

WKTU Staffers Dance The Night Away; BIA Publishes Figures On Consolidation

WKTU, WKTU, WKTU: That was just in case you missed out on the legion of exposure that Evergreen's New York top 40/dance outlet is receiving following its historic hop to No. 1 in the latest Arbitron survey. You can pick up the facts from stories on pages 6 and 91 of this issue.

What you won't read there, however, is just how spirited this radio team is. I had the pleasure of joining station staff and clients aboard a celebratory boat cruise around New York Bay July 11 and couldn't help but revel in the harmony shared by corporate execs, on-air staff, and interns alike. One doesn't traditionally associate the term "COO" with "frolicking," but **Jim de Castro**, also Evergreen's president, was throwing it down on the dancefloor with the rest of his jubilant staff. In an industry in which we all get caught up in numbers—whether ratings shares, dollar signs, or who's beating whom with what—it was rejuvenating to simply let the music lead the way for a few hours. Congrats to all involved.

But back to business: In a new report, BIA Publications reveals that since the beginning of the year, rapid consolidation has resulted in 127 fewer radio station owners. In 1995, the top 50 owners operated 876 stations, with revenues of \$4.5 billion. Today, the top 50 hold 1,187 stations, garnering more than \$5 billion.

In support of such statistics, Citadel Communications has announced the purchase of the 18-station Deschutes River Broadcasting, giving Citadel 55 outlets. Unlike other group transactions you've been reading about here with high-profile names, such as Disney, Infinity, and Clear Channel, these companies focus on medium and small markets in the Midwest and West, including Albuquerque, N.M.; Salt Lake City; Reno, Nev.; Spokane, Wash.; and Colorado Springs, Colo. Citadel president **Larry Wilson** says the merger links "two groups with identical operating philosophies and dominant positions" in their markets. Deschutes president

Ed Hardy continues in that capacity and will join Citadel management. No price was released. Meanwhile, Citadel's Albuquerque GM **Bob Profitt** adds those duties at **KASY**.

And speaking of the industry's love



by Chuck Taylor

for numbers, the Radio Advertising Bureau reports that May is the 45th consecutive month of industry revenue gains. Combined national and local advertising revenue increased 6% over the same period in '95. Year-to-date gains are 6% over the first five months of last year. Why such consistent success, you ask? More than 210 million people—or 96% of the population—tune into radio each week, according to the latest RADAR report. Not even the Arch Deluxe brings that many patrons to McDonald's in a week.

FORMATS: SO WHO'S THIS LA BOUCHE?

Oldies **WXTR** (Xtra 104) Washington, D.C., flips to mainstream top 40 as **Z104**, giving the market its first dance-oriented pop outlet in nearly five years, after the defection of former mainstays **WAVA** (to religious) and **WRQX** (to hot AC). PD **Ron Ross** will stay in some capacity, but a new PD will be hired. In its first hour, the Bonneville station served up 2 **Unlimited, Gabrielle, Alanis Morissette, Los Del Rio, Collective Soul, Nikki French, Real McCoy, Fun Factory, UB40, La Bouche, Fugees, Toad The Wet Sprocket, Boyz II Men, and Celine Dion.**

Evergreen's **WLUP-FM** Chicago

has gone to what can best be described as a talk/rock AC/classic rock mix. An afternoon sample includes **the Cars, Gin Blossoms, Hootie & the Blowfish, Steve Miller Band, Pretenders, EMF, Goo Goo Dolls, and Doobie Brothers.**

The three Southern California stations that make up modern rock Y-107 have new calls: **KMAX** becomes **KLYY**, **KBAX** becomes **KSYY**, and **KAXX** becomes **KVYY**. The Odyssey Communications' stations were all formerly sports/talk. And **KHPY** Riverside, Calif., flipped from classic country to brokered block programming July 1.

Just kidding: Seattle-based **KidStar** is rolling out three AM outlets in the next month: **KSON** San Diego, **WDOZ** Detroit, and in Houston (calls and dial position to be announced). Additional affiliates are pending in Atlanta and Boston. They'll join **KidStar's KDFC** San Francisco and **KKDZ** Seattle. The company will also launch an Internet site Aug. 15 (<http://www.kidstar.com>).

