

It didn't take long for CanWest to start rearranging the furniture after completing an exhausting, but successful, takeover of independent CKVU-TV. Barely had the news release hit the streets than nine-year veteran newsreader Joanna Piros was out of a job. "Tacky" she said.

CanWest's Donald Brinton (who is now president of Western Approaches, the company set up by VU founder Daryl Duke) says the final takeover has come at a bad time. Not only is it late to begin rebuilding a program schedule, the CRTC is insisting that the station appear for a five-year hearing in October.

Brinton told *Cinema Canada* it was too early to make any commitments about new drama production but said CanWest was talking to three or four Western independent producers about documentaries, dramas and series.

It's unlikely Carnival is one of those being talked to. VU sources say shows like *TGIF* (as in "Thank God it's Friday", an entertainment magazine that ran on Thursdays) and others produced by Duke through Carnival will soon be gone. Some of the missing hours of local production will be transferred to a half-hour nightly magazine tentatively called *West Coast Panorama*. Brinton says it won't be anything like the legendary *Vancouver Show*. It will air between 6:30 and 7 p.m., right after a shortened *First News* and just before prime time. Laurier LaPierre's phone-in *People Will Talk* moves to mid-mornings; Brinton was unable to say whether LaPierre would continue as host.

• **Congratulations to:**

Diane Neufeld of the B. C. Film Commission on winning a 1988 Vancouver Women of Distinction Award for her work in Public Relations and Communications.

Composer Michael Conway Baker and his lyricist and manager Penelope Anne Manning Ives. They are consolidating their relationship with marriage vows.

Daniel Williams, a B. C. Institute of Technology television student and winner of the B. C. M. P. A. Jack Geddes scholarship. It has been given each year since 1978 to a grad who has shown outstanding creativity in the field.

And to Thomas Howe Associates. The company has won a distribution contract for the CBC anthology series *Family Pictures*. Sales will begin at the 1989 NAPTE meeting in Houston and at MIP-TV in Cannes.

If you've been thinking about shooting in Vancouver but don't know where to begin, the City Council is going to help out. The alderpersons have decided to print up a booklet which will detail all the ins and outs of using municipally owned sites including the popular art-deco City Hall at 12th and Cambie.

The city's Engineering Department is even going so far as to ask for a half-time position so that someone will be available to divert traffic and turn off the lights. But the City Manager, who after all doesn't have to deal with these things directly, is a little less generous. He's asked Council to consider charging a fee to film companies who use city property.

• The new Telefilm Team was in town at the end of July with good news for western producers. Chairman Edmund Bovey and Executive Director Pierre DesRoches were on hand for a lunch of salmon and backpatting. Also in attendance were Communications Minister Flora MacDonald and Telefilm's new man on the West Coast, Bill Gray.

The news was that, so far in 1988, the federal agency has committed funds and support to eleven productions from the Western provinces (compared to the lone chance offered *Max Glick* in '87). Seven of those are from B. C. including *Quarantine*, a science-fiction thriller written, directed and produced by Charles Wilkinson.

Gray suggests the increased traffic is due to the increased autonomy of Telefilm's Vancouver office. He's now actually in a position to make decisions rather than consulting with Toronto which would then discuss matters with Montreal. DesRoches says B. C. is the fastest-growing Telefilm region in Canada.

Victoria and Ottawa have chipped in \$80,000 between them to find out about the future of jobs in the B. C. film industry. The province's Motion Picture Association asked for the study which will be headed by, among others, IATSE's George Chapman, Burt Skelton of Prolite and Cannell's Stephen Sassen.

All of these people should have no difficulty finding time to devote to the report; the Writers Guild strike has cruelly disappointed those who forecast another record production year in B. C. Were it not for a handful of visiting features and ongoing Canadian TV production, everyone would be lining up at the UJC casting couch.

Among the companies anticipating growth once the writers put down pickets and pick up pens are The Eyes Multimedia Productions and Shane Lunny Productions. The Eyes is building a large post-production house while Lunny, who services MuchMusic as well as producing excellent corporate tapes, has moved into a software-based, and therefore more flexible, facility near Gastown.

• This doesn't count as expansion but please make a note! One of the results of Bill Vanderzalm's summer cabinet shuffle was the relocation of the B. C. Film Commission to another department. John Jansen, the minister of International Business and Immigration, is now in charge of Diane Neufeld and the gang.

Also moved is the Association of Canadian Film Craftspeople. ACFC has abandoned its office in

the Marine Building and is renting space from All Sets. The new address is 1395 North Grandview Highway, phone 604-254-2232.

• Grant Allen of The Beacon Group confirms that the company is going ahead with a second offering to film industry investors. The first round totalled about \$5 million and resulted in, among other things, *Cowboys Don't Cry*. Beacon is hoping to raise about \$30 million on the Canadian and international markets over the next few months, primarily for feature film investment. He also promises a follow-up to the investor screening of *Cowboys* sometime in the fall. Three half-hour TV shows will be presented to the folks who paid for them.

• A script that originated as part of the Drama Lab program at the National Screen Institute is now committed to film. *The Avenue* is a half-hour installment in the CBC's *The Way We Are* anthology series. It's the story of a woman who travels back to the wrong side of a small town's tracks after years of living in New York.

Kelly Rebar (*Bordertown Cafe* for Family Pictures) is the writer, NFB veteran Sharon McGowan is making her first foray into independent production and Annie O'Donoghue (*Room for Rent, Closing Gap*) is directing. In fact about 70 per cent of the cast and crew on *The Avenue* are women.

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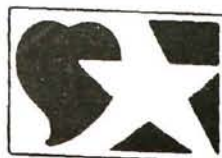
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