



Dave White

A Life in Broadcasting



The History of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers | Page 8

BROADCAST BEAT

Letter from the Editor

by **Bill Shirk**

Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Broadcast Beat Editor

One of the most frequently asked question about the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame is why a certain person has not been inducted.

A respected Broadcaster gave a list of eight people he thinks should be in the Hall of Fame. Six of the 8 have never been nominated before. If you're not nominated you have no chance of getting in. The 7th person was nominated and the Board approved them to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. They turned it down. The 8th person is very well qualified and has a good chance of being inducted.

Only six people per year are inducted and some years as many as fifty people have eligible nominations.

Every year the Indiana Broadcasters Association announces nomination are open and puts a nomination form on their website with a deadline for submissions. Nominators and nominees are not required to be members of the Pioneers to participate. Inductees are chosen by Pioneer leadership and approved by the Board of Indiana Broadcasters.

Nominate here: <https://tinyurl.com/mmfcch3s>

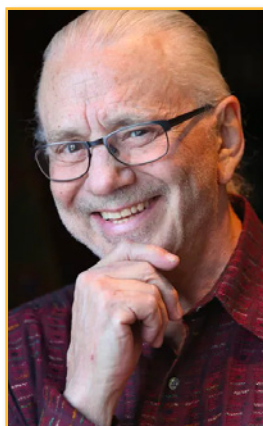


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Former Indiana Broadcast Pioneer
President

Dale Ogden

Former Chief Curator Indiana State
Museum

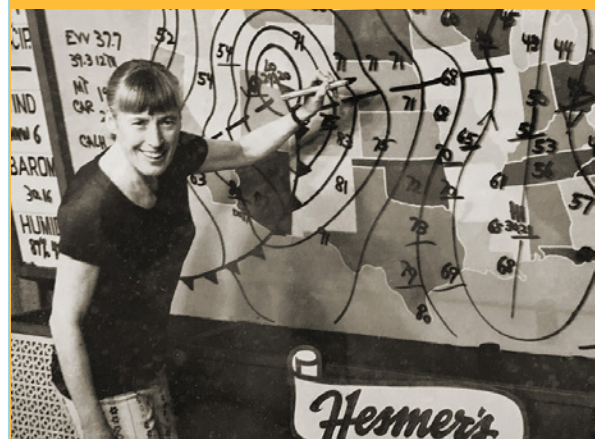
Mike Piggott

John Stehr, Mayor of Zionsville

Ken Beckley, Member, Indiana
Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame

SPECIAL THANKS to Blaine Thompson of **Indiana RadioWatch**, which is an online publication that reveals what's new at Indiana radio and TV stations: Format changes, personnel, ownership, engineering, etc. Indiana RadioWatch subscriptions are free. To subscribe, send an e-mail to irw@well.com. You can follow Blaine on twitter at @irwradio.

Due to an editing oversight, we accidentally misspelled Hall of Fame Inductee Marcia Yockey's name in the last issue of Broadcast Beat. She was an unforgettable Evansville icon.



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Passing the Torch

Things are changing with the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers. We are grateful to welcome two new faces to the Pioneers leadership. Longtime broadcasters Ken Owen and Clayton Taylor have agreed to fill the shoes as co-chairs of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers committee. They will share responsibilities for leading the organization with Ted Linn serving as Secretary.

Literally, it takes two to replace the Herculean work of retired broadcaster and mentor Dave White. When I was still a college student at Butler, Dave welcomed me as a volunteer member of the team that produced "Religion in the News" on WISH-TV. He is well known for his calm and steady demeanor and gracious leadership. Running an organization of volunteers with strong opinions is not an easy task, but Dave led the Pioneers for many years as a man with a mission. He insured that our Hall of Fame honorees came from all corners of Indiana and represented all types of broadcasters.

He took on the task of writing dozens of video tributes to Hall of Fame honorees, enshrined both on the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers website and also at the Indiana State Museum. Indeed, it's not a coincidence that Dave himself will be honored as a Hall of Fame inductee at this year's luncheon event on September 10 at The Bluffs at Conner Prairie.

Change is inevitable and rarely easy. But the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers committee of the Indiana Broadcasters Association is made stronger by Dave White's stewardship and service. We thank him for his time as chairman, and welcome both Clayton and Ken in their co-chair roles.



Dave Arland
Executive Director
Indiana Broadcasters Association

Indiana Broadcast Pioneers New Board Officers



Clayton Taylor



Ken Owens



Ted Linn



Dave White: A Life in Broadcasting

Radio and TV helped make me the person I am and determine my career path. As a child I played “radio” in front of a cardboard box with dials drawn on it. My microphone was a Lincoln Log with a string tied on to make the cord. Inside the box was my Zenith transistor radio tuned to the sonorous voice of commentator Earl Nightengale.