Legendary R&B call letters return to Jacksonville, Fla., as the defunct **WCRJ** returns to the air as R&B adult **WOBS** (Soul Generation Radio).

After much speculation, **WGCI-FM** Chicago has re-inked morning host **Steve Harvey** to a "multiyear deal" that will keep the comedian/TV star broadcasting on the station from L.A. while he tapes his new sitcom. Harvey, who had reportedly wanted to broadcast his other shows from his home in Dallas, will be in Chicago when he's not taping his series.

KNEW/KSAN San Francisco marketing director and Billboard Radio Award nominee **Paul Miraldi** moves cross-country to become director of marketing, promotion, and publicity at oldies **WCBS-FM** New York. Miraldi succeeds **Ted Kelly**, who took a corporate post at CBS Radio Networks.

According to local press reports, former Phoenix radio veteran **Carla Foxx** was sentenced to a year in jail and three years' probation July 12 after pleading guilty to leaving the scene of a November '95 accident in which a pedestrian was killed. Elsewhere in town, ABC Radio Networks' **Tom Joyner** and **Doug Banks** land on **KMJK** (Majik 107) in August.

Oldies **WMJI** Cleveland names Rock and Roll Hall of Famer and 25-year market veteran **Denny Sanders** PD.

With the completion of the Prism-to-SFX deal, **Mark Kopelman**, VP/GM of **WDGC** (G105)/**WZZU** Raleigh, N.C., adds GM duties for SFX's **WRDU**/WTRG, replacing **Phil Zachary**, who goes to modern **WHFS** Washington, D.C. Look for a similar move for SFX's newly acquired **WKSS** Hartford, Conn., where president/GM **Tim Montgomery** will likely oversee crosstown **WMRQ**, **WHCN**, and **WPOP**.

Airplay Monitor editor Sean Ross; managing editors Kevin Carter; Phyllis Stark, John Loscalzo, and Janine McAdams; and reporter Marc Schiffman contributed to this column.

Stephen Hill Programs MTV's Pop With Visuals

ACCORDING TO STEPHEN HILL, director of music programming for MTV Networks in New York, programming a radio station and a 24-hour video channel are a lot more similar than one might imagine.

"We program for the flow of the music and the images," Hill says. "We wouldn't want to put something hard rock next to Whitney Houston, we wouldn't put three black-and-white videos back to back, and you wouldn't put T-Boz next to TLC. You don't want [to play] the same artist over and over, which six months ago, with Boyz II Men, was very difficult. So it's the same philosophy as radio, just with different parameters."

As one of seven PDs and two African-Americans on the programming team, Hill decides which videos pass muster for airing on the channel and when and how often to play them. He programs not only the station's two-hour, R&B-intensive "MTV Jams" but alternative, rock, and pop fare as well.

Hill joined MTV in January 1995 after working as national programmer for ABC Radio Networks' Urban Gold format in Dallas. Prior to that, he was PD of **WILD** Boston for four years, stepping in for **Elroy Smith** when he left for **KMJZ** (100.3 Jamz) Dallas.

So what's it like picking music videos by committee? "When you're the PD, you have the final word," says Hill, a native of Washington, D.C. "In committee, it's really bantering it around. I've seen [instances] where one person's passion can carry something through, while with some songs and videos, we've gone round and round. But as long as you're open-minded, it's fine . . . If you're used to being a PD that takes a lot of input, working with a committee is not much of a transition."

With the launch of MTV's all-music **M2** in August, the same programming team will program videos for both channels. "This will be formatless; it will be hour-by-hour, free-form," says Hill. "It's really fun putting this together; the great thing about it is that it's all genres of music, and we can get more R&B on the air. MTV has developed into a music-based youth-culture network—it's a pop station, it's for our biggest artists. On **M2**, the goal is that you'll never know what you'll see next: **James Brown** next to **Smashing Pumpkins** next to **Wu-Tang Clan**."

