

Living Arts

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Talk-show hosts worry over mega-mergers

By Susan Bickelhaupt
GLOBE STAFF

Bob Newman, who writes for Talkers newsletter about the talk-radio industry, said the big talk these days is over the mega-mergers – the most recent one being last week's \$3.9 billion purchase by Westinghouse of Infinity Broadcasting.

"It's just not good for talent, because if you don't make it with Mel [Karmazin] or screw up, you have few places to go in the top 10 markets,"

Radio Tracks

he said, referring to the majority owner of the new 83-station radio group. "I think they're going to control 50 to 75 percent of the news/talk/sports programming throughout the country, so if you had a falling out with Mel, where do you go?"

Newman, who is president of Newman Communications in Milford, which represents authors and radio personalities, said he thinks talk-shows hosts at stations outside the new dynasty will want to band together.

"I can't name any names, but certain Boston

radio personalities are looking into forming some sort of committee to decide if this is the best thing for radio," he said.

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"Turf: A Conversational Concert in Black and White" will air on WGBH-FM (89.7) Sunday at 4 p.m. The radio adaptation of the 1983 award-winning play by Robbie McCauley is part of 'GBH's "Arts & Ideas" program.

The show, which features 10 Boston-based actors, storytellers and singers, takes a look at the busing controversy in Boston during the '70s. McCauley and the original group of actors interviewed people who had lived through the court-ordered desegregation in 1974.

After the radio show, the writer, cast members and community leaders will be in-studio to take listeners' call-in questions and comments from 5 to 6 p.m.

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Spinning the dial

Mexican-American singer Tish Hinojosa performs live in the WUMB-FM (91.9) studios today

at noon, in advance of her show at Johnny D's in Somerville tonight. ... Sorry, Mozart and Schumann, it's a "Killer B's" weekend on WCRB-FM (102.5) this weekend. The works of Beethoven, Brahms and Bach will be featured from 6 p.m. tomorrow through Sunday at 9 p.m. ... Speaking of WCRB, the last of its June outdoor concerts is today at noon at Copley Square Park, featuring Orchestra for the Art of Music. ... And 'CRB isn't the only station taking over Copley Square today – WOAZ-FM (99.5) offers a free concert by the group Special EFX, fronted by percussionist George Jinda. ... Jay Gordon, aka Mr. Elvis on WODS-FM (103.3), features an interview with Steve Allen this Sunday on the "Elvis Only" show at 8 a.m. Presley, who appeared on Allen's NBC-TV show 40 years ago on July 1, performed "Hound Dog" and stood still as he sang, in response to criticism of his gyrating moves. That just led to more criticism, though, and Allen recalls it all ... WRKO-AM's (680) new program director is – no surprise – Kevin Straley, who had been the acting PD since his boss, Al Mayers, left last spring.