

Holland Cooke Newsletter • June '09

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“Presume you will be fired.”

Hopefully you won't be. But look no further than the trade press...every...single...day. The-bigger-the-market, the-bigger-the-company-you-work-for, the-bigger-your-salary, the-bigger-the-bull's-eye on your forehead.

Don't shoot the messenger, OK? I'm just trying to help, and I will do so as-specifically-as-time-permits, on Saturday, June 6, at Talkers magazine's 12th annual New Media Seminar in New York (www.talkers.com). If you just fished-this-out-of your registration bag there, try NOT to take a check-messages/cigarette/bathroom break just before lunch. That's when I will present "Life After Radio: Your Personal Plan B." If you couldn't join us, hit www.HollandCooke.com, about a week later.

NOW DO YOU BELIEVE ME ABOUT FM TALK?

Last month, Seattle, Chattanooga, Fresno, and Tyler TX each got their SECOND FM News/Talk stations.

Why now, after a dozen years of "FM Talk"/"Hot Talk" hype fail to find traction? Four reasons:

1. **Bankers.** Until recently, if you asked them, they'd tell you that music = FM and Talk = AM. Now, they just want their money.
2. **Music radio's business model is now dubious.**
 - a) How many songs are on your iPod? How many commercials?
 - b) As the threat of music royalty fees looms, jittery owners tell me, HUNDREDS of music stations could go Talk OVERNIGHT.
3. **Smart station owners aren't waiting to go Talk.** In many markets, there's enough "name" syndicated longform programming available for one new talker...but not two.
4. **Less-smart owners are screwed.** Sometimes the right thing happens for the wrong reason. There should be more News/Talk/Sports on FM, so this popular, Sales-friendly programming can cover the entire market the entire year, not just during an AM station's day pattern...and because lots of people just don't use AM radio. Those are "the right reasons." Meanwhile, with mega-owners in various stages of non-payment of mega-mortgages to unamused lenders, taking-a-music-FM's-expenses-to-zero, by simulcasting the pre-existing News/Talk/Sports AM, is attractive.

Now's-the-time for FM Talk, we are hearing from, among others, longtime and respected AM Talk radio figure Phil Boyce, who is now representing the Talk Radio Network line-up available in many markets.

- He's darn right! Music radio owners who snooze, while over-thinking the Talk opportunity, while the music paradigm continues to deteriorate, will lose a window-of-opportunity: the interval after existing available longform gets snapped-up, and until the next crop of now-successful local hosts graduates to syndication.
- **CAUTION:** There's LOTS-more-to launching a station than just cobbling-together a schedule of available shows.

Several music stations I am in-the-process-of flipping-to-Talk will sound like local stations, no matter how little local programming is in the mix. That's not something a syndicator can provide.

- In most cases, we emphasize apolitical shows, since "The I'm-Right-You're-Wrong Show" is already being done-to-death by the incumbent stations we challenge. We're offering listeners "Survival Information, for the way things are now."™ Think Dave Ramsey, Clark Howard, Dr. Laura, Dr. Joy Browne. Weekends are the-opposite-of Limbaugh/Hannity re-runs.
- Imaging will be LOTS-less barking/over-produced/self-congratulatory/station-centric than the typical stuff across the street. We'll be conversational, engaging, helpful, and inviting. Local listeners will hear local voices, even within national shows; and they will understand that they can "CHECK-IN FOR A QUICK NEWS UPDATE, THROUGHOUT YOUR BUSY DAY."
- And in each of these situations, I am spending LOTS of time with Sales...once we can get the reps to stop doing cartwheels.

Will we run the incumbent News/Talk station off the road? Nah. Not right away anyway. But we're throwing a few nails under their tires. And we'll snap-up the best available programming while it's still available.

If you missed "The Coming Talk Radio Tsunami" which I wrote for Inside Radio, you can download it at www.HollandCooke.com

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5 IDEAS IN 5 MINUTES

Times-being-what-they-are, last month's 5-in-5 were all revenue-producing ideas I picked up at the NAB2009 in Las Vegas the month before. If you missed my convention notes, see back page. New month, new convention. For the several hundred Talk hosts reading this newsletter for the first time: These pertain to your work...

1. Invite listeners to "Swap links?" with your web site.

Cheery copy on your page should point out that, by doing so, "We'll both Google better!"

