

## Radio Programming

# Country Meet Impact Increasing Growing Attendance Forces Move To New Venue

By KIP KIRBY

NASHVILLE—A switch in sites to accommodate what's anticipated to be a record attendance is a measure of the growing impact of the 13th annual Country Radio Seminar.

Agenda chairman Bob English, vice president/general manager at WUBE-AM Cincinnati, projects a paid registration topping the 600 mark when the seminar takes place Feb. 25-27 at the Opryland Hotel. The conference had to be moved from the downtown Hyatt Regency because it could not accommodate this year's expanded attendance.

Also, the seminar's timetable has been moved up three weeks earlier this year to avoid conflicting with Arbitron ratings periods in certain markets, allowing more attendance.

This year, the Organization of Country Radio, which sponsors the annual country broadcasters' event, will again host a preliminary "Artists & Attendees Cocktail Reception" Thursday, Feb. 25, beginning at 7:30 p.m., so registrants can visit with performers and industry execs.

Also, there will be two "early bird" sessions each morning prior to the official opening panels. Friday's 7:30 a.m. discussion of "Daytimers," a concentrated look at the needs and problems of country daytime stations, will feature four panelists: Bill Sherard, vice president/general manager, WPKX-AM; Glenn Bell, president, Stoner Broadcasting; Charlie Ochs, program director, KIKK-AM and Rob Scheibly, operations manager, WHTN-AM.

## D.C. Area Gets Full-Time Spanish-Speaking Station

By BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON—For the first time since 1978, the Washington Metropolitan area has a full-time, Spanish-speaking radio station: WMDO, which began broadcasting here Dec. (14).

WMDO, dubbed "Radio Mundo," programs contemporary music from South and Central America and the Caribbean. There is also a seven-person news staff which covers local and national news.

The news staff will also be utilized as a Washington bureau to provide news to the other Latin stations, according to program director Miguel Morales.

The new station is owned by Lotus Communications Corp., which owns broadcast properties, including four Spanish-speaking stations. The news staff will also be utilized as a Washington bureau to provide news to the other Latin stations, according to program director Miguel Morales.

Morales said that he felt the Washington area was "a very good, very fertile market" for a Spanish-speaking station, and Lotus Communications officials have completed a market study indicating there are nearly 160,000 Hispanics in Washington and nearby suburban Maryland and Virginia.

The station, at 1540 on the AM dial, replaces WDON, which in its most recent reincarnation was a religious station, but was fondly remembered as one of the very first rock'n'roll stations in the area, broadcasting an exciting blend of r and b, and rockabilly in the mid '50s.

Lotus paid nearly \$2 million for the Wheaton, Md. station.

Saturday morning's 8 a.m. "early bird" session will focus on "Agribusiness." Moderator Bill Figenshu, vice president of programming for Viacom, will chair a panel consisting of Elmer Dapron, Mutual Radio Network; Walt Shaw, program director, KRAX-AM; and Charles Might, executive marketing/sales director, National Assn. of Farm Broadcasters.

The 13th annual Country Radio Seminar officially kicks off at 9 a.m. on Friday when keynoter Dick Clark addresses the convention. Following Clark's address, a 9:45-10:15 a.m. session titled "Hot Topics" will feature Jerry Del Colliano, editor and publisher of "Inside Radio," discussing general key issues in the broadcasting realm.

At 10:30 a.m., Charlie Cook of KHJ-AM will moderate a "Competition" panel with Jhan Hiber, president of Hiber & Hart, and Kent Burkhart, president, Burkhart/Abrams & Associates.

There will be a 30-minute CMA presentation followed by a CMA-Sponsored luncheon.

At 2 p.m., the agenda resumes, with Dave Girard, vice president/general manager of WKSX-FM, chairing "Country Lifestyles." This general session will also feature Rob Balon, president, Balon and Associates.

This will be followed by another open session dealing with "Computers For All Applications," moderated by Mike Carta, program direc-

tor, WIL-AM/FM. Panelists are Andrew Economus, president, Radio Computing Services; Phil Robbins, general manager, WYTL/WOSH; Bill Gamble, program director, WSUN-AM; and Jay Phillips, WMAQ-AM.

Two concurrent sessions at 4:15 allow seminar registrants the choice of "Career Development: Yours And Theirs" or "FCC and EEO." The career development panel, chaired by Bobby Craig, KPLX-FM, will have Don Langford, program director, KLAC-AM, and Ed Shane, program director, KTRH-AM. The FCC/EEO session, moderated by Dave Gerard, will present panelists Evelyn Keseg, corporate secretary for Nationwide Communi-

(Continued on page 58)

## WNTN Listeners Select 1,550 Disk Favorites

NEW YORK—Many stations, particularly oldies stations, have listeners vote for favorite all-time favorite records at year's end. The end of 1981 was no exception, but there are not many stations like WNTN-AM Newton, Mass., which with the help of their listeners selected 1,550 records to coincide with their 1550kHz dial position.

"Mack The Knife" by Bobby Darin and "Rock Around The Clock" by Bill Haley are two records in WNTN's top 10 that are also in WCBS-FM New York's top ten.

WNTN's list ranges from Harry Belafonte's 1956 "Jamaica Farewell" (position 269) to Iron Butterfly's 1968 "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" (position 1,487). First place in the WNTN list is Darin's "Mack The Knife," followed by "Satisfaction" by the Rolling Stones, "She Loves You" by the Beatles, "Don't Be Cruel" by Elvis Presley and "Cherish" by the Association. Last place, at the 1,550 position, is held by "Last Song" by Edward Bear.

