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Spanish channels added at odd hours

BY TODD WICKS STAFF WRITER

BY TODD WICKS
STATF WAITE.

The Parmington area will soon receive two Spanish-language cable channels — sort of.
Time Warner announced its new channel lineup at a special meeting of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC) Tuesday. The new lineup will be avoilable Dec. 1.
The two channels which feature Spanish programming are the 1nternational Channel, which picks up feeds from other countries in 24 languages, and GEMS, which is comparable to Univision, the Spanish channel that did not make the lineup.
But there are catches with both channels.
GEMS will only be broadcast from 3 a.m. to 9 a.m. on the same channel as the Nashville Network.

"What Maskville has on then is

from 3 a.m. to 9 a.m. on the same channel as the Nashville Network.

"What Nashville has on then is informercials, so well be inserting GEMS," soid Tom Bjorklund, regional vice-president of Time Warner.

And the International Channel? "One Innyuage it doesn't do a particularly good job at is Spanish," admitted Bjorklund, who said that one hour of the Spanish news channel Canade Noticias will be inserted weeknights and during early-morning hours.

Spanish channels became an issue when Spanish-speaking residents and foreign-language schoolteachers brought up the issue at a SWOCC meeting in

of the Commission of the Commi

August.

"I'm disappointed," said Charmaine Ragusa, a Spanish teacher at Harrison High School, of the new lineup. "I'm not really familiar with the other channels, I just know Univision is terrific.
"But at least if there is some news programs."
According to the survey, the only foreign-language channels receiving a substantial number of requests were The International Channel, Univision and TV Japan.
Bjerklund pointed out that nine out of the top 10 channels customers requested are being added.

"The survey and customer requests play a very important part (in what is added)... But there are some other factors that go into it. Cost is one of them. It costs a lot of money for us to get the rights to pick up services and we need to balance the customer interest with what the costs a recommendation of the results when the results of the properties of the results when the costs are for the results of the results when the costs are for the results of the results when the costs are for the results when the costs are for the results involved. interest with what the costs are

interest with what the costs are.
There are other things involved,
ike legalities.

"It is a complicated process,
not arbitrary by any stretch of
the imagination," added Bob
McCann, general manager of
Time Warner in Farmington
Hills.
Despite the announcement of
the new lineup, Aldo Vagnozzi,
SWOCC member and mayor of
Farmington Hills, said that
Farmington Hills will ge ahead
with its own survey of local cable
customers.

customers. Vagnozzi has expressed dis-

may over Time Warner's channel choices and called into question whether there was even a survey

at all.

"They claim they took a survey. I never got one in my bill," he said. "We can't demand that (Timo Warner) put on any other channels, but we'll give our survey results to them."

Vagnozzi is more concerned with the company's all-around service than the channels it offers.

"We still can't seem to get the information we're supposed to

got (from Time Warner)," he said. "Ive asked for a list of the complaints that come to them. We've never gotten that." He cited a figure given at the meeting which said that Time Warner has received 900,00 complaints from its 7 million subscribers. "That's almost one complaint out of seven customers."
Also announced at the meat-

Also announced at the meet-ing was the completion of a \$9.1 million fiberoptic upgrade, which allows a greater channel capaci-

Top 10 requested channels

These are the top-0 channels requested by local customers, according to a recent Time Warn-

- r survey. Channel requested: Number

Channel requested: Number Channel requested: Number Of reap of the State of Channel: 1,230

ESIN 2: ESIN 2:

- ing Dec. 1. Channel number: Program
- ervice III 15: City of Farmington n 16: WBSX-Indiana

- n 23: The Golf Channel 24: Sneak Preview 25: MS/NBC

- 32: ESPN 2

- 32: ESPN 2
 37: Turner Classic Movies
 38: The Learning Channel
 39: The History Channel
 40: Brave
 41: HGTV
 42: Court TV
 43: Black Entortainment
- Television

 45: Country Music TV
- 54: Nashville/GEMS

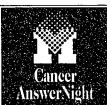
- 54: Nashville/GEMS
 55: Travel Channel
 61: International Channel
 68: HBO 2
 70: Showtime 2
 72: Cinemax 2
 76:78: Pay-Per-View

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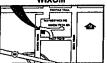


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