

Aug 19

F Y I

Network radio O and O2
did an outstanding reporting
job during the most disruptive
disaster in Detroit history.

Both stations lauded in
the unaffiliated Detroit Free
press for continuous (non commercial)
emergency service. No other
stations mentioned -- all quarter
Detroit listened to WJR and WWJ.

My previous combat infantry
experience helped me to
philosophically survive the two
day ordeal.

Best, Joe

1062

BROADCASTING CABLE TV FAX 2

Tuesday

August 19, 2003

newsroom, most notable was the demotion of popular local anchor Amelia Santaniello, who has stayed with the station. Local press frequently ran stories about conflicts within the newsroom.

"I chose not to allow unflattering things to influence my job," said Reitan. "Anyone who comes into a newsroom has to make hard decisions and changes. Change is not always welcome." Piette said he'd found Reitan cooperative and professional, but said that both he and she acknowledged that damage had been done that would likely be impossible to repair. Piette said her replacement would face a "rather large challenge. We're looking for someone who knows news and who will respect the individuals inside that newsroom; someone who knows the history of this place, and hopefully someone interested in ascending to general manager someday."

VIVENDI GETS SECOND ROUND OF BIDS—The auction for Vivendi Universal's entertainment properties passed another hurdle Monday, the deadline for second-round bids. Vivendi is now entertaining proposals from an investment group led by former Seagram's chief Edgar Bronfman, Viacom and NBC. MGM and Comcast had already dropped out of the bidding and Vivendi rejected a bid from oil baron Marvin Davis in the first round.

Odds makers are now trying to call the contest. "I think it is just a matter of time before they announce a deal with GE," said one insider.

None of the proposals are likely to meet Vivendi's \$14 billion price tag. NBC is not looking to put up any cash, but rather looking for more of a merger. Bronfman's bid does involve a cash component.

Vivendi is slated to take the proposals to its board Aug. 26.

Last week, Vivendi agreed to a potential back-up plan with Comcast. The companies said they "intend to explore an alliance involving both parties' cable channels and Vivendi's worldwide content with the goal of creating new channels and services." But Vivendi said the alliance would not preclude a sale of its entertainment properties.

FORMER CHAIRMAN CHEERS DETROIT RADIO—Former FCC Chairman James Quello was in a Detroit hotel room on business Aug. 14 when the lights went out. That left him with no radio and no TV, not to mention no dinner and no breakfast the next day (OK, he did manage to secure some cheese crackers and 7up). Quello bought a portable radio and monitored the situation via two network O&O's that he says did a great job of covering the blackout. They were Quello's former station, WJR(AM) (ABC), and WWJ(AM) (Infinity/CBS). Quello says that if he were still in the center chair, he would recommend "automatically" renewing both stations' licenses "on the basis of continuing outstanding local service." The WWJ vet even gave them extra credit for service "above and beyond."

FATES & FORTUNES—KARE-TV last week hired WKRN-TV Assistant News Director Glen Horn as its new news director. He replaces Jim Holland, who left the station last month. Horn is a Wichita native who interned at the station while a student in high school and col-

lege. ■ Viacom's Los Angeles duopoly has hired KARE-TV Minneapolis anchor Paul Magers. Magers will anchor early and late evening newscasts on KCBS-TV

FCC DOUBLES LABOR DAY FUN—Broadcast attorneys could have the chance to double their billable hours over the Labor Day weekend. Monday, the FCC extended the permissible page limit on petitions to reconsider new broadcast rules, which lawyers will be crafting over the holiday to meet a Thursday, Sept. 4, deadline. Reconsideration petitions are generally limited to 25 double-spaced pages, but given the "complex and important" issues as well as the difficulty of tackling multiple, interrelated proceedings, the commission agreed to let the petitions run 50 pages. An unusually large number is expected from the both public advocates and industry charging that the FCC either went too far or didn't go far enough in its June 2 relaxation of broadcast ownership limits. A coalition of groups led by the Minority Media Telecommunications Council asked for the extra space.

PAX PROMOTION IS PIECE OF CAKE—Snack cake maker Little Debbie and Pax TV are teaming on a six-month tune-in contest promotion. Little Debbie spots will run on the Pax network and locally on 25 Pax stations. Pax is billing it as the largest real estate exchange in the network's history. In that exchange, Pax will air Little Debbie promo spots directing viewers to buy the cakes and find out how to win prizes, which they can do by tuning in to Pax TV on the first Wednesday of each month. But Pax is getting more than tune-in. Little Debbie has also committed to buying a media schedule on the net. The cross-promotional campaign will be supported by national print ads.

WB 100+ BUYS BERNIE MAC—The WB 100+ has acquired the off-net rights to Twentieth Television's *The Bernie Mac Show*. The show is likely to air in access, paired with Sony's *The King of Queens*, debuting in syndication this fall. Warner Bros' *Will & Grace* is the other off-net sitcom aired by The WB 100+, which is made up of cable-delivered WB programming the network supplies to markets 100 and higher.

John Eggerton, editor

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3.1/8

WGN/W

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2.4/6

WMAQ/N

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2.1/6

WBBM/C

maury

UNIVERSAL

Source: NSI/WRAP Overnights; July '03 Sweep 7/10-8/6/03. HFI Rtg./Shz. 3-4pm.