2. Unless you're targeting pre-teens, expunge the word "LIKE" from your vocabulary.

Just eavesdrop, in-your-daily-travels...which you should be doing in any event, to hear vox populi, and tune-into what-people-are-talking-about.

When you do, you will fear for America's youth. Kids are, like, unable to finish a complete sentence, without, like, saying..."like," often multiple times, like, PER sentence.

Think I'm exaggerating? Listen for this. Want to sound like that?

3. DON'T begin your show with a-list-of-what-you're-planning-to-talk-about today.

Warning to regular readers of this newsletter: This'll be familiar HC lore...

- The listeners local advertisers want to reach most are BUSY people, high-TSL in-car users. Every time they stop that car, they take money out of their pockets. Got that picture?
- These folks have their own To-Do lists, and theirs are probably longer than yours. You get to sit still for 3 or 4 hours. So it's your job to keep-up-with them, not vice-versa. Everything we do needs to be as helpful, useful, and listener-centric as possible; and succinctly offered. Boastful promos which pronounce you "THE TRAFFIC LEADER" cut-through-the-clutter less than less-station-centric language like "BECAUSE ONE TRAFFIC JAM CAN JAM-UP YOUR WHOLE DAY..."

Logical enough, right? Yet, too typically, hosts I hear in my wearying travels sound like they think listeners are sitting remarkably still, taking notes on graph paper. The show, or the hour, begins with a-list-of-all-the-things-I'll-be-getting-to-over-the-next-several-hours. News flash: YOU might be the only person who will hear your whole show. Anyone else who does might be too sedentary to be attractive to advertisers.

- Applause for show prep! DO go in with enough material for your entire show (and then some, just in case). DON'T recite the whole list in your open. It sounds more onerous and self-centered than you realize; and nobody's taking dictation.
- Tell listeners whassup RIGHT NOW, the call-in proposition you're inviting them to weigh-in-on RIGHT NOW. And, as you announce the call-in number S-L-O-W-L-Y, say "CALL ME RIGHT NOW."
- And – QUICKLY – tease one other thing-they'll-want-to-stick-around-for no-more-than-an-hour-later, i.e., if your show begins at 2PM: "WHEN I HEARD THE NEWS THIS MORNING THAT GEORGE CARLIN DIED, I WENT LOOKING FOR THE TAPE OF MY INTERVIEW WITH HIM LAST YEAR. AND WHEN I FOUND IT, I HEARD SOMETHING THAT GAVE ME CHILLS. WAIT'LL YOU HEAR WHAT HE PREDICTED...RIGHT AFTER THE NEWS AT THREE. BUT FIRST, THIS HOUR..."
- Set the bar real high for teasing what's-coming-up an-hour-and-a-half-or-longer yonder, when many listening now may no longer be near radio. "AND RIGHT-AFTER THE NEWS AT FOUR, GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON WILL BE HERE TO ANNOUNCE ANOTHER MOVIE THAT'LL BE FILMING HERE SOON. SO IF YOU MISSED-OUT ON AN EXTRA ROLE IN 'TERMINATOR 4' OR 'SUNSHINE CLEANING,' THIS COULD BE YOUR CASTING CALL."

Don't take my word for this! Try it. You will like the results.

4. When you listen to your aircheck, ask yourself, "Would I want to be seated next to that person on a long flight?"

5. It's "DEMOCRATIC PARTY," not "DEMOCRAT PARTY."

If you insist on talking-about-politics – which you should do sparingly -- at least sound-like-you-know-what-you're-talking-about. Saying "DEMOCRAT PARTY" is like saying "REPUBLIC PARTY." But even-saying-it-correctly threatens to telegraph to listeners that your show is more-of-the-same.

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YOUR BEST CALLERS?

This'll be familiar HC lore to regular readers, and hosts who suffer my direction on-an-ongoing-basis: Great callers are the hallmark of a great show.

- After all, unlike music radio, Talk is two-way radio, right?
- Notwithstanding the comfort our industry takes self-congratulating its "compelling hosts," hosts-who-compel-and-welcome lots of well-spoken callers sound popular, and provide listeners a richer experience than the I-talk-you-listen routine that's still too common. **Interactivity** is the basis of every other electronic device and media experience now part of a busy listener's day.

