

KDTH-fm

50 KW of alert coverage in Dubuque's
Tri-state area.



THE state line that separates Illinois and Wisconsin runs from Lake Michigan to the broad, murky Mississippi and points like an arrow at the progressive city of Dubuque, Iowa, on the river's western shore. Just eight miles south on a high bluff above the ancient river, a slender needle-like tower punctures the sky with a new eight-bay Western Electric Clover-Leaf FM antenna.

Visible for dozens of miles in all directions, the tower is located on an ideal site and proclaims to the people of the three states that something new has come to this section of the Midwest's rich farm area. Exactly what was new was revealed to all people of the region who own FM receivers when this new transmitter went on the air for the first time at noon April 11, 1948, as the FM outlet of Dubuque's popular KDTH.

This latest addition to Iowa's growing number of FM stations (the tenth strong FM voice in the state) is new evidence of the forward-looking, public spirited service which has characterized the role played for many years in this section by *The Telegraph-Herald*, newspaper owner and operator of KDTH and KDTH-FM. KDTH-FM is now on the air with a Western Electric 10 kw 506B-2 FM transmitter with effective radiated power of 90,000 watts based on the eight-bay Clover-Leaf and effective antenna height of 650 feet. All provisions have been made for increasing effective radiated power to 180 kw by adding a 50,000 watt final amplifier to the present transmitter.

FM to Serve Area With 1,300,000

The story of the growth of KDTH to its position of prominence and importance in the unique "tri-state" region is the story of typical American will-to-do-things-better. It was in February 1944 that *The Telegraph-Herald* filed its original application with the F.C.C. At that time it was planned to construct a three kilowatt FM station which would serve an estimated 350,000 people. But a year and a half later the potentialities of FM had become so forcibly apparent to KDTH's management that the application was amended. In September 1945, the F.C.C. was asked to consider granting 50,000 watts power to KDTH-FM which would enable the station to cover an area made up of

chunks of Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin with a population of almost 1,300,000 persons. A construction permit was granted for the 50 kilowatt station in July 1946.

Complete Western Electric transmitting and studio equipment—from antenna to turntables, consoles, microphones—was immediately ordered from Graybar Electric Co. In April of last year the foundations of the tower were constructed. Two months later the transmitter building itself began to take shape and was completed March 1st of this year. The tower went skyward 415 feet from its perch on the Mississippi bluff in December 1947.

Supplying the "drive" and enthusiasm needed to push this job through to completion was the entire staff of KDTH led by Ken S. Gordon, who has been General Manager of the station since its founding. KDTH engineers, Donald Abitz, Robert Hancock, Wilbur Emerson and Keith Jones teamed with Richard Davidson of Western Electric and Phil Woodward and Frederick Nearing of Graybar Electric in the installing, testing and tuning needed to get the station ready to go.

Newspaper Sections Mark Inaugural

When at last all was "set" and KDTH-FM went on the air, it was an important event in "Dubuqueland," the culmination of four years of planning and hard work. *The Telegraph-Herald* marked the day, a Sunday, by publishing two special fourteen-page FM sections, telling in pictures and articles the complete story of FM and KDTH-FM. All major national manufacturers of FM receivers were represented in cooperative advertising with local merchants. Dealers held "open-house" that Sunday so that prospective FM customers could come to see new sets and hear FM for themselves. As a concentrated, hard-hitting newspaper promotion for FM these two sections of *The Telegraph-Herald*

were outstanding and undoubtedly succeeded in accelerating tremendously the acceptance of FM in Dubuque.

A statement by Ken Gordon in *The Telegraph-Herald* promised the general public that it would "enjoy KDTH-FM fully as much as KDTH during the last seven years." He added, "KDTH-FM will have many advantages over AM broadcasting and we invite suggestions on how we can better serve you."

Programming for "Dubuqueland"

So far as listeners are concerned, the future popularity of Dubuque's new FM transmitter is in the experienced hands of Arnie Steirman, Program Director, and George Freund, News Editor, both of whom were members of the original staff of KDTH. On the station's initial broadcast, seven years ago, it was Freund who supplied the Mississippi River sound effects with the help of water in a washtub.

Programming will follow the general pattern established by KDTH and well liked by its audience, except that possibly there will be greater accent upon music than ever before due to the high fidelity capacity inherent in FM. Although a Mutual Network affiliate, KDTH has always endeavored to arrange a daily program menu in which the local "Dubuqueland" flavor is strong. Typical is "Down Melody Lane," a musical stroll through a mythical neighborhood peopled by the sort of persons you like to know. A telephone survey, measuring the radio audience when this show is on the air, indicates that "Down Melody Lane" is one of the top favorite programs in the area. This program will be aired simultaneously over KDTH and KDTH-FM.

The spring and summer schedule will also bring a full quota of news and sports. Fifteen minute newscasts are

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W. R. Emerson, KDTH and KDTH-FM engineer, and F. W. Woodward, President of the Telegraph-Herald Company, watch while R. M. Davidson of Western Electric throws switch to start KDTH-FM's 10 kw transmitter.



