

Kenny Rogers Serenades Newlyweds In 20-Station Country Tie-In

BY PHYLLIS STARK

NEW YORK To promote his new single, "The Vows Go Unbroken (Always True To You)," Kenny Rogers is doing promotions with radio stations in 20 cities on his current tour, according to manager Ken Kragen. The participating station in each city selects one married couple to be brought on stage during the show where Rogers per-

PROMOTIONS

forms the song for them.

In selected cities, the couple also wins a Hawaiian holiday from Dole (which also supplies a month's worth of its products to all winners) and jewelry from Sterling Jewelers. Both companies feature Rogers and

his wife in their advertising. In addition, most participating stations also throw in such prizes as a limousine to the concert, front-row seats for the winning couple, and concert tickets for the couple's family and friends. All of the winners meet Rogers backstage before the show.

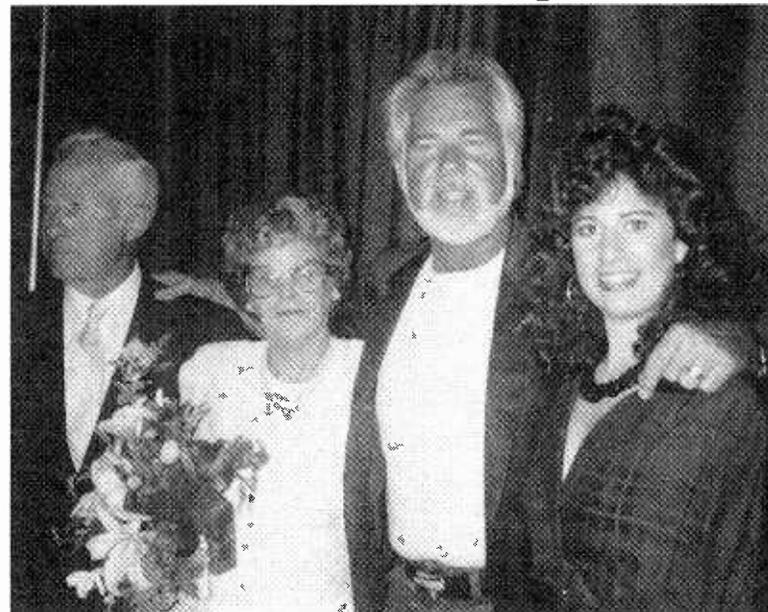
The first country station to tie-in with Rogers, **WGAR** Cleveland, qualified only newlyweds for their contest; the winners, a 65-year-old man and a 66-year-old woman, were married just hours before the show. Conversely, in keeping with the lyrics of the song, **WOW** Omaha, Neb., registered only couples who had been married to each other for 20 years or more.

"It was a real warm, fuzzy kind of thing," says **WOW** PD **Gene Bridges**. "Kenny really made it special for the couple and for the radio station." Other participating stations include **KZLA** Los Angeles, **WUSN** Chicago, **WDSY** Pittsburgh, and **WITL** Lansing, Mich.

PIRATE MONEY

After vowing to stay away from big money giveaways, **KQLZ** (Pirate Radio) Los Angeles PD **Scott Shannon** has apparently reconsidered. On Oct. 16, Shannon began promoting a \$10,000 giveaway to the first listener to call in after hearing Guns N' Roses' "Welcome To The Jungle," (the song **KQLZ** signed on with), on the station.

Shannon claims the contest is Pirate's response to a trade ad taken by top 40 rival **KIIS**, emphasizing the fact that its **Rick Dees** was still No. 1 in mornings (and, conversely, that Shannon was not). "We weren't



Kenny Rogers poses backstage with winning couple George and Stella Saver and country **WGAR** Cleveland morning personality **Lucy Grant** before his concert at the Front Row Theatre in Cleveland.

VOX JOX

(Continued from preceding page)

placed... **Charlie McGraw**, formerly of Las Vegas stations **KWNR** and **KMZQ**, is the new PD at that market's oldies **KUDA**, replacing **Ted Brown**.

Michael Pool is the new PD of **WBLX-AM** Mobile, Ala. That station, which had been doing block-programmed urban, is now black AC Classic 660. Pool was previously on-air at religious **KHAA** New Orleans... Album **WIMZ** Knoxville, Tenn., PD **John Larson** has resigned; reach him at 615-525-6000. No replacement has been named.

WQSM Fayetteville, N.C., the market's only top 40 station besides those audible from nearby Raleigh, has become AC Magic 98. PD **Scott McCloud** and the rest of the staff stay on. Across town, urban **WDKS** is off the air following its takeover by new owners. OM/PD/MD **Joe Diaz**, who says he found out an hour before the plug was pulled, is out, as is all of the programming staff. Call Diaz at 919-425-7542.

