

**THE VERMONT
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BROADCASTERS**

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WEQX: 25 YEARS OLD

Manchester station WEQX (102.7 MHz) will celebrate its 25th anniversary on November 14. To help its listeners get in the swing of the festivities, the



rock station is inviting back some former on-air talent. The former staffers will return as part of WEQX's "25 Years in 25 Days" countdown to the anniversary.

Each day, the station will feature music from each of its years. WEQX is owned and operated by VAB Hall of Fame member A. Brooks Brown.

REPS SAY PUT FM IN PHONES

Homeland Security Chief Janet Napolitano and FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski have received a letter signed by 60 Congressmen calling on them to explore the benefits of requiring FM chips in all mobile telephones.

Mobile telephone manufacturers were ordered in 2006 to find a way to connect their devices to the Emergency Alert System.

The letter notes that millions of mobile phones in other countries already have FM tuners, and suggests there is no excuse for America to lag behind. The reps say the public, public safety officials, phone manufacturers and FM broadcasters will all stand to benefit.

COMCAST NBC DEAL NEAR?

Comcast Corp and the General Electric Co. have agreed on a price tag for NBC Universal, meaning a deal may be close, observers say. The two sides have valued NBC-U at \$30 million. GE owns 80% of NBC-U. French conglomerate Vivendi owns 20% and has not signed off on the deal yet. Comcast would get 51% of all shares with an option for more within 7 years.

See the winning VAB logo entry on Page Two!

The VAB Voice



November, 2009

PARSONS, CURRAN AND MANY MORE HONORED AT VAB GALA

A standing ovation from his fellow broadcasters capped off the long journey of Marselis Parsons, from WEST Radio in Easton, Pennsylvania to the VAB Hall of Fame.



Gov. Jim Douglas with Marselis Parsons

Parsons, the longtime anchor and News Director of WCAX-TV, was welcomed in to the Hall of Fame at the VAB Awards banquet Nov. 7 at the Essex Resort and Spa.

"This is not goodbye," Parsons told the crowd. He noted station owner Peter Martin has supplied him with a camera to help produce occasional feature stories about interesting people and places he hopes to find during his so-called retirement.

Parsons was officially welcomed into the Hall of Fame by Martin and by Vermont Governor Jim Douglas. It was pointed out that Douglas has also announced his retirement, but the Governor reminded the crowd that he still has 14 months to go on the job.

Also joining the VAB Hall of Fame this year is the late Belva Keyworth, who owned and operated WBTV-AM and WHGC-FM in Bennington for many years. Keyworth was a longtime supporter of both the VAB and the AWRT, American Women in Radio and Television.

The VAB Broadcaster of the Year award was presented to Ann Curran of Vermont Public Television.

In his introductory remarks, VAB President Ken Kasz recalled the incredible amount of work Curran did to help all the local TV stations through the historic transition to all-digital transmission.



VAB President Ken Kasz with Ann Curran

Two Distinguished Service Awards were presented to two longtime radio reporters. Bob Kinzel of VPR and Tim Johnson of WTSA in Brattleboro were the inaugural winners of the awards.

Calling himself a "Luddite," averse to new technology, Kinzel demonstrated how recording media has evolved since he began using cart machines as a disc jockey at WJOY-AM in the mid-1970's.

Johnson was introduced by his former boss (and former VAB President) Dave Underhill. Johnson listed a few of his favorite radio stories, but focused on the generosity of his listeners, who always came through whenever the station held a food drive for the needy.

Helping those less fortunate afford fuel helped Ray Kimball of WCFR in Springfield earn the first Al Noyes Community Service Award.

Kimball has helped raise thousands of dollars each year for the local "Share the Warmth" campaign staged by Southeast Vermont Community Action.

Jon Brooks and Mark Knight of WKOL radio accepted another Community Service Award for their station's yearly campaign to help send kids with cancer to summer camp. Their "Camp Ta-Kum-Ta Thon" has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years.

Nassau Broadcasting was also honored with a Community Service Award for their creative fundraising campaign. Nassau General Manager Michael Waggoner presented a check for \$4000 to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, the check representing proceeds from the sale of a locally-produced music CD, "The Best of Area Code 802."



