

THE RADIO WAVE  
"Keeping Radio People in Touch"

7<sup>TH</sup>. December 2003

Issue #23

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By subscription only! Welcome to the twenty-third issue of  
THE RADIO WAVE  
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SPONSORSHIP NOTICE (SHAMELESS PERSONAL PLUG)  
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FOR RADIO WAVE READERS WHO LIVE NEAR SYDNEY AUSTRALIA  
Radio schools are not all the same. As you investigate each  
school, it will become quite obvious that each school offers  
different levels of training in radio broadcasting.

Unfortunately, some radio schools, amount to nothing more  
than social gatherings with little or no time devoted to  
the student's true needs and expectations, often using outdated  
or poorly functioning equipment.

Whilst other schools, which may be affiliated with a university,  
are excellent, utilising today's equipment, but, beyond the  
reach of most students because of their limited annual intake,  
geographic location or high entry fees.

An interesting exercise is on the home page of our radio  
school site where you can "rate a radio school"

Please note the new URL for the school.

[www.radioschool.biz](http://www.radioschool.biz)

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G'DAY.  
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This is our final issue for 2003.

To be honest I never thought we'd make it this far.

Reason being my professional life has become kinda busy.  
Not my personal life because I don't have one. Just as  
well I'm not married! (anymore x 3)

So I keep saying to myself (I'm a good listener) "why are  
you spending all this financially unproductive time writing  
this newsletter when there is so much other stuff to do?"

Then I receive a whole lot of positive feedback from my  
subscribers plus interesting reactions to some of the  
stories and I realise that we do have something good here  
so I keep going.

Encouragingly we have a whole lot of new subscribers so a  
very special welcome to you guys.

This newsletter is aimed at people who'd like to be in radio,  
newbies who've just started and full-time professionals.

Any comments you have about anything you read here please  
let me have them.

Anything you need help or advice with...ask. If I can't  
provide the answer I'll find someone who can.

If you'd like to contribute an article...you're welcome.

You can reach me at [ian@allaboutradio.net](mailto:ian@allaboutradio.net)

Meantime may I wish you and yours a truly happy Christmas  
season and a vastly improved New Year.

And for those of us who'll be working through the holiday  
season...just remember you aren't alone. The industry owes  
us a lot. Yeah. I know. They won't pay!

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GREGG WHITESIDE...AAHHH! NO MORE! DEFINITELY!  
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I'm still getting the occasional email asking me what Gregg  
Whiteside said in the corridors of classical station WQXR  
New York to get him the sack. I DON'T KNOW! NO-ONE KNOWS!

e.g. this e-mail: "I looked further into this and apparently  
it was a remark made to Sam Hall privately that was overheard  
and construed to be anti-Semitic.

Hall has enough experience in reading the news for decades  
and should have advised Whiteside to be open about the remark

and apologize for it. But everyone makes mistakes and the Times' self-righteous conduct is bizarre and unfortunate.

Michael Kalman"

If you want to sign the petition to get him back it's at <http://www.petitiononline.com/gwp3wqxr/petition.html>

Please bring this guy back! There are too many people hurting out there! I've never heard on air him but he must have been a total star!

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OK..WHILE WE'RE AT IT...WHAT ELSE IS IN THE MAILBAG?  
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Hi Ian,

I was wondering if in the next issue of the radio wave you could give a plug to a project I'm working on.

I trying to create a website for people who are in community radio who help each other to create great sounding by sharing their skills and knowledge.

please visit <http://home.iprimus.com.au/dkaarma/radioexchange> for more info.

Cheers

Daniel Kaarma  
[dkaarma@iprimus.com.au](mailto:dkaarma@iprimus.com.au)

COMMENT: This is a terrific idea and I hope it happens, Daniel. Keep in touch.

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AND MORE MAIL  
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If you were subscribing last February you may recall I ran a story about The Last Radio Station which, in fact, is a great little internet station that chucks formats out the window and plays what it likes.

Programmers would call this "eclectic" or something.

Well, it took 10 months but the folks behind the project got to find out about the mention and I received this e-mail...

Mr. McRae

Thanks for the recent mention of The Last Radio Station in the February issue of your newsletter. I was not aware of it until I did a Google search on the LRS just for kicks and your site came up.

Back in February we were keeping rather irregular hours with the webcast, which mostly operated during the overnight hours. However, we have since shifted our online hours

to 3 PM eastern USA time until whenever.

Most people don't keep vampire hours so we have found this increases our listenership somewhat. We have received much positive response from online listeners who enjoy our format-less presentation.