Following an ownership change, **AC WGMX** Stamford, Conn., flips to classic rock **WEFX** (The Fox) under Burkhart/Douglas consultant **Gary Burns**. **John Perry** from nearby **WRKI** (195) joins for p.m. drive. **Marc Hilan** from **WNUA** Chicago does morning news. PD **Mike Fitzgerald** stays on, but **GSM Don Lacerenza** is promoted to GM... **Eric Chaney** is out as PD of top 40 **WWGT** (G98) Portland, Maine. T&R to GM **Tom Talbott**... **Jim Riley** from **WEZL** Charleston, S.C., is now PD at new country outlet **WIKX** Albany, Ga.

At top 40 **WHTO** Williamsport, Pa., PD **Denny Hartman**, MD **Michael Wright**, and night jock **Troy Sellers** are all out. **Wild Bill Kingston** returns to radio as **WHTO's** PD. Former morning man **Jim Stewart** is back at the station after eight months as **Jonathan Rush** moves to afternoons. Overnighter **Rod Stacy** is moving to nights/MD... **Lee Stone** is the new PD at top 40 **KAHR** Poplar Bluff, Mo., replacing **Scott Innes**, now doing nights at **WMC-FM** (FM100) Memphis.

PEOPLE: Although contract details were being worked out at press time, it appears that **WLS** Chicago legend **John Landecker**, who was previously rumored as a candidate for the open shift at **WHTZ** (Z100) New York, will instead end up in mornings at oldies **KLOU** St. Louis, replacing **Ron Morgan**. In addition, **Corey Deitz** from oldies **WFYR** Chicago is now at **KLOU** for afternoons.

According to a story in the Chicago Sun-Times, night jock **Alan Kabel** has been suspended indefinitely at top 40 **WYTY** (Z95) Chicago, and is

not expected to return to the station. **Kabel** was suspended for two days last month after airing a call from a listener who told him that rival **WBBM-FM** (B96) "can suck my dick." **Kabel's** current suspension also stemmed from the usage of "unacceptable words."

Ruby Cheeks, previously of afternoons at **WMMS** Cleveland, joins top 40/rock **WAAF** Boston/Worcester, Mass., for mornings. At co-owned urban **WZAK** Cleveland, **Vivian Sharp** is the new overnighter and morning co-host for returning PD/morning man **Lynn Tolliver** (Billboard, Oct. 28), replacing **Jeffrey Charles**... **Sue Serio** joins **AC WMGK** (Magic 103) Philadelphia for late nights from **WSTW** Wilmington, Del. **Bill Womack** returns to overnights.

After several months off the air, former **WHFS** Washington personality **Damian Einstein** has reportedly filed a complaint with the Maryland State Human Relations Commission claiming he was taken off the air and promoted to a programming department job because of a speech impediment stemming from a car crash in the '70s. **Einstein** is seeking a return to his airshift and extra back pay for his expanded duties.

Loo Katz, formerly of country **WMZQ** Washington, has been named production director at **WRQX** (Q107) Washington. Q107 part-timer **George Mason** is upped to overnights... Former top 40 **WMC-FM** Memphis news director and morning show co-host **David Page** has moved to the station's N/T AM as morning host.

Former **KHTY** Santa Barbara, Calif., PD **Jim Crowe** is the new overnighter at classic rock **KSDO-FM** San Diego... **Ken McGill** from top 40 **WSPK** (K104) Poughkeepsie, N.Y., joins similarly formatted **WBLI** Long Island, N.Y., for weekends; he replaces **Brett Howard**.

Joe Jones joins top 40 **KHOP** Modesto, Calif., for middays from the production director slot at **KEWB** (B94) Redding, Calif.... **Linda Austin** from **WIRX** St. Joseph, Mich., is the replacement in middays at **KRNQ** Des Moines, Iowa, for **Yvette Fox**, now doing overnights at **WLLO** Minneapolis after 18 months in radio.

ACCORDING TO the National Assn. of Broadcasters 1989 Radio Financial Report, while their average net revenue was down by approximately \$150,000 in 1988, full-time AM stations reported an average pretax profit of \$85,471, up from last year's average pretax profit of \$53,939, implying that massive cost-cutting measures—i.e., going satellite or simulcasting—may be taking place. **FMs**, (Continued on page 112)

AM STATIONS CLING TO GRAFFITI OLDIES

(Continued from preceding page)

actively music-intensive **KRTH-AM**, and that **KODJ** has toned down its initial graffiti-heavy approach.

