

WYSU-FM improves programming with WESTAR satellite system

WYSU listeners will notice their public radio station has taken on a distinctive new sound this month.

Stephen J. Grcevich, director of telecommunications, recently announced the University's fine arts station will become the first radio station in the Youngstown area to use a satellite distribution system. Western Union's WESTAR I, to bring its listeners programs from all over the nation and the world.

"What this means for our listeners is a program diversity and broadcast quality unprecedented in the history of radio," Grcevich said.

He pointed out that until now, radio programs traveled from their source to local stations through telephone cables that were not able to deliver full fidelity signals over long distances.

"The satellite, however, mirrors exactly the signals it receives, and WYSU and other public radio stations equipped to receive satellite transmissions can take advantage of the higher quality broadcasts to better serve

their listeners," he said.

The key to the "ultra sound" system is a large dish-shaped, reflector antenna, constructed earlier near the YSU Communications Center, which will be connected to the National Public Radio (NPR) satellite interconnection system.

Programs are transmitted to the WESTAR communications satellite from NPR's main origination terminal near Washington, D.C., one at Cincinnati serving the Mid-West. The satellite amplifies and re-transmits the programs for reception at ground terminals such as the one at YSU. There will be 10 of these ground terminals in Ohio.

In addition to receiving transmissions, WYSU will also be able to transmit programs via the satellite through the existing state microwave network, which will be connected to the Cincinnati "uplink."

In January 1979, the Federal Communications Commission approved the linking of 192 public radio stations by satellite to create the first non-commercial

American radio network capable of transmissions in high fidelity monaural, quadrophonic and stereo sound.

Now that the system is being completed, programs will be transmitted over four channels to satellite-connected NPR stations, with the capacity to expand to 12 channels in the future.

Grcevich said, "The satellite system will make it possible for local audiences to receive live, full-fidelity broadcasts of music, entertainment and public affairs programs originating anywhere in the U.S. and the world. Also, it will provide unprecedented diversity in programs from the four channels."

He predicted that as a result of this new technology, WYSU may also become a telecommunications center for the community.

"In addition to the wide variety of programs available for broadcast, other channels may be used for special services to community institutions." These might include educational programs for use in the classroom,

(Cont. on page 8)



WESTAR I—YSU's telecommunications center will become the first radio station in Youngstown to use a satellite distribution system. WESTAR I will bring international programs to Youngstown's listening audience.

Satellite

(Cont. from page 1)

special news and entertainment programs for hospitals and other long-term health care facilities and expanded services for the visually handicapped.

“We are just beginning to imagine the potential of satellite communications technology,” Grcevich added, “and it is appropriate that YSU is leading the way in its exploration.”