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The VAB Voice



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PAUL SANDS TO RETIRE

Since becoming President and General Manager of TV stations WPTZ and WNNE in 1998, Paul Sands became well known to viewers for his sometimes outspoken editorials, which always ended with the phrase, "That's our opinion...what's yours?"



Paul Sands

Well, since he asked, our opinion is that Sands did a great job at the helm of the NBC affiliates and richly deserves a happy and healthy retirement after 38 years in the business.

Hearst TV announced July 19 that Sands will retire at the end of the year and will be replaced by Kyle Grimes, a former WPTZ News Director.

Grimes has worked for Hearst for 12 years and has been News Director of WPBF-TV in West Palm Beach, Florida since leaving WPTZ in 2008.

PIRATE FM IN NASHUA

The FCC is looking at TheBeat, a Nashua NH radio station broadcasting at 87.9 Mhz. The station has been operating for more than a year. Owner Antoine Anthem told the *Nashua Telegraph* he doesn't have an FCC license. He claims 87.9, on the low end of the FM spectrum, is unregulated and that he is serving a public need for more dance and Hip-Hop music. Not everyone is dancing in the aisles, though. Jerry Di-Grezo, GM of AM talk stations WSMN, WGAM and WGFM, told the paper, "The big deal is we're playing by the rules and someone else isn't." He noted TheBeat, which has no call letters, is avoiding music licensing fees. "We have to pay the fees, and we don't even play any music," he said.

TV STATION PUBLIC FILES TO GO ON LINE THIS MONTH

On July 27, the federal appeals court in Washington, DC denied a request from the NAB for a stay of the FCC's new online political file rules. As a result, stations will need to comply with the FCC's online public and political file rules beginning August 2.

All television stations will be required to upload any new public file material starting on August 2.

Also on August 2, the Big 4 network stations in the top 50 markets must upload new political file material starting on that date.

Stations will have to upload new documents that would normally go into their public inspection files. And they will have to upload all previous public file documents by January 1, 2013. On July 1, 2014, ALL TV stations will have to upload all new political file items as well.

The NAB plans to continue to pursue an appeal of the FCC order, but in the meantime the new rules will go into effect. To help stations understand the new rules, we've put a helpful guide on our website at www.vab.org.

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE FLIES WITH THE GREEN MT BOYS

Just two days after taking over for Ann Curry as co-host of NBC's "Today Show," Savannah Guthrie took viewers on a real joy ride in Vermont.

Guthrie took a spin in a Vermont Air National Guard F-16 jet with her brother, Lt. Col. Charles "Camron" Guthrie. The segment showed the meticulous preparation pilots and crew go through to make sure that



Lt. Col. Charles Guthrie and sister Savannah Guthrie

they and their aircraft are ready for duty. She said the chance to fly with her brother, a full-time Air Guard pilot, was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream.

Guthrie reminded viewers of the Air Guard's mission to provide around-the-clock defense for America, and noted the Green Mountain Boys completed three tours of duty in Iraq and were among the first responders to the 9/11 attacks. The flight, she said, was "awesome." And for the record, she did not need to deploy the two air sickness bags she was given. - Jim Condon

“Modest” Increase in Regulatory Fees

By Tony Lin, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP



The FCC has released a Report and Order which includes its final determinations as to how much each FCC licensee will have to pay in Annual Regulatory Fees for fiscal year 2012. The FCC collects Annual Regulatory Fees to offset the cost of its non-application processing functions, such as conducting rulemaking proceedings.

In May of this year, the FCC issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding its FY 2012 payment process and the proposed fee amounts for each type of FCC license. In large part, the FCC adopted its proposals without material changes. With respect to the non-fee related proposals, the FCC imposed a new requirement that refund, waiver, fee reduction and/or payment deferment requests must be submitted online rather than via hardcopy. The FCC also adopted its proposal to use 2010 U.S. Census data in calculating regulatory fees.

With respect to fees, Commercial UHF Television Station fees increased across the board, except for the fee associated with stations in Markets 11-25. In contrast, Commercial VHF Television Station fees decreased across the board, except for those stations in Markets 11-25. The fees for most categories of radio stations increased modestly.

The FCC will release a Public Notice announcing the window for payment of the regulatory fees. As has been the case for the past few years, the FCC no longer mails a hardcopy of regulatory fee assessments to broadcast stations. Instead, stations must make an online filing using the FCC's Fee Filer system reporting the types and fee amounts they are obligated to pay. After submitting that information, stations may pay their fees electronically or by separately submitting payment to the FCC's Lockbox.

Finally, the FCC is re-examining its regulatory fee program and has initiated the first of two separate NPRM proceedings seeking comment on issues related to how the FCC should allocate its regulatory costs among different segments of the communications industry. The FCC expects to release the second NPRM "in the near future" and implement any changes from those rulemakings in time for FY 2013.



If you've already sent in your 2012-2013 dues, thank you! If not, please send them in as soon as you can. If you need another copy of your dues invoice, please email Jim Condon at vab@vab.org. Thanks!

CBC PULLS PLUG ON ANALOG TV

On Tuesday, July 31 (press time for the *VAB Voice*), CBC/Radio-Canada was due to decommission 607 existing analog TV transmitters across the country.

The shutdown will complete the national transition to digital television ordered by Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Most stations made the switch last year, but the CBC owned and operated analog facilities, among others, were able to continue until now. The CBC decided against upgrading all the transmitters to digital, which they say would have cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Instead, just 27 digital transmitters will take the place of those 607 analog transmitters.



An example of the digital transition marketing campaign in Canada

A number of medium to large markets will left out of the digital loop, as they weren't deemed to deserve "mandatory" coverage. Digital CBC English television, for instance, will not replace current analog in London, Kitchener and Sudbury, Ontario, Quebec City, Moncton, NB and many other markets. CBC says the move will save them \$10 million per year, which they have pledged to reinvest in programming.

Go on-line now to www.vab.org to enter your nominations for the **VAB HALL OF FAME** and our other big awards: Distinguished Service, Community Service and Broadcaster of the Year.

You do not have to be a VAB member to make nominations. Hope to see you at our Hall of Fame Banquet, Dec. 1 at the Burlington Hilton!