

THE VERMONT  
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Lower Cost HD?

The cost barrier to High Definition radio may begin to disappear. iBiquity Digital, the developer of HD radio, says a new generation of low-cost chipsets will trigger a surge in the number of HD radio receivers on the market. The new chipsets started shipping at the end of May, according to *Radio Online*. Dozens of manufacturers plan new HD radio receivers for both the auto and the home/office markets.

FCC Appeal Stays in 'Frisco

A challenge to the FCC's recent ruling on cross-ownership of media outlets will be heard in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. Opponents wanted the case moved to the Third Circuit Court in Philadelphia.

Last year, the FCC said newspapers in the top 20 markets could own one radio or television station in their market, as long as the station wasn't in the "top four." That compromise was supported by both the National Association of Broadcasters and the Newspaper Association of America

Seniors Set for DTV Demos

Senior citizens in the Strafford and South Royalton areas will have the chance to learn about the Digital TV transition this month. On June 11th, a lunch-time gathering will be held at the Strafford Senior Center. A similar event will be held at the South Royalton Senior Center on June 24th. VAB Executive Director Jim Condon will demonstrate DTV and answer questions. To learn more about the DTV transition, please visit [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov).

# The VAB Voice



The VAB VOICE

June, 2008

## WBTN-AM to Continue Broadcasting in Bennington

Faced with the prospect of losing its only community radio station, a group of civic-minded individuals banded together last month to keep WBTN (1370 AM) from going dark.



The station had been operated by Southern Vermont College since 2002, when former owner Robert Howe, a member of the school's Board of Trustees, donated the station to them. Since that time, however, the college had lost nearly a half million dollars on the station.

Howe had purchased the station in 2002 from Vermont Public Radio, which continues to operate WBTN-FM (94.3).

WBTN-AM was put on the air in 1952 by Belva Keyworth.

Keyworth was very active in the American Women in Radio and Television organization. She ran the show at WBTN for 47 years, before selling the combo to VPR in 1999.

College President David Scribner announced in May the station would be sold to a new non-profit group, Shires Media Partnership, for \$100,000.

Shires spokeswoman Joann Erenhouse told the *Bennington Banner* the station would con-

tinue to work with the area colleges, and would continue and possibly increase the amount of local news reporting.

The station has also featured an eclectic mix of music in recent years.

WBTN-AM operates at 1000 watts during daytime hours and 87 watts at night.

The station has three employees, who have all been offered the chance to stay with the station.

Station Manager Richard Ryder has indicated he would like to stay. "We've worked hard to bring the station where it is," he told the *Banner*, "but it's still a work in progress."

## Online Revenue Seen Skyrocketing for Local TV Stations



Online revenue for local TV stations is expected to jump by more than 50 percent in 2008, climbing to an estimated \$1.2 billion. The prediction is in a new study by Borrell Associates. More than 3,100 local media outlets were surveyed for the study, "What Local Media Web Sites Earn." Last year, online revenue for local TV stations was estimated at \$772 million. Local newspaper websites are also expected to see major growth, with 2008 revenue expected to reach \$3.7 billion.

*Broadcasting & Cable* noted several local TV websites outperform newspaper sites. For instance, KOB-TV Albuquerque beats the local paper by more than four-to-one. Closer to home, the magazine reports WMUR in Manchester, NH generates more than twice the amount of online revenue than the Manchester Union Leader.

## 80th Anniversary of Vermont Crooner's Radio Debut

In 1928, a native of Island Pond, Vermont began a radio career that helped him become, arguably, the first mass media pop star of the 20th century.

Rudy Vallee (real name Hubert Prior Vallee) was born July 28, 1901 in Island Pond. His parents, Charles Alphonse Vallee and Catherine Lynch Vallee had both been born and raised in Vermont.

The family later moved to Westbrook, Maine, where Rudy started a high school band. During World War I, Vallee enlisted in the U.S. Navy but was bounced out after 41 days when it was discovered he was only 15 years old.

