

Top country singers may testify in court dispute over use of 'opry'

United Press International
KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Some of the top country singers in the nation will try to convince a federal judge the word "opry" belongs to the nation's most successful country show.

An attorney for WSM Inc. of Nashville indicated Roy Acuff, Minnie Pearl, Grant

Turner, Porter Wagoner and Red O'Donnell, as well as others, may be called Tuesday in the attempt to stop Dennis Hilton from using the term "opry" in the title of his Lake of the Ozarks show.

WSM, the owner and operator of the Grand Ole Opry, contends "opry" is its registered trademark.

Hilton, operator of the Country Shindig Opry, will contend the word is in the public domain and cannot be the property of any one person or corporation.

Judge Scott O. Wright last month ordered Hilton to drop the "opry" term from his sign, advertising and literature. He then set Tuesday's

hearing to decide whether to issue a permanent injunction.

David Brydon of Jefferson City, Mo., an attorney for WSM, said his company will contend that "opry" has always meant the Grand Ole Opry and cannot be used by anyone else without WSM's approval.

'Sperm bank' parents lose custody of two

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CHICAGO — The parents of the first child conceived through artificial insemination from the "Nobel Sperm Bank" lost custody of two children for child abuse and were sentenced to federal prison for fraud, the Chicago Tribune reported Tuesday.

Questions were being raised about the investigative procedures used by the Repository for Germinal Choice to screen potential parents of geniuses as a result of the child-beating charges, the Tribune's "Inc." column said.

The parents, Joyce and Jack Kowalski, both 39, of Phoenix,

also were sentenced in 1978 to federal prison on fraud charges.

Mrs. Kowalski told UPI she would not comment on the allegations.

The Kowalskis gained international attention with the birth of a daughter, Victoria, April 21. The child's father reportedly is a mathematical genius.

A spokesman for the Del Mar, Calif.-based sperm bank — dubbed the Nobel Sperm Bank because it distributes sperm donated only by men deemed highly intelligent — was not available for comment.

A National Enquirer report featured Mrs. Kowalski in a "World Exclusive" in its June 29 edition.

The magazine reportedly paid her \$20,000 for the sperm-bank story and the contract prohibits her from talking to any other media for 30 days after the article was published.

"I've always loved kids and when I married Joyce I couldn't wait to have some of our own," the Enquirer quoted Kowalski as saying. "We'll begin training Victoria on computers when she's 3, and we'll teach her words and numbers before she can walk."

The Tribune column said Mrs. Kowalski, the former Joyce Naunapper of Des Plaines, Ill., lost custody of her two children after an investigation by state authorities showed the children had been abused.

Her former husband, Eric Naunapper, was awarded custody of the children in 1976, after an investigator for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services ordered them removed from the Kowalski home in Des Plaines.

In a court petition filed in 1976, Naunapper said his daughter Donna, then 11, and son Eric, 10, had been beaten with straps. Teachers and a nurse at the Einstein School in Des Plaines said children appeared in class battered and bruised.

The Kowalskis were sentenced to federal prison on a number of counts including using the names of dead children to obtain credit cards, phony Social Security numbers and credit references in fraudulent schemes in Arizona, the column said.

United Press International
SAN DIEGO — When soap opera characters attempt or commit suicide on television, the nation's suicide rate climbs, says a sociologist who compared health statistics against the story lines of daytime TV dramas.

David P. Phillips of the University of California at San Diego also said Monday that fatal car crashes increase after television suicides and his study indicates these wrecks may be disguised suicides.

TV soaps may inspire suicides

The findings are based on a computer survey of health statistics and newspaper summaries of 13 attempted or successful suicides in soap opera episodes, said Phillips, whose study will appear in Thursday's edition of the American Journal of Sociology.

Phillips conceded the evidence is too preliminary to justify undue concern about content of the daytime shows, and he said the correlation may be a statistical illusion since there is no way of knowing whether the real-life suicide victims ever watched soap operas.

His study found city-dwelling women are the most likely to try to kill themselves in the event of a fictional suicide on a television soap.

He claims in the article that his study "presents the first systematic evidence that violent, fictional television stories trigger imitative deaths (suicides) and near-fatal accidents in the United States."

Phillips suggested many soap-opera viewers strongly identify with their video favorites, as attested to by the amount of mail received by the fictional characters offering advice as if the soap operas were real life.

The computer survey was based on 1977 records from the National Center for Health Statistics and the California Highway Patrol.

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| \$500 | 200 | 1:100,000 | 1:7,692 | 1:3,846 |
| \$100 | 500 | 1:40,000 | 1:3,077 | 1:1,539 |
| \$50 | 1,000 | 1:20,000 | 1:1,539 | 1:769 |
| \$10 | 5,000 | 1:4,000 | 1:308 | 1:154 |
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