Sabo concurs: "I think there's very little FM impact on AM, especially in a city with so many radio stations. Ninety percent of the people who listen to **KODJ** don't know about **KRTH-AM**, and vice versa. **KRTH-AM's** sharing was with **KRLA**, **KFWB**, and **KABC**; it was rarely with **FM**."

And **Adams Communications** regional VP **Jim Seemiller**, who oversees **Kool Gold**, says "FMs will go back and pick up **Chuck Berry** or **Little Richard**—the high-profile [graffiti oldies]—here and there. They won't play 'In the Still Of The Night.'" And **KOOL-FM's** **Hunter**, like most proponents of the format, minimizes the amount of cume duplication between the AM and FM, saying that neither shows among the other's top 10 sharing stations. (Only **WYST's** **O'Neil** differs, saying that about 25% of his listeners also use mainstream **FM WQSR**.)

For his part, **KODJ** PD **Kurt Kelly** says that "while we weren't specifically targeting any one radio station, to some degree, our growth probably had some impact on **KRTH-AM**, but I'm sure that wasn't all of it." He also denies that **KODJ** is backing off on graffiti gold, saying that it currently represents considerably more than the customary 25% of his library.

going to do [major giveaways], but we got so pissed off by that stupid full-page ad, it was a gut reaction. We are prostituting our sound."

Shannon would not give specifics about the frequency of the giveaway, but said it "probably won't happen every day. We are trying something different to shake up the cume. We may drop it next week." He also says that **KQLZ's** cash prize "is not that big by today's standards."

Elsewhere in L.A., **KIIS** is giving away Mazda Miatas to listeners

who can identify the song titles in its "car tunes" contest. And after escalating its Birthday Thursday contest from \$5,000 to \$20,000 in weekly increments of \$5,000, **KPWR** (Power 106) is continuing the contest, offering a mere \$1,000.

The Miata, incidentally, is a choice giveaway for top 40 stations, according to a recent survey by **WQHT** (Hot 97) New York. The station's survey of "what's hot" in today's popular culture polled 432 students ages 14-23. Joining the Miata (Continued on page 19)

Tom Schuh, PD of **WHTT-AM-FM** Buffalo, N.Y., which flipped to oldies this spring, is more blunt about his station's effect on graffiti **AM WGKT**, which has since gone from a local approach to **Kool Gold**. "When we went on, we pretty much dented them in the first couple of months. The loyalty they had wasn't strong enough to hang on in the face of a better signal. Outside mornings, they were basically automated, so when we went on, they didn't have very much to defend themselves with."

Schuh says that having a graffiti **AM** in the market doesn't particularly affect his station, and that **WHTT's** Sunday night specialty show satisfies most of his pre-Beatles fans. Other **FM** PDs have a similar take on their first generation **AM** competition. "I don't find them having any effect," says **KLOU** St. Louis PD **Frank Hollar** about **AM** rival **WKLL**. "What they're trying to do might work better in the Northeast. I don't know that the St. Louis audience can relate to 'Ka-Ding Dong' by the G-Clefs."

Newly promoted **Americom** VP/programming **Mike Bushy**, who competes with **Kool Gold** at **KFSO** Fresno, Calif., calls that format "more like an archive. If you're going to limit yourself to '55-'63, you need great depth to fill up an hour. You become a musicologists' station, not a mass-appeal station."

Title depth is, in fact, perhaps the graffiti format's biggest issue. Although **Kool Gold** does, technically, go well beyond 1964 for a few songs, it emphasizes pre-1964 and displays tremendous depth there. **FM** PDs anguish over playing songs that weren't top five. **Kool Gold's** 2500-plus song library includes songs that weren't even top 40 hits—i.e., the **Coasters'** "What About Us" and **Chuck Berry's** "Sweet Little Rock'N'Roller."

Seemiller calls his approach "B-side radio. When [OM] **Del Hull** and I were growing up, we went out and paid our 79 cents for 45s. When we were done with the first side, we flipped them over. We didn't know the difference between an A side and a B side. 'Earth Angel' by the Penguins may have been the hit, but 'Hey Señorita' is the B side and it's the greatest record ever made."

Sabo, who put **KRTH** on the air with a much tighter list, differs. "It is important to recognize [graffiti gold] for what it is—a novelty format. It will be a station that people listen to in addition to three or four others. So when they visit, you had better be playing 'Johnny B. Goode' or 'Blueberry Hill.' I view it as just being courteous to the listener. If they've come for a smash-hit favorite oldie, we know what those are and can play those. The other ones you put on a cassette and take home."