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New AM radio station hits Tri-state airwaves

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KINGMAN — The first new AM radio station in Mohave County in more than 40 years signed on last month.

KYET, owned by broadcast veteran Joe Hart's Route 66 Broadcasting LLC, began operations on Oct. 14 at 1170 on the dial. "This is an AM stereo and it does generate in stereo if you've got a radio that's equipped to receive it, it will," said Hart, who also serves as Arizona's State Mine Inspector.

Licensed to Golden Valley, with its 190-foot-tall tower near the junction of U.S. 93 and SR 68, KYET broadcasts with 6,000 watts of power. The other four AM stations in Mohave County, as well as the one in Needles, do not exceed 1,000 watts.

KYET originated in Williams, Ariz., broadcasting on 1180 with 10,000 watts. Hart bought the station about 15 years ago. In order to move it, he needed to get permission from the Federal Communications Commission. "It's been a long, long, long time getting down here but now it's here. It's licensed for Golden Valley because they have a post office and no radio stations. So they got one now," Hart said.

Although licensed to Golden Valley, KYET shares offices and studios with the other Hart broadcast properties on Beale Street in Kingman. Hart said he carries no debt. "It's all paid for, that's the good thing. That's what's taken me so long to do everything," he said.

KYET features a classic or traditional country music format, and currently has no news, commercials, or announcers. That will soon change as Hart's plans take shape. "We're going to (have) news, sports and hopefully some local talk. I hope to improve on the talk that's out there now. I don't want to be like that thing in Needles. I'd like to have a little more credibility in what we say and do," Hart said.

KYET will remain primarily a music station. "I don't really want to get a Rush Limbaugh or anything like that. I can listen to Rush Limbaugh for about 10 minutes and I'm ready to kill everybody," Hart joked.

KYET, like the other AMs in the Tri-state, broadcasts with a non-directional signal, meaning the same amount of power goes out in all directions. For that reason, KYET cannot exceed 6,000 watts, so as to not interfere with KCBQ in San Diego, which also occupies the 1170 frequency. Hart said he could raise his power above the 6,000-watt limit if he changes his pattern from non-directional to directional, which would protect KCBQ from interference.

Because AM signals travel further at night, KYET reduces its power to 250 watts after sunset, to protect KCBQ and other stations on 1170.

During the day, the station comes in loud and clear in places like North Las Vegas, and can be heard as far away as Barstow, Calif., and Wickenburg, Ariz., Hart said.

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