May 1948

All studio facilities and offices of KDTH and KDTH-FM are in this modern building in the center of Dubuque, constructed especially for the broadcast operations of the Telegraph-Herald Company.



premieres during the 1948 production. The performers include practically all the leading professional groups in the city, who donate their time for this non-commercial project, as well as a large group of younger artists drawn from the schools and conservatories of the city. During the eleven days of the Festival, from four to six hours of air time daily are devoted to it. The whole project is produced by Herman Neumann, WNYC's fast-moving Musical Director who is responsible for much of the station's maturity and enterprise in the musical field.

Political broadcasts are presented on WNYC on a strictly non-partisan basis, with equal time offered to all recognized groups. During actual campaigns, each party is invited to name a speaker or speakers to present the party candidate's message to the city. A remarkably entertaining and enlightening broadcast was the Transit Hearing conducted by Mayor O'Dwyer in 1947, in which for three whole days the city had its say on the nickel fare, which is just about the hottest subject in New York politics. Citizen after citizen rose in the open meeting to have a go at it, and with the New Yorker's known ability to express himself pungently and forcefully, the broadcast set a high mark in aliveness and human interest.

Most important of the station's presentations of political material are its "gavel to gavel" broadcasts of the United Nations Meetings, a service of which the station is deeply proud, and one which has drawn the greatest volume of appreciative mail of any of its "public service" programs. In these broadcasts WNYC is entering a field that points beyond "public service", as now understood, toward a direct role for broadcasting in opening parliamentary councils to the peoples of the world.

KDTH-FM, Dubuque

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built upon the *Telegraph-Herald's* own coverage in Dubuque and the surrounding territory plus the Associated Press wire services. Local on-the-spot broadcasts have long been popular thanks to a 1½-ton mobile truck unit. A daily feature this year will be the Chicago Cubs baseball games via direct wire from Chicago, which will be a KDTH-FM exclusive in the Dubuque area. Mutual Network shows will augment this "balanced diet."

It is anticipated that KDTH-FM programs will eventually be heard at the maximum distance possible for FM due to the station's 50,000 watts and the unusually fine location of the antenna. Full provisions have been made in the transmitter building to take care of the increase in power output which will be carried forward as rapidly as possible this year.

Today's business-like building which has been constructed in the center of a 77½ acre treeless tract on the Mississippi bluff, is only the initial step in the creation of a commodious two-story structure, the second floor of which will be completely turned over to living accommodations for engineering personnel. The first floor now contains living quarters for an engineer, consisting of a combination living room-dining room, bedroom, kitchenette and bath.

In the largest room in the building are the transmitter,

speech input equipment, turntables, console, and other operating equipment. A large workroom is situated to the right of the transmitter room. Back of the transmitter is a large room to house rectifying units and high voltage equipment, and outside the building a 12,000 volt power line is terminated. Under the entire building is a finished basement which houses the heating plant.

Completion of the transmitter building, the increase to 50,000 watts, and the steady growth of an enthusiastic FM audience in "Dubuqueland," all promise an attractive and profitable future for KDTH-FM. In the opening minutes of the new station's career on the air KDTH-FM expressed its hopes in this way:

"Keep your dials tuned to this station," the announcer advised, "for the latest in news, in sports, and the best in radio entertainment. It is our honest hope to serve our listeners with the best at our command, and we sincerely hope that you, our listeners, and KDTH-FM will become and remain very good friends."

Now the Service Can Be Heard

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puts are obtained, since each main amplifier accommodates two 116B preamplifiers.

Final results have been most enthusiastically received by the congregation. After sixteen years of discouraging experience, every pew is provided with clear, natural speech which can be understood without straining. The choir sounds twice its size with much clearer projection of the soloists. In the past, congregational singing has been half-hearted because of the inability of the crowd to fill the church with sufficient volume to encourage the bashful singer. Projection of the choir into the audience by the new system has greatly improved this situation.

The illusion as to the source of the sound is helped by lighting the lectern in a manner to draw the eye to the person speaking. That the system blends architecturally is shown by the fact that many members, after learning that new sound apparatus was installed, have been unable to spot its location without informed assistance.

WFMY, Greensboro

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Carolínians a pre-opening broadcast of the Southern Conference Basketball Games at Duke University, March 3 to 6. It gave regular coverage to the Greater Greensboro Open Golf Tournament March 19, 20, and 21, an event in which many national leaders of professional and amateur golf participated. WFMY had the only FM coverage of this event, and parts of the broadcasts were fed to other members of the Dixie network, inaugurating the kind of reciprocal origination which will be fundamental in the network operations.

In another place in this issue, 1948 is discussed as a most tremendous "growing up" year for radio, and in particular as the year in which FM jumped to full size almost overnight. WFMY shows what this means in a particular example . . . broadcasting is pushing down a vast number of new roots into the life of America.