

Bradbury Heights Didn't Have a Station**But There's One BUZZin' Now***By Sonia Stein*

IT WAS distressing—nay, unthinkable! A suburban community on the outskirts of Washington had no radio station of its own. To be sure the people in Bradbury Heights, Md., could tune in to any or all of the 13 standard band stations in this area, the six frequency modulation stations or the three television stations. But a station of their own, to serve the particular needs of that expanding community, they did not have.

But take heart, cousin, there's one buzzin' out there now. WBUZ-FM has been on the air two weeks, the first full-time FM station in the Washington area. Furthermore, it went on the air with enough commercials already contracted for to make it self-supporting from the first station identification at 7 a. m. January 18.

This claim to the station's financial well-being was made by A. K. Porter, assistant general manager of WBUZ-FM. He thinks there's a good possibility that this station is the only FM station in the country that's self-supporting.

Customary Thing

IT'S QUITE customary for radio stations which have AM and FM transmitters to offer their standard band sponsors the FM coverage free of charge.

Even the network sponsors are currently getting a break. The American Federation of Musicians contract with the networks which prevented duplication of shows on FM, expired last night. Now network affiliates which own FM stations can offer the duplicate coverage on FM at no extra cost to the sponsor.

Stations which are exclusively FM, such as WASH-FM here in Washington, just don't expect to be self-supporting for a while.

Reluctance on the part of the sponsors to buy FM programs is caused by no lack of enthusiasm for FM's static-free, high-fidelity qualities, but results from an unwillingness to advertise on a medium which reaches relatively few people.

(A Washington Post poll last September showed that there were 16,000 FM or AM-FM combination sets in the Washington and suburban area. The FM Association optimistically estimates between 25 and 40 thousand FM or combination AM-FM sets are in use in a slightly larger area at present.)

In addition to its happy commercial state, WBUZ-FM has had enough mail response from listeners to indicate a pretty good-sized audience, according to Gordon Shaw, program director for the station.

'Public Good'

AS A NEW station, with quite a bit of free time still available, and as a "community" station with Prince Georges County, Md., and



GORDON SHAW

the southeast section of Washington as its particular province, WBUZ-FM is opening its arms to community groups, clubs and such in need of air time. Any group with a story to tell in the public good, that is, is invited to consult with Shaw. Amateur choral groups are also welcome.

Public service, which WBUZ-FM asserts it's up to (up to 40 hours a week), includes religious programs daily and Sunday.

Shaw also considers good entertainment part of public service in its way. Right now he's busy taking a measure of the musical tastes of the WBUZ-FM audience. "Preferences indicated by mail will certainly be reflected in the programming," he says.

Sounds Promising

PROGRAM-WISE, there's nothing startling going on at the station, but there are several shows which sound promising. On Sundays at 2-45 p. m. there is a "Little Red School House" program which is a essentially a children's amateur hour—for people who like that kind of thing.

"Fur, Feather and Fin" which starts today at 1 p. m. will be conducted by Margaret Hines who has almost 2000 birds on her Hyattsville bird farm. The program will deal with furry and finny creatures as well, and will include hints on how to choose a pet.

"Buzzin' with Freddie," the wake-up show from 7 to 9 a. m. and the bedtime "Slumber Hour" from 11 p. m. to midnight have the station personnel delighted.

Roberta Rule, who doubles in brass as secretary to the boss, has a daily Hollywood news show at 1-25 p. m. Muriel Evans who once did a Hollywood news show for WINX, is now women's commentator at WBUZ-FM, eschewing household hints for suggestions on beauty and fashion, and reviews of books of particular interest to women.

A 1000-Watter

OPERATING at 967 mc. with its studios in the Washington, Marlboro and Annapolis Motor Lines terminal at 1510 Southern ave. in Bradbury Heights, WBUZ-FM is licensed as a 1000-watt station. Its owners, the Chesapeake Broadcasting Co., Inc. have filed petition for a sister standard band station and have their fingers crossed.

Officers of the company who own the controlling interest, are President A. B. Curtis, Vice President A. K. Porter, Secretary H. W. Berry, and Treasurer L. L. Altmann.

Porter came by the idea of a radio station honestly, having handled radio accounts for an advertising agency for years, and having been founder and dean of Southeastern University's radio department.

Altmann, who is president of the W. M. & A. Motor Lines, was a Navy radio man during the first World War. Feeling that a radio station could be a great asset to Prince Georges County, which he predicts to be the Washington suburb most likely to be built up next (having made a good start in that direction even during the war), he wasn't hard to persuade either.