If you would like to check us out, we can be heard directly from the server at:

<http://66.26.52.16:8000/>

Note the new IP address. If you'd like to take the grand tour, go to:

<http://home.nc.rr.com/gttyson/lastradio.html>

Sorry we weren't there when you last tried to hear us, but if you'll hit the site after 3 PM eastern USA time you should get an earful most any day of the week.

Keith Lake  
The Last Radio Station

COMMENT: Well, even if they're not on the air when you visit, the web site is worth a cruise especially the interview with Keith.

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AND MAIL RE. MAIL  
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You mightn't be familiar with the market's mentioned here but you'll get the message in this edited email from Marcus Fitzgerald.

I couldn't agree more with David Hague's comments on Sydney radio. His comment: "it mystifies me that when these current 'rock' stations create their Top 100 countdowns or compile their top album lists, they don't seem to get the hint from the voters (the public) there IS music we would like to hear more of"

That's easily explained isn't it? Stations take no notice of feedback like that - the only feedback they follow is the misguided tracking that most stations are addicted on while they loose perspective of the wider market.

I used to go on holidays and look forward to Sydney radio (I live in Brisbane) - but this time, I felt as if the market had burnt itself out and that left me feeling sad - not for myself - but for radio in general. I ended up station surfing listening out for the announcer breaks and other station elements.

Yes, AC Nielsen do surveys that prospective/current clients seem to accept, but I wonder what the reaction would be if a survey was done on if prospective/current listeners of

Sydney (and surrounds) commercial radio were actually happy/satisfied with what they had to listen to.

More stations is not the answer - that's just asking for more of the same.

Kind regards,  
Marcus Fitz-Gerald

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BICYCLISTS VERSUS CLEAR CHANNEL  
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The story about bicyclists being upset by on-air comments made the major wire services. Presenters suggested that drivers should throw bottles at cyclists or hit them with open car doors.

The weird thing was that the comments were made in three separate U.S. markets on three separate radio stations. The only common denominator was that they were all Clear Channel outlets.

CLEVELAND, Ohio (AP) --Bicyclists are demanding that the nation's largest radio group be punished because disc jockeys at three stations made on-air comments they say encouraged drivers to throw bottles at bike riders or hit them with open car doors.

They say the morning show hosts at Clear Channel Communications stations in Cleveland, Houston and Raleigh, North Carolina, also suggested motorists blast horns at cyclists, and speed past them and slam on their brakes in front of them.

"DJs encouraging the masses to hurt people in any form is insipid, and should not go unpunished," said Edwin D. Reeves, 30, a cyclist and ceramic engineer in St. Louis.

The company won't release transcripts or tapes of the broadcasts, but the three stations apologized on the air and Clear Channel donated \$10,000 and air time to promote bicycle safety.

The comments started June 30 on WMJI in Cleveland when one of the morning show personalities complained that a group of bicyclists had held him up in traffic near his home.

"The other guys started chiming in," said listener Don Barnett, service manager at Century Cycles in Medina. "Then it escalated. People started calling in."

Similar remarks came weeks later on WDCG-FM in Raleigh and KLOL-FM in Houston.

Lois Cowan, 42, who owns the Century Cycles shops in the Cleveland area, filed a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission asking it to fine the company or take away the licenses of the three stations.

"They shouldn't be advocating things that kill people," Cowan said.

She says she's received more than 5,000 e-mails from cyclists about the issue.

Dorothy Nance of Raleigh said she and her husband sold their Clear Channel stock after she heard the bicycle comments on WDCG on September 22.

Nance said the announcers were "egging listeners on, by encouraging harm to cyclists." Suggestions included throwing soft drink bottles, she said.

Thomas F. Valone, owner of seven outdoor clothing and equipment stores in North Carolina, pulled "a few thousand dollars" worth of advertising from the Raleigh station because of the comments.

FCC lawyers refuse to comment on specific complaints.

"We got a complaint about that and we are acting on that," FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell told the cyclists. (End of story)

Later, the CEO of Clear Channel issued a further apology in a letter to the League of American Bicyclists. It said the company had taken disciplinary action (including one firing) and that its stations would be launching a road safety campaign.

Personally I can understand the frustrations that probably caused the comments. In Sydney, once a month, a large group of cyclists who call themselves Critical Mass, cross the Harbour Bridge at the evening peak time tying up traffic and causing all sorts of hassles.

Apparently they're making some sort of point but no-one seems to know precisely what it is. Why the police let them get away with it is another mystery. However, every time it happens the air-waves are full of people making very similar comments to those made in America.

As far as I know no apologies have been made and no-one's been fired. Nor should they be.

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SEX IN CHURCH HAS MASS DISAPPROVAL.  
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You may remember the now infamous stunt on the Opie and Anthony Show where a couple were dared to have sex in a church.