Tim Johnson flanked by Ken Kasz and Jim Condon

The award presentations were hosted by VAB Hall of Fame member Eric Michaels of Radio Vermont. Michaels also helped put together a video montage of historic Vermont radio and television photos and a collection of current station logos.

The next big event for the VAB will be the 55th Annual Convention, featuring training seminars and the awards for commercial production. Keep checking the VAB Voice and our website, vab.org, for more information.

MORE AWARD BANQUET
PHOTOS ON PAGE TWO

PHOTOS FROM THE 2009 VAB AWARDS BANQUET

Thanks to the Essex Resort & Spa for helping to make the 2009 Awards Banquet a real crowd-pleaser.

For more information about this year's honorees, please visit the VAB website at www.vab.org.

See you in 2010!



Hall of Fame inductee Marselis Parsons



Broadcaster of the Year Ann Curran



Nassau GM Michael Waggoner (l) and Ed Bride of Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.



Ted Kessler (l) of Camp Ta-Kum-Ta with Jon Brooks and Mark Knight of WKOL-FM.



ABOVE: VAB President Ken Kasz with WCFR's Ray Kimball, winner of the Al Noyes Community Service Award
LEFT: Francis Morrissey and Bob Howe of Bennington were on hand to accept the Hall of Fame plaque on behalf of the late Belva Chase Keyworth.

PERFORMANCE TAX UPDATE

Last week, six Congressional supporters of the broadcast performance royalty wrote a letter calling upon the NAB to sit down with music industry representatives to reach a "negotiated resolution" of the "longstanding disagreement" in a session to last from November 17 through December 1. Could this call for negotiations really result in a deal that would lead to a law requiring that radio broadcasters pay a fee for the use of sound recordings on their over-the-air stations?

First, we must ask whether there will even be any negotiations. The NAB's only statement issued thus far says that they are willing to "talk to Congress" about the matter, but that they hoped that the discussion would include some of the almost 300 members of Congress who oppose the royalty. As we've written before, the NAB has over 250 Congressmen and over 20 Senators signed on to resolutions opposing the performance royalty. Note that the NAB statement says nothing about participating in "negotiations", which the former President of the NAB had said that he would never do. New NAB President Gordon Smith, who has been in his job less than two weeks, is said to be more of a consensus-builder than his predecessor, but he has had a very short time to come up to speed on the issue.

But, beyond the question of whether the parties are even willing to participate, could these sorts of negotiations actually be successful? Copyright issues, as they are so detailed and technical given the complexity of the mechanics of the Copyright laws, are often resolved through negotiations - often at the urging of Congress. But here, there are many parties involved who may not see eye to eye on the kinds of issues that might be discussed in any negotiation.

There are many stations with differing interests as to what might be included in any negotiations. All these diverse interests would have to be taken into account in reaching any deal that would cover broadcasters - and two weeks with Thanksgiving in between does not seem to provide the time to reach a deal. In fact, given that broadcasters for the most part believe that the issue is all but dead, how do you then convince broadcasters nationwide that a deal is in their best interests?

So, if the parties are not sure to negotiate, and if the prospects of a deal in two weeks in late November are so slight, why bother with the letter? One thought is that the letter is another well-orchestrated publicity move by royalty proponents. Just like the MusicFirst petition filed at the FCC complaining about broadcasters supposedly boycotting musicians who supported the royalty (with little or no evidence), this letter has already generated press attention putting a spotlight back on the issue - attention that has perhaps flagged somewhat since the NAB had signed up its majority of the House of Representatives onto the resolution opposing the royalty. Perhaps by trying to make the NAB look bad, the supporters of the royalty are trying to pry some of the legislators off their positions in favor of the NAB and against the performance royalty.

So, will any of this work? Watch and see, as we should know whether negotiations take place very soon.

- David Oxenford

LOGO CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to Sheri Bannister of WBTZ-FM for submitting the winning entry in the recent VAB Logo contest. More than 70 different entries were received.

Sheri, whose entry was shown at the VAB Awards Banquet, was the winner of a \$1000 prize!

Her design will be the basis for the new VAB logo, coming soon. Congratulations also go out to Ryan Dente of WIZN-FM and Willobee of WEQX-FM. Ryan and Will were the winners of the random drawing prizes. They have both received \$250 prizes. At right is Sheri Bannisters's winning entry.