I hear LOTS of radio in my travels, and I still wince when I hear host monologues drone on...or, worse, hosts POINTING-OUT-that-they're-not-connecting, by chastising listeners for not calling. Imagine an advertiser hearing that? This tends to happen for one-or-both-of two reasons:

- **Topic** du jour lacks curb appeal. Over-reliance on politics and often-arcane public policy issues telegraphs same-old-same-old.
- **Technique**: The host hasn't distilled the topic into an unambiguous, quickly-offered proposition that invites callers' feelings.

APPLAUSE for hosts who **conceive** engaging topics (show prep), **conduct** the conversation (at-the-speed-of-life of the busy in-car listeners responsible for so many of Talk radio's Average Quarter Hours), and (barely) **control** the ensuing chat.

CAN YOU DO THIS?

I'm collecting aircheck clips which include GREAT (not good, GREAT) callers. Why: To demonstrate technique, how talented Talk hosts attract and interact with callers. I'm looking for that "Wow!" moment when everything clicked, and what-the-caller-said jumped-out-the-speaker. The moment that demonstrates how you NAILED your topic that day...and really engaged the audience.

From airchecks submitted, I'll put-together a podcast, which will be:

1. on iTunes, as a free download;
2. on my web site; and
4. linked to McVayMedia.com.

I will not sell the podcast or sell a sponsorship in it or otherwise derive revenue from it. Think of this as a Talk radio "Best Of." It's "a virtual convention workshop" that showcases great Talk radio technique.

Just for submitting your aircheck -- whether or not I use it -- you will get a copy of my July newsletter, which includes notes from Talk radio's biggest actual convention, Talkers' New Media Seminar. And if I do use what-you-send, **I will give you a FREE one-year newsletter subscription** (beginning with an August issue you WON'T want to miss).

This is not a contest, but you may (as radio promos say) "enter as often as you like." Got several calls, on different topics, from different shows? Send 'em all. Got an hour when your call-in topic really caught fire? Send me the whole hour, I'll pick the calls.

I would especially like to hear FIRST-TIME callers, because attracting them says good things about your topic and technique. Or send callers who surprised you or the audience with what they said. Or those emotionally-riveting calls that'd keep a listener in the car with the key on Accessories.

To submit, send your name and call letters, a photo if you wish, and the URL of your web site if you have one, to listen2america@aol.com. Attach MP3 files 10MB or smaller. Send larger MP3 files to that same address via YouSendIt.com (free).

GO green, SAVE some green! If you already subscribe to this newsletter, via hard copy in snail-mail, choose electronic delivery, and I'll send you each month's issue the very same day I send it to the printer. You save time, we save a tree. And since you're saving me a stamp, I'll bonus you three more months, FREE. E-mail me at newsletter@hollandcooke.com. Write "Green me!" in the Subject line.

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“The dollars always follow the eyeballs.”

Paul Sagan, CEO, Akamai, keynoting last month's Streaming Media East conference in New York

On the night of the 2000 presidential election, viewers were using laptops to augment TV coverage, because the Internet could deliver more information, faster, than live TV coverage. By the time Florida officials were squinting at hanging chads, the Internet was shoulder-to-shoulder with cable news channels, and way-ahead-of traditional network coverage.

Fast-forward to Inauguration Day 2009, when, as Sagan reminded us, coverage was available “on every television channel, free.” Yet Internet coverage “delivered prime time television size audiences...equivalent to the ratings of ‘60 Minutes’ or ‘24.’”

In between, the milestones Sagan ticked-off were clearly observable:

- 2001 MTV Music Awards: still a TV-only show, but co-promoted supplemental online content added incremental ad revenue;
- 2003's SARS benefit concert in Toronto: a TV show simulcast on the web;
- 2005 NASA mission to Mars: live video from the rover was only available online; television only had “small clips.”
- 2005: YouTube launches, what Sagan calls “‘Short Attention Span Theater,’ snackable content;”
- 2006: 20 million live and on-demand streams for the Olympics “reach an audience in places they didn't have a television set.”
- 2007: Hulu.com launches, delivering “the longform video experience on the Internet...TV-on-the-Internet at TV quality;”
- 2008: The Masters playoff carries-over to Monday, “delivering cable-size audience and HD quality into the workplace.”

During Q+A, I asked “What direction are users leading us in terms of content?” His two part answer:

- He said “they have reminded us that they don't particularly like commercials,” as VCR and DVR use has demonstrated. Stopping-down for spots is verboten online; so title sponsorships, product placement, etc. will continue to be opportune.
- The most successful content seems to be “things where they don't know the ending,” i.e., sports and live events.

