

Pay-As-You-See Television Head Favored



RECEIVE PAY-TV LESSON—Mrs. Richard Booth and children, Brenda and Dennis, of West Hartford, Conn., receive instruction on use of pay-TV decoder from installer Ed Yost. Now, seven months after the first programs were

aired, such fare as first-run movies, professional sports, opera, and concerts has become nightly entertainment for some 300 families in the Hartford area. (UPI)

By RONALD E. COHEN
United Press International
Hartford, Conn. —(UPI)— One night seven months ago, 300 families sat in front of their television sets to view a new airways phenomenon, pay-as-you-see television.

Now, as a routine evening entertainment, 2,000 Hartford-area families can or cannot, as they wish, twist a couple of knobs and view first-run movies, professional sporting events, ballet, opera and concerts. And Charles O. Wood is beaming.

Wood, general manager of WHCT, the first and presently only subscription television station in the nation, feels the first seven months of a three-year experiment have been "encouraging."

A typical evening of pay-television has included such programs as: "Murder She Said," a mystery running 90 minutes, \$1.00.

"Barabbas," costing \$1.50 for 135 minutes. Or: "A Summer To Remember," costing \$1.00 for 85 minutes.

"Gypsy," costing \$1.50 for 150 minutes. When "Music Man" was televised for \$1.25 it was playing at local theaters for a comparable price.

Wood, emphasizing that "experiment means just that," said the RKO-Zenith-Phonevision system his channel uses is geared to be a "supplemental service" to implement entertainment needs and desires of the viewing public.

He said the aim was not just to make money, but to iron out the wrinkles in technical matters, try to guess what human nature will most desire in the way of programming, and untie the knotty problems in the expectations that someday in the not-too-distant future pay television will be a nationwide reality.

"We're not in a hurry to make the subscription list grow," Wood said. "Of course we're gratified at results so far, which are very encouraging but we feel that we're going to make plenty of mistakes at the start, and they might just as well be mistakes made before a limited viewing audience."

Screen Applicants
Consequently, applicants are carefully screened before the decoder is installed. Officials want reception to be satisfactory, since if the picture comes in bad on regular channels, it will be received the same way on the subscription station.

TV sales, at least during the experimental period, definitely are not "high-pressure."

One of the greatest problems facing officials of the neophyte venture is gauging exposure. Most of the programs are rerun, some several times, particularly movies. Just what is the saturation point?

Wood said that this was one area which could be only found through experiment.

Difficult Problem
"Of course, if we put the same movie on every night of the week, we're bound to get the maximum viewing audience," he said. "But what is the optimum point? Could we get more viewers for more different programs by repeating twice, then switching to another program? It's a difficult problem."

Wood said he thought the apparent success of subscription television depended almost as much on the convenience as upon the programming. He said the convenience of a monthly bill, rather than dropping quarters into a pay-box, was one feature.

Another convenience is the "theatre in the living-room" concept, whereby families can merely switch on the set and see first run movies without having to call in a baby sitter, worry about parking problems, and getting home early.

How about pay TV replacing movies in neighborhood theatres?
"We're trying to replace absolutely nothing," Wood said. "We are trying to pour some new life into some dead media."

He felt the neighborhood theatre was "dead in many areas" and said that as long as "the producers know the film is being seen in someone's living room, and they're getting the same revenue, they'd rather show it in the home than in empty theatres."

Right now, Wood said, the majority of subscribers are of the higher income bracket, and subscription television is more of "a luxury."

"But we expect that to change. More and more middle and lower income families are becoming interested," he said. "And, how long ago was the automobile a luxury? Everything we have must be a luxury before it becomes a necessity."

2 Points To Prove
"We're trying to prove two things with this experiment.

First, we have to convince ourselves that what we're doing will be profitable, and make good business sense.

"Second, we have to convince everyone else that we have a marketable product that is in the public interest."

Wood envisions a network of many different pay television stations across the nation, regulated by the Federal Communications Commission, much as light and power companies are regulated by Public Utilities Commissions. Without overlapping, and with the great number of potential ultra high frequency channels, Wood thinks the entire country someday will be able to pick up a pay-TV station.

Decoder Used
The Hartford experiment works through a decoder. The device is installed for \$10.

Programs cost between 25 cents and \$3, with billing at the end of the month. Subscribers get a bi-monthly magazine with code numbers for different programs. By twisting a few dials, they can dial in the coded program, and the picture is unscrambled.

Wood said that the average amount spent by subscribers each month was "classified" right now. However, he said that "we are very happy with the subscriber spending and the subscribers also appear happy with what it is costing them to see good shows."

Wood said, if each family viewed two programs per week, the operation would be successful.

"Best of all," Wood said, "the programs are uninterrupted by commercials."

Reorganization Plan for the State Land Board Announced

By ZAN STARK
United Press International
Salem —(UPI)— A sweeping reorganization plan for the State Land Board was announced today.

All three members of the board gave their enthusiastic endorsement to the plan, the most complete modernization of the board in the state's history.

The program calls for shifting the work load of the board to state agencies which are expert in the various fields.

Administratively the board would continue to function as at present.

The program will be presented to the legislature for approval.

The board, established by the Oregon Constitution, is made up of Gov. Mark Hatfield, Secretary of State Howell Appling Jr., and State Treasurer Howard Belton.

Transfers Due
Some members of the present board staff would be transferred to other agencies as the work load shifted, Hatfield explained.

The governor stressed the board would continue to function as it now does at the administrative level, and that only the specialized work load would be shifted.

lead to "better administration and possible savings."

The governor said the 1967

Oratorical Contest Starts Tonight

The 26th annual national High School Oratorical contest sponsored by the American Legion will get under way at 8 o'clock tonight at the American Legion Memorial building, 404 Walnut st. Medford.

The two speakers tonight will be Miss Lindsay Darnelle, Medford High school, and Todd Dole, Phoenix school. They will speak on some phase of the Constitution of the United States, emphasizing the duties and obligations of a citizen to the government.

Following the prepared talks, each contestant will give an extemporaneous talk between 4 and six minutes in length.

The district contest will be held March 2 with winners from Jackson, Josephine, Klamath and Lake counties participating.

Cash awards, scholarships and citations will be presented to the winners on each level. First place winner in the national competition receives a \$4,000 scholarship.

The state contest will be held March 9 in Portland with the national finals in Eau Claire, Wisc., May 2.

The contest tonight is open to the public, according to DeVere Taylor, contest district chairman.

reorganization of the Forest Management activities of the board set the precedent for the present proposal.

Example Cited

Hatfield cited these examples of what was planned: Duties relating to mining would be shifted to the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries; veterans' loan activities would be shifted to the Department of Veterans Affairs; forest land duties would be shifted to the Forestry Department; investments would be handled by the state treasurer, as would duties relating to escheated property.

Hatfield said the present nine-member land board staff operates "miniature departments" to handle these functions. He said the major advantage of the proposal would be that these specialized functions would be shifted to state departments which specialize in those activities.

Hatfield, Appling and Belton all said they believed the legislature would approve the plan.

Fire Damages House In Ashland Wednesday

Ashland — Fire caused considerable damage to a residence at 220 Hargadine st. here yesterday, Ashland firemen reported.

The fire started in a trash burner in the kitchen and extended to the attic of the house, the George Rose residence. It was reported at 10:26 a.m.

white as well as green, blue, coral or beige... in the coat of frothy, textured wool that's feather-light... finished with especially careful detail... the side, pockets, the ring collar, self button, flatterer for town, resort, travel... 8 to 16... second floor... just one of a beautiful collection at

40.

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