

Garziglia, John

From: Tom Taylor [tom@radio-info.com]
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2009 4:01 AM
To: Garziglia, John
Subject: Taylor on Radio-Info : They feel your pain

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by Tom Taylor | tom@in3media.com | 609.883.3321

Friday, January 30th 2009

They feel your pain



The "5% Solution" for salary cuts is spreading to at least one Citadel cluster.

I won't name the cluster, but I'm told the mandatory 5% salary reductions for all employees include – surprisingly – those with contracts. Yesterday T-R-I broke the news about Salem Communications' companywide 5% cut for all employees.

Nobody's happy to see less green in their paychecks, but if it's

really that important to the company staying out of trouble with lenders – or preventing layoffs – most folks understand that. It was nice to see top executives at Salem set an example by accepting a 10% reduction. Though CEO Ed Atsinger has enjoyed some handsome pay packages over the years, and he and his partner Stu Epperson own various buildings and pieces of land that they lease to Salem. That amounted to about \$1.2 million in payments for 2007. Also in 2007, Salem said the company "rents aircraft from a company which is owned by" Atsinger, in a deal cleared by the board's independent members. In 2007, Salem paid Atsinger's aircraft company \$368,000 in hourly rentals. But I'm sure Atsinger's doing less flying now. A lot of that airtime was probably for Salem's buying and selling activities - and nobody's doing much of that.

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Saga's 1-for-4 reverse stock split goes off according to plan.

Its "SGA" stock split Wednesday night, and the stock that had closed Wednesday at \$1.03 a share closed yesterday at \$3.93. Looking at that \$1.03, I'd say Saga just made it in time. It seems to have assured itself of a comfortable ride above the New York Stock Exchange's fussy minimums about stock price and market cap. That \$3.93 closing price is at the bottom of yesterday's trading range, though – it varied between a high of \$4.10 and a low of \$3.91. Trading volume was only a bit higher than usual, after adjusting for the split. Ed Christian and CFO Sam Bush probably wanted this reverse split to be a non-event, and it was. Meanwhile, investor Daniel Tisch scarfed up another 60,000 or so shares at a buck apiece, just before the split. Tisch thus held over 1.5 million shares of Saga before Wednesday night's split.



O'REILLY

Bill O'Reilly's leaving radio – partly to concentrate on harvesting more from BillOReilly.com.

O'Reilly claims he just doesn't have time for his lucrative daily radio show because he's so busy on Fox News Channel with "The O'Reilly Factor." But a T-R-I reader observes that what really has

Bill's attention are the plans for his own website and its premium membership, at \$49.95 a year. Here's the posting – "just a few of the key features we'll be rolling out over the next few months – The Factor 'post-game' web show. Immediately after The Factor has wrapped up for the night, Bill will analyze and evaluate each show exclusively for Premium members." That will be on-demand, for access any time. Then there's this – "Expanded backstage conversation webcasts." Bill currently does one of these a week but will expand that to three times weekly. That's "three times as many opportunities to have your questions answered directly by Bill. Remember, Bill answers questions only from Premium Members." There's also exclusive on-demand access to the two daily "Talking Points Memo" shorts that Bill will supply to Westwood, and a searchable archive of Radio Factor shows back to 2005. Westwood's then-CEO Joel Hollander put O'Reilly into radio syndication in the Spring of 2002 and he's leaving at the end of February – but he's seen the power of one-to-one contact on the web, and he loves the revenue possibilities.



BRANDMEIER

How much is Chicago's Jonathan Brandmeier worth in today's marketplace?

His services currently command about \$1.2 million a year at Emmis' "Loop" WLUP (97.9). So says [Sun-Times writer Lewis Lazare](#), who reports that the multi-year deal Johnny B. signed in 2005 is up in March. Agent John Malevitis will be fully earning his commission on the renewal, because Lazare quotes somebody in


the Chicago radio community who thinks Emmis might not even offer one-third of the current deal – maybe \$400,000. And is that even enough to persuade Brandmeier to get up so early? It's not that the Loop doesn't appreciate him. GM Marv Nyren says Jonathan "is really better than all those who have come and gone in Chicago." Will Emmis eventually offer enough to keep this special talent on the reservation? The Chicago morning-show scene is already many dollars lighter on the talent front. Though CBS is still paying off the contracts for Eddie & JoBo, and WLS recently resigned Don Wade and Roma.

