM, and both stations will be known as "KK Country." GM Bill Sherard told R&R that the stations will simulcast morning and afternoon drivetimes and Saturday middays.

Sherard explained, "The numbers have been disappointing. It's been a year, and we had equal if not better numbers even when it was Country. This puts us in a unique position again...to be the only double Country station in the market. There will be subtle differences between the two stations during middays and weekends, leaning a little bit toward more traditional on the AM." Sherard added that new staffers for the AM station would be announced shortly.

Hatfield New PD At KOMA

Bobby Hatfield has been named Program Director of Country-formatted KOMA (Oklahoma City), leaving the midday shift at CHF WZPL/Indianapolis (formerly WIKS) to take the position. He replaces Greg Lindahl, who recently became Operations Manager at WSAM-AM & FM/Nashville (R&R 1/21). KOMA's acting PD John Pratt will retain his afternoon airshift.

KOMA GM Woody Woodard told R&R, "We went with Bobby primarily because of his experience. He seems to be into what we're into - lots of research, tight playlist, lots of promotions...He appears to be a strong motivator and knowledgeable about the business. Quite frankly, I didn't go out looking for a great Country programmer...I went out looking for a programmer."

Hatfield, who was Operations Manager at WCHI & WKJ/Louisville for a year and a half before joining WZPL in 1982, said, "The thing I'm really excited about is the company (KOMA) owns nothing but AM radio stations. They're very supportive of doing things on the AM dial as opposed to throwing their arms up and saying 'Forget it, I'm going to get out of AM.' We're going to position ourselves as a hit Country radio station.

Radio Pioneer Godfrey Dies

Arthur Godfrey, one of radio's most successful performers and a star on the CBS Radio Network for 27 years, died last week at 79 from pneumonia and emphysema. Godfrey enjoyed a 43-year radio career, beginning as "Red Godfrey the Warbling Banjoist" on WFRB/Baltimore in 1929. He was credited with the first all-night DJ show, was the first to talk over WLS/Chicago, and later on WJZ/Washington (now WTOP) in 1954, and launched his daily CBS Radio show, "Arthur Godfrey Time," in 1940. That show continued through 1972, outlasting his significant run as a top TV star.

Godfrey was one of the first radio personalities to adopt a one-on-one, conversational approach to broadcasting, and also gained fame with his unconventional attitude toward commercials, frequently departing from scripts Jim Winters wrote for him. However, he was stifled by the immense public response Godfrey's many fans felt; at one point he was credited with bringing in 12% of CBS's total revenues through his radio and TV programs.

Following his retirement from radio in 1972, he was actively involved in environmental concerns, and in 1981 he returned to radio with a three-minute syndicated series. His death came after a two-week hospitalization and an extended period of ill health.

KCCW

KLLS PD Bruce Buchanan added, "While there was the feeling that the previous format had peaked in terms of sales, the growth on the FM has been phenomenal. We're going to make our highly-successful FM A/C format available to those listeners who only have access to AM." Parker indicated that some AM part-time staff additions will be made.

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