

US FREE RADIONEWS

Howdy again! Unfortunately, I didn't make a copy of what I wrote last time, so I don't know! Regardless, please forgive me if I repeat some things!

Radio New York International (RNI)

A good introduction to North American pirate radio is RNI. Since I hear RNI mentioned in the EuroRadio press a lot, I guess you guys generally listen to them on Sun nights (or at least a number of Europeans have listened to them). US die-hard pirate freaks do not consider RNI a pirate (or even a free radio station). For that matter, I don't consider Radio caroline much of a pirate either, but there's no reason to get into a fight over a side topic. Regardless, RNI has a deep-rooted pirate past that I'm not sure if many realize.

For example, when I first started listening to pirates in the summer of 1983, one of the most active stations was KPRC (Pirate Radio Central). This station began in early 1982 with main DJ Pirate Joe (the same DJ from RNI). KPRC operated once or twice per month on 1616 kHz with very high power. Apparently, this station was previously known as KSUN, which operated on the FM (ie VHF) band in the early 1980's from New York City. Anyway, KPRC operated first on FM, then MW & FM and later (1983) on FM, MW & SW.

The programs on KPRC were much the same as Pirate Joe shows on RNI. Generally, a left-wing stance was taken on a socio-political topic and listeners could call in. KPRC's range on 1616 was incredible- reaching into Kansas & Oklahoma (about 1,500 miles away)! KPRC lasted until 1984 when they were reportedly busted by the FCC, who apparently caughtly them broadcasting from a legal MW station!

Afterwards, the operators made a come-back as KPF-941 on 1622 kHz with 100 watts. This time, they claimed to be be legally licensed to WOZI, a legal station in Maine. Unfortunately, the FCC didn't appreciate the loophole that KPF-941 was operating in, so Alan Weiner (WOZI owner) was forced to sell everything.

Later in 1988/ early 1989, KPRC resurfaced being relayed on shortwave by Falling Star Radio- an obvious connection to The Falling Star Network, a bunch of stations that were operated in part by Alan Weiner in 1970/71. This batch of stations were closed several times by the FCC in Yonkers, New York. The Falling Star Radio disappeared mysteriously in early 1989- evidently to make way for RNI.

Interestingly, these stations have always been separate from the North American pirate scene as a whole. For some reason, New York City has bred a different type of pirate, which in general has ignored the shortwave pirate scene. These stations are typified by the RNI group and by Radio Free New York. The average New York MW pirate featured telephone call-ins, using an ingenious illegal method to take calls, without being traced, and a desire to return to the MW radio of the 60s in the US. Dozens of these stations operated from 1976 to 1985, but generally other than WDX, Pirate Radio New England, WENJ & WART, the most memorable stations had some connection to the present-day RNI or RFNY.

Unfortunately, the medium- to high power MW pirate scene has died in the US. The last stations that I've heard in this area were

WKND on Halloween 1989. It's a real shame because many SW....