Any radio station or show not-at-least-somehow-using-YouTube, is M.I.A.

WHAT THIS MEANS TO RADIO? FOR STARTERS, STREAM OR SCREAM.

When I recently visited client WPTF/Raleigh, they put-me-up-in the handsome new downtown Marriott. How new? You could still smell carpet adhesive. You could eat off the garage floor. In my room? Big HDTV, and a clock radio with TWO ways to connect an iPod (dock it on top, or use plug-on-a-wire). It gets FM...but has no AM chip. I was there to listen to an AM station.

Streaming is no longer just an adjunct.

- In many workplaces there's no AM radio, and if there were, computers would interfere with it. So use computers to penetrate that venue. In New York, PPM data shows a bigger audience for one FM's stream than for its transmitter! So at least simulcast your live on-air programming online. I know, I know, covering spots is a pain. But you've gotta be there.
- Then, provide other content online. In recent months here, I have outlined specific, quick-and-easy opportunities, low-cost/no-cost stuff. If you missed those issues, see back page...and see page 3. Also, click “Internet NTR Road Map: Easy Directions to New Dollars” at www.HollandCooke.com
- Want to see a dang CLINIC in how-radio-should-use-the-Internet? Poke-around FreeTalkLive.com. This innovative syndicated radio show's 40+ AM and FM affiliates are only one way they're connecting with listeners and advertisers. And everything else they're doing benefits their affiliates, since it promotes the show and engages listeners.

***“Use easy entry-level tools...to talk to the-people
formerly-known-as ‘the audience.’”***

“Live Broadcasting With Mobile Phones, Consumer Cameras, Laptops” session moderator Steve Garfield

Garfield, a Boston University Journalism prof who claims to have coined the term “video blogging,” E-mailed NBC Late Night host Jimmy Fallon to politely challenge his use of the term, on a nerdy technicality. Fallon is promoting his TV show by posting rough-cut stuff to YouTube; and he invited Garfield backstage and on-set after the show...which Garfield streamed live from his Nokia phone...which prompted viewers from Los Angeles and Denmark and elsewhere to start interacting in real-time, with each other.

“Stay away from [Internet] programming that has ‘The Curse of the Any,’ meaning anyone-would-want-to-watch-it.”

Content Production for the Web” session moderator: Paul Kontonis, CEO/Founder, For Your Imagination

Useful perspective from a non-radio event like Streaming Media East: We-who-program-transmitters approach content creation from a **live real-time, mass-appeal, broadcast** perspective. We “play the hits” we reckon to be of interest to as-many-people-as-possible listening at-any-given-time. Conversely, the emerging Internet revenue success template is sponsorships-of/product-placement-in one-off or episodic on-demand content of narrower interest. Small chunks on-air, bigger chunks online.

Because radio has proven to be such a powerful way to drive-traffic-to Internet content, stations have an valuable opportunity to go-beyond format boundaries, and one-thing-at-a-time 24/7 programming. Use the transmitter to serve snack-size on-air samples of what-only-those-interested can take-a-bigger-bite-of online. Their-doing-so identifies them as qualified prospects for sponsors.

- If you’re in Sales, think infomercial web content. Those small on-air chunks are paid-for (in what we call “spot avails”), as are the bigger online chunks, or links to applicable content on the advertiser’s site. Opportune: advertisers already-producing their own YouTube videos! They’ve done the heavy lifting, but until you plug ‘em on-air, the videos are a well-kept secret.
- If you’re a host, offer-or-invite deeper content about something-you-touch-on briefly on-air. If, for instance, listeners know you as a chow-hound, and with the summer picnic season upon us, you might solicit listeners’ recipes for barbecue sauce or potato salad, etc. Possibly you could tie-into a sponsored bake-off type event. Or if you’re a cat lover, you could invite listeners to upload photos of cuddly kittens or video of cats-doing-something-funny, on a page sponsored by a veterinarian.

CONTENT REVENUE MODEL: “FREEMIUM”

As I’ve recommended aplenty, watch how Rush Limbaugh makes money online: free-with-an-upsell Internet content, promoted aggressively on-air. Various Streaming Media East speakers affirmed that revenue models for the burgeoning new platform are still being invented-on-the-fly. “Throw as much up on the wall as possible and see what sticks,” recommends NYTimes.com’s Senior Product Manager Will Gonzalez. Other panelists chanted “test, test, test.”