Hill maintains that video channels like MTV are still great places to break new artists but that MTV in particular has been instrumental in breaking R&B artists to a wider pop audience. Such acts as **Tony Rich**, **Busta Rhymes**, **Coolio**, and **Skee-Lo** have benefited from exposure on MTV, Hill says. However, at R&B trade shows, Hill finds himself taking it on the chin from record executives upset that MTV doesn't air more R&B music. "At the

conventions, they hammer me, but that's OK," Hill says. "MTV is a pop channel; we're great for playing pop music. BET's target audience is African-Americans, while MTV's audience is the whole country. MTV is good at taking something that is an R&B hit and taking it to a larger audience. **Tony Rich** was [an artist] that even urban stations didn't want to play, but we embraced it. Though we didn't break [**Busta Rhymes**] to the black audience,

we took [him] to another audience that may not have heard of him otherwise. Explaining MTV's position is worth taking the flak."

Like many in radio, Hill got his first taste of working in the medium by accident. A student pursuing a degree in applied math and economics at **Brown University** in Providence, R.I., he heard about recruitment for the school's commercial **WBRU** and went to orientation. Soon he was on the all-Sunday "360 Degree Black Experience In Sound" and

playing rock weekday mornings. He loved being on the air so much that even after graduating and teaching high school at the Groton School near Boston, his alma mater, he continued to do weekends at **WBRU**.

On one such occasion, Hill was on the air while **Smith**, PD of **WILD**, was driving through town and listening to the station. Later, Hill began a five-year stint at **WILD**, doing weekends.

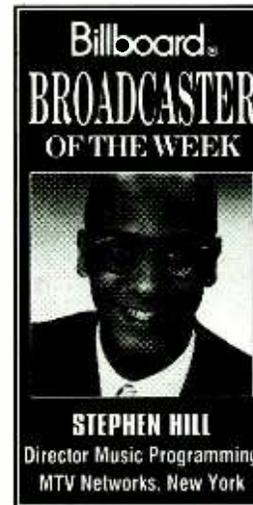
"I was there during the week as well, asking all these questions, like 'Why do we program these songs back to back?' and 'Why are these songs on the playlist?' I was the Why Man, and it caught the attention of **OM Ken Nash**, so after **Elroy** left to go to **Jamz**, he took a chance on me, and I became the PD."

Programming **WILD** in the early '90s was tough, because at the time, crosstown top 40 **WXKS** had begun to add more rhythmic music, Hill says. "I was making the mistake of trying to give a little bit to everybody . . . It reflected in our numbers. We didn't build the core," he says, crediting **Smith** for focusing him and **Nash** for keeping him. "I decided that it's a black thing, and if [a song] doesn't appeal to an 18- to 34-year-old black female, then it doesn't belong on the station. I was able to leave the station with the highest ratings in the last 10 years," Hill says.

Though happy in his position at MTV, Hill says he misses the immediacy, local appeal, and fun of radio.

"Every four or five months, I call **Ken** [Johnson, PD of **WILD**] and say, 'If somebody wants to take this Saturday off, I'll do a show!'" says Hill. "The great thing about black radio is, it's like what **Bill Cosby** would say at the beginning of 'The Fat Albert Show': Stick around, you'll have fun, and if you're not careful, you might learn something."

JANINE McADAMS



newsline...

STEPHEN SCHRAM is named GM of **WNIC** Detroit; he was director of marketing at **WJBK-TV**. He succeeds **John Fullum**, now GM of **WKTU** New York.

MARV NYREN is promoted from general sales manager to GM of Chancellor's **WFOX** Atlanta.

STEPHEN MILLER is named VP with **Patterson Broadcasting** from Western regional manager, and **Philip Catlett** is promoted to VP from Midwest regional manager.

MICHAEL DRISCOLL is named CFO of **Connoisseur Communications**, after a decade with **U.S. Radio**, where he was CFO.

TODD FISHER, PD of **WRAL** Raleigh, N.C., is named director of programming for **Capitol Broadcasting** and will serve as PD for **WWMX** (Mix 106.5) Baltimore.

STATION SALES: **WFSJ** Jacksonville, Fla., from **Todd Communications** to **Paxson**, owned, respectively, by son and father.