

THE VERMONT
ASSOCIATION OF
BROADCASTERS

500A DALTON DRIVE
COLCHESTER, VT 05446
(802) 655-5764
VAB@TOGETHER.NET

VOX COMPLETES CC DEAL

Ken Barlow is back at the helm at CHAMP 101.3 in the Burlington market.

Barlow's VOX AM/FM group has completed its purchase of seven former Clear Channel signals, including CHAMP, WCPV, licensed to Essex, NY.

The other stations include WEAV-AM, WXZO-FM, WEZF-FM and WVTK-FM in the Burlington/Plattsburgh market and WCVR-FM and WTSJ-AM in Randolph, VT.

Barlow serves as Chief Operating Officer, while Bruce Danziger serves as CEO.

FM IS BACK IN SPRINGFIELD

After a ten-year hiatus, FM radio service is once again emanating from Springfield, VT.

Governor Jim Douglas was on hand July 28 to officially welcome the new WCVR-FM to the airwaves. The new sister station to WCVR-AM is broadcasting at 106.5 MHz. Both stations are owned by Bob Vinikoor's Koor Communications group.

New studios for both stations have been built at 25 Main Street. on the dial.

The original WCVR-FM (later WTSM) was sold in 1998, and later relocated to Swanzey, NH. Koor Communications has owned WCVR-AM since 2001.

The VAB Voice



The VAB VOICE

August, 2008

Satellite Radio Merger Gets Green Light from FCC

Despite the opposition of terrestrial broadcasters and many consumer groups, the FCC finally gave its approval to the merger of the Sirius and XM satellite radio services.

Commissioners voted 3-2 (Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein against) to permit the monopoly, valued at 3.3 Billion dollars.

The companies must pay about 20 million dollars in technical fines resulting from the placement of non-



conforming ground-based towers and receivers.

The two companies have about 18 million subscribers between them. Most analysts believe the sluggishness in the new car market will work against the new company, to be called Sirius XM Inc. Sirius CEO Mel Kar-

mazin will stay in his role as head of the company.

The companies also agreed to freeze their subscription rates for three years and to give consumers the ability to choose the stations they want and pay less for certain packages.

Ten years ago, when the FCC first issued licenses to the satellite radio firms, it was with the warning that they would never be allowed to merge.

FRIENDLY PIONEER SUBJECT OF NEW DOCUMENTARY

Activists trying to force the FCC to issue harsh new "localism" rules would be well-advised to tune an ear to Vermont.



Lloyd Squier

Our radio stations have always taken the mission of serving the local community seriously, and at the top of the list you'll find WDEV-AM & FM in Central Vermont. In fact, as far as localism is concerned, WDEV has been at it for 77 years now!

The colorful history of Washington County's first radio sta-

tion has formed the basis of a new documentary. "Tune In Tomorrow" will air at least twice this month on Vermont Public Television.

The program is the work of Waitsfield resident Ed Dooley of Mad River Media. He says he is a longtime fan of the station and conceived of the idea during WDEV's 75th anniversary two years ago.

Dooley combines new and historical footage and photographs to explain the enormous appeal of the local legend.

WDEV went on the air on July 16, 1931. The station was owned by Harry Whitehill, who was assisted by future owner

Lloyd Squier, Squier had worked at the old *Waterbury Record*, also owned by Whitehill. Lloyd Squier instilled a steadfast commitment to local broadcasting.



Ken Squier

His son, Ken, has continued the local tradition, resisting the clarion call of computer automation and satellite music. WDEV

has been recognized as one of the great locally-owned independent stations in the USA. Check local VPT listings for program airtimes.

“C’mon Down and Get Ready for Digital TV!”

Legendary TV game show host Bob Barker has signed on to help spread the word about the coming transition to digital TV.



Bob Barker

The longtime host of “The Price is Right” has been hired by the National Association of Broadcasters to encourage over-the-air TV viewers to make the upgrade to digital.

In a news release, NAB Vice President for DTV Jonathan Collegio said, “Bob Barker is an American icon who is instantly recognizable to generations both young and old.” Broadcasters are keenly interested in reaching out to older viewers as

the Feb. 17, 2009 deadline nears.

Barker will appear in a number of DTV public service spots, including a special spot targeted at Wilmington, NC. Wilmington stations have agreed to make the digital switch early, on September 8, to help measure community reaction. Meanwhile, the largest TV group in the nation has announced it will conduct “soft” tests of DTV in many of its markets.

ION Media Networks runs 60 full-power stations, in-



Roughing up Adam Sandler in the feature film, “Happy Gilmore.”

cluding 39 of the top 50 markets.

ION will heavily promote the DTV tests in select markets, and stage a countdown to the test. Viewers will be told that may or may not lose their picture, depending on their reception mode.

Analog viewers will see their screens go blank for an unspecified period of time. Then, a message will pop up advising those viewers to visit the FCC’s DTV website or the ION website.

Locally, the NAB has confirmed their Rolling DTV Display will pay a visit to Vermont next month. The colorful mobile van lets visitors see the digital difference for themselves. It is expected the display will pay a visit to Chittenden County on September 24. Keep an eye on the VAB website (vab.org) for updates on times and locations.

RETRANSMISSION CONTRACTS UP FOR RENEWAL

More than fifty percent of the agreements between cable companies and local TV stations will expire on January 1, 2009.

The contracts generally run for three years, and among those up for renewal are CBS, Hearst-Argyle Television, Nextstar Broadcasting Group and Sinclair Broadcast Group.

Broadcasting & Cable reports the average local station receives about 20 cents per subscriber per month. Meanwhile, major cable stations receive 25 cents or more per month per subscriber.

One consultant says local TV stations collected 365 Million dollars last year from retransmission deals. That number is expected to climb.

Retransmission fees currently account for 1.5 percent of a typical station’s revenues. According to a consultant quoted by the magazine, that figure is expected to jump to 4 percent by 2011-2012.

Class A LPTV Filing Freeze to Lift on August 4th

The FCC has announced the freeze on filing certain Class A LPTV applications will be lifted on August 4th. Previously, Class A stations had been frozen from expanding their authorized contours and from changing channels while the DTV transition was underway. Because Class A stations receive protection as primary stations, the FCC needed to lock those stations down until it had completed the DTV Table of Allotments, which it has now done.

Accordingly, as of August 4th (nearly four years to the day that the freeze was first imposed), Class A LPTV stations will once again be able to seek to modify their contours and change channels. Applications filed prior to August 4th that requested a waiver of the freeze will be treated as having been filed on the 4th. Thereafter, changes will be on a first come, first serve basis. — David Oxenford

NFL TO DEBUT COMPUTER STREAMING OF SOME REGULAR SEASON GAMES

SportsBusiness Journal reports the NFL is about to go somewhere it’s never been: Computer screens. The magazine reports the NFL will use the network feed to stream the 17 Sunday night games that will be carried on



NBC-TV, starting with the season opener between the Washington Redskins and New York Giants. The NFL has never streamed any games in real time. It’s expected the NFL and NBC will share any new advertising revenue.