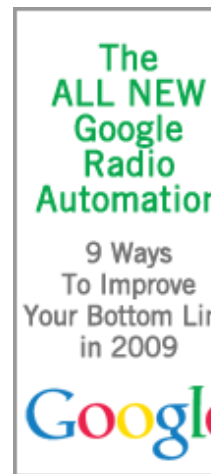
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Univision installs its “Recuerdo” Spanish AC format on two FMs around Chicago.

It can be highly entertaining to watch the message boards at Radio-Info.com in real time – like late Wednesday night, when somebody on the Chicago board was posting the report about WVIV and WVIX ditching the “La Kalle” (“Street”) format just as it happened. Here’s the story - Univision shifted the bilingual “La Kalle” urban format (but not the name) off of its WVIV, Highland Park (103.1) and WVIX, Joliet (93.5) simulcast, and onto another FM it owns. That’s WPPN, Des Plaines, IL at 106.7, and it’s no longer Spanish adult hits “Pasion.” While WVIV and WVIX are now doing Univision’s Spanish adult contemporary “Recuerdo”, with a decidedly older appeal than “La Kalle.” The Chicago message board conversation is here. 



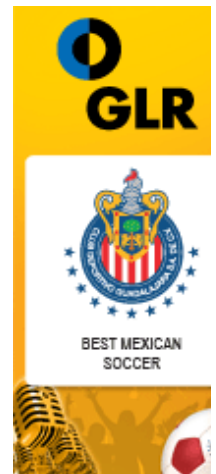
A new Spanish FM in Salt Lake City, as Clear Channel flips KTMY from country to “La Preciosa.”

Salt Lake’s becoming more diversified – in fact, your old mental picture of the market probably needs updating. But it’s still not exactly McAllen-Brownsville or El Paso when it comes to Hispanic percentages, so Clear Channel’s ahead of the population curve with this new Spanish adult hits “La Preciosa” on KTMY at 105.7. The Clear Channel-produced format, with the new Humberto Luna morning show, relies on a core of regional Mexican music, and that fits the migration patterns along the Wasatch Front. The Centerville, Utah-licensed Class C has sported a number of formats lately – country since November 2007, but classic hits and modern rock before that.



The ongoing nervousness at Clear Channel stations extends to GMs...

The company won’t say that the 1,850 Inauguration Day hits were the end of the personnel cuts, and the recession is clearly still driving everybody’s business plans. (Or what’s left of those plans.) But I got this note about one market manager who thinks the strict numbers-driven thinking out of San Antonio (and Bain Consulting in Boston) will eventually reduce the number of market managers. Is this guy being paranoid? He says “If you work in a market less than 100 miles from another CC market and there is someone in that other market doing the same job as you – it’s a horse race. One of you could be spending lots of time up close and personal with the 100 miles between the markets.” That manager says I’m “preparing for Rounds #2 and #3” of layoffs.



As for the January 20 black-letter day itself...

One T-R-I reader says Clear Channel “still has my personal stuff... we were told it would be inventoried and then returned” after he left the building that fateful day. But that hasn’t happened and he’s already consulted an attorney. From the stories I can piece together, the tense business of laying off great numbers of people

was guided by specific instructions from San Antonio. As T-R-I has said before, the company doesn't want to leave itself open to legal problems by straying outside the do-what-you-gotta-do guidelines for terminations. In some markets, that was done by managers with empathy and warmth. But not in other places.

North of Seattle, the Skotdals' persistence pays off, and they'll get to build more AM towers.

S-R Broadcasting outlasted years of community protests and legal maneuvers on its last project – for an engineering upgrade for “Northsound 1380” KRKO, Everett. After that, they plunged into getting the local approvals to build out towers for a completely new AM station at 1520. Work was halted in October by a hearing examiner, after some locals alarmed about the potential for health problems from over-exposure to RF. Now the Snohomish County Council has reversed its own decision and said the tower-building may continue. It was a 3-2 vote, though – and the opponents are still out there. The [Seattle Times](#) says an appeal of the latest County Council decision seems likely.



Perhaps broadcasters will dodge the bullet on the FCC's “Localism” push – because of the costs.

D.C. legal guy John Garziglia tells me “It is doubtful that either modified main studio rules or 24/7 personnel coverage will be required [under the new Obama administration], as such a

dramatic increase in the costs of doing business is not likely to be countenanced by either Congress or the Administration. [But] the enhanced disclosure obligations, and possibly advisory boards, are more likely to become law. Neither can be argued against on an economic basis, and the FCC will also likely be moving toward much stricter license renewal application standards. Both enhanced-disclosure, which is a multi-part quarterly questionnaire on programming to replace the current issues/programs lists, and advisory boards, go a long ways toward giving the public information on licensee performance which will be measured in one way or another during the next license renewal cycle. Democratic Commissioners Copps and Adelstein are likely to drive the radio broadcasting agenda in the short term, because they are intimately familiar with current radio issues, and it is likely that the new Chairman will put his focus on newer technologies such as universal broadband. The new Chairman is no neophyte on broadcasting issues, however, having previously served at the FCC, and having the wide technology background he brings now to broadcast regulation.”