Well, the end result is that Loretta Harper, the woman involved in the incident in St. Patrick's Cathedral, has been sentenced to five days community service for disorderly conduct.

Meanwhile the comic Paul Mercurio, who reported the play-by-play before he got involved in a confrontation with church staff and the police, got seven days community service.

The only person to have escaped the long arm of the law is Loretta's boyfriend who apparently died in September.

It would have been a nice touch if the funeral had been held at St. Patrick's.

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BEACHED WHALES ARE ONE THING BUT - BEACHED CHICKENS?  
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Another silly radio station stunt gone wrong. This one on the Gold Coast. If you don't know, the Gold Coast is a premier Australian coastal resort. A bit like Waikiki. A new FM station has just opened in the market and the incumbents are panicking.

I can just hear the conversation at their "think-tank" meeting. "What we need is a publicity stunt. I know! Let's dump frozen chickens everywhere and claim it's nothing to do with us. Har-har har!"

Here's the story as reported in The Gold Coast Bulletin.

I AM glad to see that the radio station Sea FM admitted to The Bulletin responsibility for the disgraceful stunt they pulled on Tuesday morning, when they dumped 200 rotten chickens on our beautiful beaches.

They sure had a different story when my family got into contact with them.

I was told by two different employees at Sea FM that they had nothing to do with the stunt and I was wasting my time talking to them about it; one of them actually hung up on me.

Sea FM if this is your idea of a joke. I'll be listening to a different station in future.

Jenny Waterman            Benowa

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This letter to the editor reflects the views of the majority of the GC public who were outraged by SEA FM's irresponsible and ill-thought action of dumping frozen chickens at various sites.

600 in the Tweed River, 100 @ Northcliffe Beach and 100 @ Main Beach.

This is all after very destructive storms and all 'clean-up' organisations were focussed on helping clean up public and private properties - they then had to divert some attention to this very childish act.

Think of how many homeless and needy people could've benefited from all those chickens. What a slap in the face to all charity

organisations to waste all that perfectly good food, so many deserving people could've benefited.

Don't forget the environmental/health risk. The rivers and beaches already were coping with stormwater downfall and then were burdened with the pollution of all those chickens.

SEA FM initially refused to pay for clean up and then took a long while to apologise.

Northcliffe is my home beach when I'm down at the Coast and I can assure you all, the club members are none too happy at all with SEA FM's incomprehensible actions.

SEA FM desperately thought this would win them some listeners, how wrong, it's only created the biggest PR disaster in a long while by an Australian radio station.

Yet another negative act from the paranoid, unimaginative "leaders" of 90.9 SEA FM.

Highly disappointing.

The Listener  
(End of story)

Reminds me of another infamous stunt by an American radio station that threw a number of turkeys out of a helicopter not realising that turkeys can't fly!

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ANOTHER SILLY STUNT.  
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Rock station WBAB/FM-Long Island is copping backlash from listeners after morning drive presenter John Parise told kids that Santa is none other than mom and dad.

The station had been promoting a big announcement at 7:20am. It was big all right. John Parise told children to look for presents at home and explained the impossibility of one man delivering gifts across the world.

PD John Olsen said he reviews the content of all shows before they air. "We may not agree with everything," he told New York Newsday, "but we support their right to free speech - even if it may cause some controversy."

Parise said he's not sorry for what he said but how he said it.

It's not been decided if he'll be punished but I bet he's on Santa's "naughty" list!

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...AND SILLY STUNT NUMBER THREE  
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In the UK the Radio Authority is investigating GALAXY 102.2 in BIRMINGHAM for a "Bank It or Burn It" contest. This ended up with the station, upon a listeners' vote, burning £5,000.

instead of giving it to a listener for "a boob job and hair extensions."

The stunt drew complaints and the Church of England is also reportedly considering a complaint after the station declined to give the cash to charity instead.

How often do we hear station management saying: "Do you think we have money to burn?" Well, in this case, it looks like they did!

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A STERN WARNING  
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Howard Stern went on the Late Show with David Letterman and attacked the radio industry...again.

"Media Investors Report" says: "Three different times, [Stern] came back to the subject until he made his point that radio hasn't changed creatively while radio advertising has stooped to new levels in its desperation for money. While Stern was biting the hand that feeds him, his comments should not fall on deaf ears."

Howard Stern said: "Radio hasn't changed - it's still a horrible medium. Look at what's happened. Nothing has progressed in radio. I'm still fantastic. I'm still doing my thing. But we have Rush Limbaugh on heroin or a heroin substitute, which really took me by surprise. Something's finally happened in radio."

He also said the radio business is hurting. "When I first got to my radio station, they wouldn't even take an advertisement from Playboy. They considered that too pornographic."