“The push can come from anywhere.”

Streaming Media East Keynote Joe Ambeault, Director, Product Development and Management, Video Services, Verizon

With radio Time Spent Listening under attack from so many directions, we can relate to Ambeault’s goal: “Keep ‘em in our store.” Accordingly, no content delivery idea is unwelcome in the ecosystem of Verizon’s blazing-fast fiber-optic FIOS TV. An idea can sprout internally, at any level, or come from a user Email or other feedback. Next comes the Verizon “Rapid Development” process:

Incubator > Prototyping > Do-no-harm testing > Go-again, or Exit, or Ship it

Radio Sales: See the new “spec spot” opportunity there?

“It’s an 8-to-4 audience.”

BusinessWeek.com Multimedia Director James Leone, in the session “How Old Media is Embracing Online Video and New Media”

This is consistent with server stats I’ve seen at client stations that are aggressive about content. In daypart lingo, the web site is “listen-at-work.” With so many News/Talk stations being AMs, the opportunity is obvious...and, in today’s economy, imperative.

In that same session:

- Time Magazine Multimedia Director Craig Duff offered what he regards as three attributes of effective Internet storytelling: “Make it **‘webby’** [as-opposed-to TV-like], **‘wiki’** [engaging, vs. old media “push”], and **‘sticky’** [think TSL].”
- I asked all panelists in this session, “What online content just-plain-does-NOT-work?” Their responses: Roundtable panel discussions, text in the video, bad audio quality, long sit-down interviews.

Streaming Media East conference sessions (and Streaming Media West and European conferences) stream FREE, at <http://streamingmedia.com/videos>. Speakers’ PowerPoints are at <http://streamingmedia.com/east>.

Caution: These are Internet video conventions. Radio folk might find the discussion arcane. There’s lots of talk about meta-data, and there’s no nerd-to-English captioning. And for some reason, many of these speakers have the mildly-annoying habit of beginning sentences with “So...”

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SOUND BITES

"Kids, husbands, dogs, electronic gizmos, refrigerators, bugs and so forth can come at you in ways you'd never imagined and gang up on you when you least expect it."

Dr. Laura Schlessinger, in her latest best-seller "In Praise Of Stay-At-Home Moms" (Harper). Thus Idea #3 on page 2. Don't take "stay-at-home" literally. She spends LOTS of time in-car...and more of her husband's income than he gets to spend.

"...apparently there are some who remain confused...I hope not willfully so."

Acting FCC Chairman Michael Copps, apropos Conservative talkers' favorite hobby horse these days: "There is one topic that I do not expect this Committee to address — that would be the Fairness Doctrine."

"The book is a repetitious, one-sided barrage of generalities and anecdotes, alarmist at times, corny at others. In other words, it reads a lot like talk radio sounds."

Wall Street Journal review written by a recently-fired Talk radio programmer (Randall Bloomquist) of a book by another recently-fired Talk radio programmer (Brian Jennings, "Censorship: The Threat To Silence Talk Radio")

"To my elephant friends - you had your shot, your deregulation got us in this mess, you lost power, deal with it by working together with Democrats to fix it."

From the MySpace page of one Chris Murphy, who, with former WTDY/Madison "The Wisconsin Guys" partner Shawn Prebil, moves to KSTP/Minneapolis.

It was my pleasure to consult jocular "Murph" and "Prebil" in The Peoples' Republic of Madison. Though they'll be missed there, I applaud KSTP PD Steve Konrad for snatching 'em the way diligent PDs used to acquire talent: **scouting**. He heard The Wisconsin Guys online, then made a stealthy visit to the market to hear 'em again, then had 'em down to "The Cities" to fill-in on KSTP.

Moral of the story: Bring your "A" game every day.

"Nobody has a free hour to hear your sob story."

Fortune Magazine

In this economy, just GETTING a job interview requires some technique. Once you're in there, "exude an upbeat attitude" recommends a recent article in The Wall Street Journal: "For example, if you were laid off, instead of lamenting the situation, you might say that the experience prompted you to reassess your skills and that's what led you here."

As I will remind Talkers New Media Seminar attendees in my session, the skill set you have mastered in broadcasting will stand you in good stead in many other walks of life.

"When people are uncertain they become loss-averse, and they look to peers for guidance. If they hear testimonials from happy customers, and see that supplies are limited, their interest spikes."

