

INSIDE RADIO
by Tom Taylor

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NEWS

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a "timing impact" of taking the buyout in first quarter. But the Tribune-owned Chicago Cubs wanted out of its contract with the outfielder so badly — they traded him to the Orioles and agreed to pay \$8.15M of Sosa's \$17M salary this year as an Oriole. They also paid Sosa an \$8M bonus for agreeing to the trade.

X Citadel gets room under the cap (to use a sports term) by selling 2 outlying FMs in New Orleans. Farid Suleman inherited the black gospel "Praise 94.9" simulcast of WOPR, Lacombe and WPRF, Reserve, LA as part of the Wilks deal in 2003. They aren't big contributors to the New Orleans cluster — but they do "count" under the FCC local ownership rules. So it was probably an easy decision to sell the combo to former Louisiana Congressman Wayne Dowdy for \$4,500,000. Just speculating here — but what are Farid's next plans for New Orleans? He'll soon have room under the cap to fill in with some bigger sticks. Is Farid sniffing out another opportunity in the Big Easy? Broker on WOPR/WPRF: Mike Bergner

East of Atlanta, WPBS (1040) sells for \$2,250,000. Like the preceding story, this one's about a black gospel station named "Praise" — only this one's on AM and it's in the vicinity of Atlanta. WPBS, Conyers, GA has a big 12-kw daytime signal but just 76 watts at night. Seller is Franklin Walden's Christ In You Hope of Glory Church. And we wonder about the programming plans of the buyer — Charles Kim of Pacific Star. Looks like Pacific Star already owns Atlanta-area WPBC, Doraville, GA (1310) — and it does Spanish hits. Broker on the sale of "Praise" WPBS — John Pierce.

Cumulus closes the \$38,750,000 purchase that put them over the 300-station mark last year. It's been just over a year (March 2, 2004 *Inside Radio*) — but Lew Dickey and company now own the seven Missouri stations whose purchase they announced last year and which they've been LMAing all this time. There are four stations in Columbia, MO (talk KFRU, adult alternative KBXR, rhythmic Q106 KOQL, AC KPLA) and three around Jefferson City (talk KLIK, rock "Buzz" KBBM, "Kool" oldies KJMO). Seller is Premier Marketing Group. George Reed of Media Services Group brokered for Premier.

People Moves — Lizz Winstead becomes the first of Air America Radio's sign-on crew to leave, nearly a year after its launch. . . **Alan Ritchie** takes over two Pensacola-market FMs for Pamal — WXBM and WMEZ. . . **David Reeder** leaves the RAB to join the ranks of station brokers. His new job's at American Media Services. . . **John Murphy** becomes VP/Talk programming Sales for Dial-Global. . . **Shannon Stone** is the first PD of Jones Radio Networks' new "True Country" format. . . **Jim Seemiller** is Salem's GSM for Phoenix-market "Patriot" KKNT and KPXQ. Details online at the "People Moves" tab of "InsideRadio.com."

What's the state of talk radio? Consultant Holland Cooke has a radical view. Holland thinks music radio is in trouble ("mature at best"). And says "what we have permitted to be marginalized as 'terrestrial radio' is now playing defense. News/talk/sports radio has at least a fighting chance" against iPods and technology that lets you wirelessly share your favorite content anywhere around the house. Holland says radio better figure out what it can do, and fast. As lots of folks head to R&R's valuable Talk Radio Seminar this week we thought we'd take the temperature of talk radio. And we found well-known talk consultant Holland Cooke in a radical mood, indeed. Read his provocative column online at "InsideRadio.com."

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