"We had a product on the other day [that makes a man's] buttocks smell better. It's a cream that you put on. So I go to the GM of our radio station and I said, 'Have things gotten this bad that this is what we're up to?' And he said, 'Yeah it's gotten bad.' It's very difficult to make a living in radio."

Mind you Howard Stern hasn't done too badly out of it.

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APPLE'S i-TUNES HAS APPEAL.  
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Topping the list of Time Magazine's "Coolest Inventions of 2003 was...(no, it was not President Bush's claim of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq)...Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store.

Time Mag. explained its choice by saying that the download service found "a middle ground between record labels and digital pirates."

True to form Steve Job's competitors immediately jumped on the bandwagon.

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NADER NUKES NETWORKING.  
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Former Green Party presidential candidate and consumer advocate Ralph Nader says he will reveal his specific plan to reverse radio consolidation in a speech this week at Forecast 2004. The conference is being held by Radio Ink in New York.

The speech will be so contentious he's requested two body guards.

Radio Ink is saying that, if successful, Nader's actions could bring devastation to the industry. Radio stocks could plummet.

Radio Ink is also saying this because it's a great promotion for the event.

However, the question does arise can Ralph Nader rip broadcast licenses from the hands of radio's biggest companies?

Can America's biggest consumer advocate force Congress to reverse radio consolidation? It may seem far-fetched, but when broadcasters hear his specific plan to unwind deregulation, it will send shockwaves throughout the industry.

In fact Ralph Nader recently filed petitions to the FCC to deny renewal of 63 Clear Channel broadcast licenses.

But Clear Channel is not his only target. Every consolidated radio company is a potential target. Mr. Nader says he intends to return radio to "the public interest," and claims he will take this fight all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary.

The conference is December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. so by the time you read this the merde may have hit the fan!

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AND HERE'S SOMEBODY ELSE WITH THE SAME PLAN  
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Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean has said that, if elected President, he'd "break up giant media enterprises."

He said, "There's too much penetration by single corporations in media markets all over this country. We need locally owned radio stations. There are only two or three radio stations left in Vermont where you can get local news anymore."

I betcha you won't be hearing any "Howard Dean for President" messages on Clear Channel!"

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AND A PLAN THAT BITES THE DUST.  
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A most bizarre plan was announced by fierce Sydney talk radio rivals Radio 2UE and 2GB.

For those who don't know the market these two have been competitors for years with 2UE always well ahead of 2GB. That is until 2GB, realising they could never win, decided that, rather than try to beat them they would become them.

So they waved the cheque book with a few incentives thrown in and got a number of 2UE's high-profile presenters to switch allegiances. These included top-rating breakfast personality Alan Jones and sports and talk-back personality Ray Hadley.

This worked spectacularly for 2GB who very quickly became Sydney's number one station.

Then came the announcement that the two stations were looking at merging their news, sales and engineering operations and both would finish up in the same building.

When the announcement of the 2UE/2GB newsroom merger was made to 2UE staff there were tears in the newsroom as bewildered reporters wondered about their jobs and about their ability to compete with their rival under the new arrangement.

Other reaction included a strong response from the Media Alliance's Chris Warren, who believed the joint venture should be investigated, and a warning from the Australian Broadcasting Authority that they will "look closely" at the proposal.

Anyway after a firestorm of opposition, including political and listener reaction, the merger was called off.

Unless there was a hidden agenda we don't know about it's difficult to understand how anybody in their right mind could really believe such a merger would work.

Meantime, 2UE now has its own problems. JOHN LAWS has been accused by the ABA with 19 violations of ABA rules about sponsor identification, which could earn the station up to \$1 million in fines.

The breaches appear fairly minor with John saying "our sponsor" instead of "my sponsor," but it's really a case of "here we go again" after a previous pay-for-talk case involving 2UE, LAWS, and former 2UE host (now at 2GB) ALAN JONES.

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TOP RADIO PREP SITES  
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This is a terrific alternative to regular encyclopaedias: WIKIPEDIA is a free resource that is not only available for your use but can be edited by you, too.

It's multilingual and the great thing is that it's continually building and updating. When you need quick information, it's another place to go.

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

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A FINAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR  
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The plan is to grow the list of people taking this e-letter,

and encourage interactivity from our readers.

To do this I need your help.

If there is anyone you know either in or outside the radio industry who would like to receive THE RADIO WAVE please simply ask to be subscribed by sending a blank e-mail to:

[radiowave@allaboutradio.net](mailto:radiowave@allaboutradio.net)

As you know it's free and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Hey...if every subscriber signed one other person on we'd double our base overnight. The more people we have the more clout we can build in the industry.

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