He continued with his musical pursuits and played in London for two years. In the mid-1920's, he returned to the States to earn a degree in philosophy from Yale. While there, he started "Rudy Vallee and His Connecticut Yankees."

He was called Rudy after Rudy Wiedoeft, a well-known saxophonist at the time.

In 1928 he signed a recording deal with Columbia, and started performing on the radio. In 1929, he switched to Victor and also began hosting *The Fleischmann's Yeast Hour*, which later became *The Royal Gelatin Hour*."



His program featured the comedians Olsen and Johnson and became the second-most popular program of the era, behind only *Amos 'n' Andy*.

Many stars made their first radio appearance on his show, including Milton Berle, Burns and Allen, Kate Smith, Gloria Swanson and the Mills Brothers.

In 1937, Rudy demanded Louis Armstrong host the show during

his summer vacation, helping him become the first African-American to host a national radio show.

His movies include "The Vagabond Lover," "The Palm Beach Story," "The Bachelor and the Bobbysoxer" and "How to Succeed in Business (Without Really Trying)."

Hit records included "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries," "The Stein Song," "Vieni, Vieni" and "As Time Goes By." His crooning style paved the way for Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Perry Como.

Vallee continued hosting a weekly radio show into the 1950's and he continued touring into the 1980's, even opening for the Village People!

He passed away in 1986 after uttering his last words, "I do love parties." His widow, Eleanor, has written a book about their 40 years together, entitled "My Vagabond Lover." For more information, go to [www.rudyvallee.com](http://www.rudyvallee.com)

For links to clips of Vermont native Rudy Vallee, please visit the VAB website at [www.vab.org](http://www.vab.org).

## Construction of Fallen Heroes Memorial Underway at Camp Johnson

A lasting tribute to those Vermont Guard members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq War is officially under construction at Camp Johnson in Colchester.

Gov. James Douglas, Sen. Bernie Sanders and other dignitaries were on hand on May 30th for the ground-breaking ceremonies.

In attendance were many "Gold Star Families," the parents and siblings of our fallen heroes.

The memorial has been designed by world-famous sculptor Terry Jones.

The Vermont National Guard Charitable Foundation, Inc, in partnership with Revision Eyewear has commissioned the Vermont National Guard Fallen Heroes Memorial and is seeking contributions towards the \$300,000 goal to erect a lasting, inspiring monument.

Personalized bricks that will form part of the "Pathway of Freedom" are being sold to help raise money.

To learn more about this tribute, visit [www.vermontremembers.com](http://www.vermontremembers.com).

## SURPRISE! Most FCC Fees Expected to Increase

The FCC has announced its proposed annual regulatory fees for Fiscal Year 2008.

The final fee amounts will be announced in a Public Notice following consideration of Reply Comments, to be filed by June 6, 2008.

Commercial VHF television stations face the prospect of the following annual regulatory fee increases: in top 10 markets, those stations will see their annual fee rise from \$64,300 to \$69,400, and in markets 11 to 25, the fee increases from \$46,350 to \$50,850. VHF construction permit fees will in-

crease from \$5,125 to \$5,600 under the FCC's proposal, and UHF construction permit fees will increase from \$1,750 to \$1,875.

The amount of increase in annual fees for AM and FM radio stations will be between \$75 to \$400, depending upon the type of station involved. The annual fee for FM construction permits will increase from \$575 to \$600. Similarly, the AM construction permit fee will rise from \$400 to \$450.

The wireless fees of general interest to broadcasters are



left unchanged: annual fees for Part 74 Broadcast Auxiliaries remain at \$10.00 per license. Fee payments must be sent to the Commission's lockbox at U.S. Bank in St. Louis.

It is important for licensees and permittees to consider that the failure to make full payment in a timely fashion can subject them to a collection action (with a 25% penalty) by the FCC.