Topping the WCBS list is "In The Still Of The Night" by the Five Satins, followed by "Earth Angel" by the Penguins, "Tonight, Tonight" by the Mello Kings, "My Way" by Elvis Presley and "Can't Help Falling In Love," also by Presley.



STATION MEETING—Capitol recording artist Peabo Bryson meets with WRKS-FM (Kiss 98.7) New York personality Mary Thomas as he tours stations to promote his new album, "I Am Love," and single, "Let The Feeling Flow."

## 25 TO 49 DEMOGRAPHIC

# Chicago AC Stations Battle For Top Spot

By MOIRA McCORMICK

Radio's pursuit of the 25 to 49 demographic via a softer adult contemporary format is perhaps nowhere more evident than in Chicago. Billboard's Moira McCormick has been analyzing the situation, and filed this report.

CHICAGO—Three heavyweight broadcast corporations are slugging it out here for the largest share of the adult contemporary market. Bonneville International's WCLR-FM, RKO's WFYR-FM and NBC's WKQX-FM are locked in fierce competition for the 25 to 49 audience, trying different variations on the AC theme to see who will eventually win out.

Another recent contestant, CBS' WBBM-FM, appears to be dropping out of the war at this point. WCFL-AM is not considered officially in the running, but holds down its spot as Chicago's only AM adult contemporary station. This leaves the "big three" to battle it out with all they've got: extensive tv advertising, competing oldies shows, promotions, and different programming approaches. It seems inevitable that at least one of the three must surrender if any one of them is to have a successful share of the market.

WCLR leads in the just released Arbitron fall report among 25 to 49 year olds. The station has a 5.6 share, ahead of WFYR's 4.8, WKQX 4.2, WBBM's 2.5 and WCFL's 1.6.

WFYR, WCLR, and WKQX all rely on extensive research to determine their programming. As a result, much of the music on all three stations is similar. Chicago, the Eagles, Billy Joel, James Taylor, and the Beatles figure in all the most-played artist lists across the board. Research results do vary somewhat, however. WKQX programs more Motown music than its competitors. In fact, the Supremes are one of its most-played ads.

WKQX targets a younger audience than WFYR and WCLR, the 25 to 34-year-olds. Formerly a full-service news, weather, sports, and public service station, WKQX began stripping down its presentation last spring. Jim Smith, general manager, says they are concentrating on music

and foregoing such features as on-air contests.

"The main reason people would tune into our station now is the music," says Smith. "There's not a lot of talk—it's very streamlined, uncluttered, and clean."

WCLR, on the other hand, trades on its image as a full-service FM station, largely to hang on to the 35-49 audience which would normally turn to an AM station for anything but music. Chet Redpath, general manager, says, "Our concept has always been to stick with the older audiences, because that's what the advertisers want to buy."

WFYR is set off from the other two by its 80 percent oldies programming. The large percentage of "gold" is due to WFYR's strong identification with oldies, a result of its very popular "Saturday Night Oldies" show. In a major coup WFYR's oldies show was picked up by parent RKO and broadcast nationally as of Jan. 9. A year ago, WCLR had launched its own oldies program in the same time slot to compete for WFYR's listeners.

WCLR's Redpath says, "We could see and feel WFYR's audience growing. FYR's highest ratings are during the oldies show. We didn't want to hand over that audience to them—it would have been foolish to sit back on our haunches and let them run away with it."

WFYR has won a big battle, but the war is far from over. No one station has been able to make a significantly bigger showing in the ratings among adult contemporary listeners. The 25-49 audience is seen by advertisers as "upwardly mobile," with higher incomes and therefore more dollars to spend. The reason they like to turn to adult contemporary stations, says WKQX general manager Jim Smith, is that they want "an escape environment."

Says Smith, "My feeling is that, for 16-to 22-year olds, music is a very important part of their social life. It revolves around music—playing records, listening to the radio; when they move to college, the first thing out of the van is the stereo. (Continued on page 27)

## New On The Charts

BUCKNER & GARCIA  
"Pac-Man Fever"—★

They'd been doing some research in a bar one night when Gary Buckner and Jerry Garcia were inspired to title a song after one of their favorite video games.

Although it seemed like a good idea at the time, it was abandoned until months later when their manager, Arnie Geller, suggested they pursue it. "We didn't want to make 'just' a novelty record," Garcia explains. "We wanted to make sure it was as much of a record as it was a novelty."

The concept has taken off with "Pac-Man Fever," now into its fourth week on Billboard's Hot 100. The idea caught on at their label, Columbia, also. Eyeing the success of this single, it requested a few more game-oriented songs for the album that is being readied for release in February. Some of the tunes in their debut LP are "Froggy's Lament," "Hyper-Space," "Ode To A Centipede," "Do The Donkey Kong," and "Goin' Berserk."

But don't think Buckner and Garcia spend all their time showing quarters into electronic gadgets. Although this is their first success as artists, they've been represented in the charts as producers by records like the Steve Carlisle single "WKRP In Cincinnati" and Edgel Groves' "Footprints In The Sand."

The Atlanta-based team spends most of its time writing and producing, and also doing a considerable amount of jingle work.

Further information on Buckner and Garcia may be obtained through Arnie Geller at the Buie-Geller Organization, 3297 Northcrest Road, Suite 203, Doraville, Ga. 30340 (404) 491-0950.

• This feature is designed to spotlight acts making their debut on Billboard's Hot 100 and Top LP/Tape charts. For newcomers on the soul and country charts, see pages 41 and 63 respectively.