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» [Arbitron](#) Fall 2008 Quarterly Ratings

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90. Des Moines - 516,400

158. Myrtle Beach, SC - 278,600

210. Cedar Rapids - 172,000

213. Hilton Head, SC - 172,100

217. Florence, SC - 167,200

222. Las Cruces, NM - 165,400

262. Kalispell-Flathead Valley, MT - 117,400

Click on the city to review recently released ratings. View a complete list of Arbitron markets [here](#).

» Wheeling & Dealing

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In Southwestern Colorado, nine-month-old classic rock KZBR, La Jara (97.1) sell for \$260,000. Seller is Lendsi Radio (Lina Jones) and the buyer is East Side Broadcasting (William & Kristen Spears). KZBR is a Class C3 that Mississippi-based Jones won in the December 2004 FCC Auction #37. She also now owns WVBG-FM, Redwood, MS at 105.5 – which she won in the same auction. You know how much I love to check out the auction price in such cases, and this Colorado deal is one time when the seller makes some money. Lina Jones paid the FCC a net amount of \$140,400 after the 35% bidding credit, and she got the station on the air in April 2008. Her buyers (the Spears) own KWUF-AM/FM in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, located about 60 miles from La Jara. This sale is brokered by Gordon Rice.

» Sound Bites

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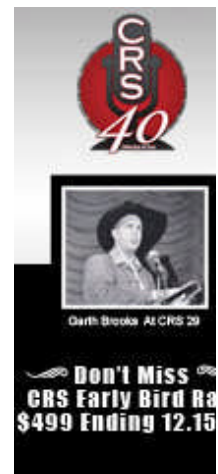
Renda stops streaming two Pittsburgh stations because of the expense, says the [PBRTV.com](#) site. The stations pulled

soft AC WSSH (99.7) and standards WJAS (1320) down on January 1 “due to escalating royalty fees for online streaming broadcasts.” Sister WMNY (1360) – doing business talk – continues to stream.

Katz Advantage turns the lights on in Dallas, Detroit and Minneapolis, with new Vice President/Managers in each market. Katz Advantage President Bonnie Press says they’ll preside over offices that reach out to “brand managers and national marketers on ways to most effectively employ radio in their advertising plans.” 20-year Katz guy Bill Klotz gets Detroit, Mike Krejci takes Dallas and Bob Ruhland is hired (from Treasure Island Resort and Casino) for Minneapolis.



Charlotte-area talk station WDYT (1220) can’t take the economy, and goes dark. Owner and longtime Charlotte air personality Danny Fontana tells the [Observer](#) “I think our format was the right one, but the economic conditions right now are the



worst I've ever seen." Fontana's CRN Communications might return with a different format – or sell. WDYT, Kings Mountain, NC posted a 0.5 share in the Fall Arbitrons.

» [Faces on the Radio](#)

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Dana Marshall is no longer programming Greater Media's modern rock WBOS, Boston (92.9). She tells the [Globe](#) "I'll miss those who I did great radio with, and look forward to the next adventure." But there's the big picture – "February marks five years free of breast cancer, so even this bad news can't overshadow that." Ken West will double-team, serving both as PD of classic hits WROR-FM (105.7) and also now WBOS.



Mark & Mercedes enter the Sacramento market with their morning show – the one that originates at a CBS station in another market. They're based at CBS-owned KMXB (94.1) in Las Vegas and on Monday they'll debut on modern AC "Zone" KZZO (100.5) in Sacramento.



Scott Slade of news/talk WSB, Atlanta (750) broke his left leg Wednesday night, sorry to say. The morning-show host was "carrying a 100-pound bag of feed and a bucket to the barn", says the [Journal Constitution](#), and will be "out of commission for at least a few days while getting surgery." Scott's got horses – so hopefully somebody else will be feeding them.

Sins: from yesterday's story about the sale of KPIO (1570) in Loveland, Colorado – we showed the wrong "Loveland", say T-R-I readers Skip Joeckel and Lester St. James ("I'm sure you'll hear from tons of Coloradans" about the mixup between Loveland and Loveland Pass). Got a cogent comment, blinding insight, confidential newstip? I'm at Tom@in3media.com - and hope you enjoy your weekend. Tom Taylor



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