Good advice for whoever-writes-commercial-copy at your station, from Arizona State University Professor of Psychology and Marketing Dr. Robert Cialdini, author of "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion."

"They were the ultimate business 30 or 40 years ago, but they lost their essential nature."

"Oracle of Omaha" and Berkshire Hathaway Chairman Warren Buffet, referring to newspapers, as he addressed shareholders at the recent annual meeting. He predicted that newspapers face "unending losses."

- Traditionally, radio and newspapers have been arch enemies, and many among us are ready to flamenco on newspapers' grave. OR...should we buddy-up?
- Theoretically, radio/newspaper synergies are opportune. But, as a practical matter, these partnerships tend to be problematic... even when the station and the paper are commonly owned. I speak from experience. In nearly 15 years of full-time consulting, I've been involved in various such efforts. And before-I-hung-out-my-shingle, I spent three years as Vice President of a new media unit at USA Today...repurposing The Nation's Newspaper to audio. So help yourself to...

FREE SPECIAL REPORT: Recommendations for Radio/Newspaper Partnerships. Included: THE-most-diabolical-trick I've ever seen a newspaper play on local radio stations. And it happens year after year. For your copy, simply send an Email to newspaper@hollandcooke.com. Within moments, the robot will Email you the document. No spam, no virus. And no charge... because newspapers aren't the only "old media" that are challenged right now.

"While Yellow Pages and newspaper companies crashed into bankruptcy and TV and radio station revenues hit the brakes, their online hybrids zipped right along. Many of them saw strong double-digit growth in their online revenues."

Gordon Borrell, as Borrell Associates recently released their report "What Local Media Website Earn."

- If you're wondering it's 2%. Yep, radio is getting 2% of \$12.6 BILLION LOCAL DOLLARS spent online. The average station's take ranges from about \$18K in small markets to ten-times-as-much in the top 20.
- He acknowledged to Inside Radio what we already know, from a pile of Arbitron/Edison Research data I've cited in this newsletter from time to time: "radio does a fantastic job driving Internet traffic – better than any other medium." Alas, he notes, "unlike their more diversified legacy media competitors, radio operators remain focused primarily on selling banners or up-selling advertisers into their audio streaming programs."
- He urges stations to do more with email, video, and Search. "If radio station managers could just use that capacity to leverage themselves into a new business, they'd be building a business that in the end might be larger than the radio business."

Sound intimidating? It doesn't have to. Many stations haven't even picked the low-hanging fruit. For 22 pages of proven low-cost/no-cost techniques that stations are already using to make money, click "Sales" at www.HollandCooke.com the banner that says "Internet NTR Road Map: Easy Directions to New Dollars."

"...fomenting hatred, of such extreme views and expressing them in such a way that is actually likely to cause inter-community tension or even violence if that person were allowed into the country."

TRN's Michael Savage, in-the-estimation-of British Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, announcing that Savage is now one of 16 people in the world unwelcome in the UK. Others include a former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard, a Hamas bigshot, a neo-Nazi, the leader of a violent Russian skinhead gang (currently in prison), a Hezbollah terrorist, and some guys named Abdul, Abdullah, and Mohamed.

I have advised Savage-affiliated client stations to do a promo P.T. Barnum would be proud of.

"Darn! I was just planning a trip to England for their superior dental work and cuisine."

Savage's witty retort

"I think Rush Limbaugh was the 20th hijacker. But he was just so strung out on Oxy-Contin, he missed his flight."

Wanda Sykes, at the White House Correspondents' Dinner

"The past several months have seen some difficult and necessary changes."

Clear Channel CEO Mark Mays, in a message to his remaining employees: "While we can't predict the future, we now believe we have determined the right structure and staffing levels for the current economic environment."

And finally...

Among recent Citadel firings: WMAL/Washington host Chris Plante. Someone Emailed me "a form letter from the WMAL operations director I found on Facebook:"

Thanks for your Email. I am truly saddened to see Chris go. He's a great broadcaster and friend. The line-up change that resulted in Chris's departure was not a local decision. As you may know, The Joe Scarborough Show is owned and distributed by Citadel Media/Broadcasting - the company that owns 630 WMAL. The addition of his program to our line-up was part of the company's strategy to get their programs on their stations - something that's not uncommon in the industry. I've made my share of decisions at 630 WMAL, however this one came from the corporate folks.

Thanks again for your feedback.
Best regards,
Paul Duckworth
Operations Director