My first childhood radio memories are of listening to Joe Pickett and Glenn Webber on WFBM while having breakfast with my aunt and uncle. I can’t think of the radio duo without remembering the smell of coffee, eggs and bacon. Jim Gerard did man-on-the-street reports. Each morning Cold War America fears took a backseat to their homey humor and Woof Boom Mary.

Lunchtime flashbacks include sitting next to the Sears Silverstone radio with my grandparents listening to WIBC news, farm reports and my favorite, Jim Shelton, doing his Pick-A-Pocket quiz program. My grandparents always did better than me. They were remarkably well-informed thanks to WIBC and the fact they literally had lived history.

The moment I fell in love with the power of radio had to be hearing Sid Collins calling the opening moments of the Indianapolis 500. For me, Collins, Donald Davidson and Howdy Bell brought the race to life with their dramatic and insightful commentary and interviews.



Although he produced a program on WISH TV for 28 years, Dave White was never a Channel 8 employee. He was paid by The Church Federation.



Dave White and Phil Foley hosted Power Source Videos for 10 years on WHMB TV 40. Power Source featured local and national music artists.

“A church connection led to my becoming a public affairs program producer at WISH TV where I continued for 28 years. Many of my most treasured friendships among broadcasters grew out of those years.”

As I grew up TV also made an impact including the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy's assassination, and the moon landing. I remember them distinctly. Each seemed very real and alternately swung me from great optimism to despair. I came to realize radio and TV took faraway events and brought them home. They connected everyone. I wanted to be a real-life part of that connecting process. *(Continued)*



Dave and his wife Roberta's travels have included the Netherlands, U.K., the Mediterranean, and Eastern Europe.



WXIR Station Reunion

(Continued from page 5)

I got my start in radio and TV much earlier than most who grew up in the 50's and 60's. Mooresville High School had a new building with cables for connecting TV monitors. The school had won a Sony camera and video tape recorder years before most schools had them. Our teachers, concerned that many students didn't watch the news, decided to have us create our own newscasts shown in the classrooms. In addition, our school was given a weekly radio program on the Plainfield FM radio station. I was totally hooked. Broadcasting was for me.

A guidance counselor pointed out, while Indiana University had a top notch broadcasting program, Franklin College allowed students to be on the air from their freshman year. Franklin was a choice I never regretted. Student radio management jobs led to being employed at the local Franklin commercial station. I continued to work there after graduation for a couple of years before moving on to Indianapolis. Where, at various times, I was on WFMS, WIFE, WNTS, and WATI radio.

A church connection led to my becoming a public affairs program producer at WISH TV where I continued for 28 years. Many of my most treasured friendships among broadcasters grew out of those years.

My work eventually led me back to that 98.3 Plainfield FM frequency where I started in high school. It had become WXIR-Indy's Christian Music Station. I was morning drive host, operations manager, and program director. I worked for WXIR and its AM sister station WBRI for over 20 years. WXIR was credited with being one of the top Contemporary Christian stations in the country.



(Middle Left) L-R WISH TV Religion in the News co-hosts J R Ryder, Dave, Shiela Cox and Jeanie Wilks-Brown. **(Middle Right)** Dave at a recent meeting of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers.

My favorite memories of WXIR include coordinating album projects where local artists competed for a spot on a studio recording. The station sent me to do reports to Israel, China, Thailand, and Haiti. And, for ten of those years, I co-hosted and produced the station's music videos program on WHMB TV 40.

When my son Josh graduated from Franklin College, we partnered to form DreamVision Media Partners. DreamVision created broadcast and Internet productions for 20 more years. It was during that time I became involved with the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers.

Up to my retirement in October of 2023, I had the honor to work with many broadcasting professionals in helping to induct people into the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame. My work involved the creation of over 120 video biographies that are on display at the Indiana State Museum. Getting to know these people and working with them has been one of the greatest blessings of my life.



Broadcast Pioneers Gather in Carmel



A Brief History of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame (Part 2, 2000-2024)

By R. Dale Ogden

Chief Curator of Cultural History, Indiana State Museum, retired
Archivist, Indiana Broadcast Pioneers

In 2002, after two decades of fits and starts, a 200,000 square foot state-of-the-art Indiana State Museum (ISM) opened in downtown Indianapolis. Although the new museum expanded the institution's galleries by 300%, a number of factors conspired to drastically limit the space dedicated to any one aspect of Indiana history.

The physical constraints of the old ISM – no loading dock, a small freight elevator, detached galleries that often led to superficial exhibits, etc. – meant there were many important historical topics the museum was unable to even introduce.

Prior to the Great Depression, Indiana was the center of the American luxury automobile industry with Duesenberg, Cord, Marmon and others providing cars for the country's rich and famous. It was, unfortunately, impossible to get a full-size vehicle into the building.

The interurban system, Indiana's canal history, a significant treatment of Hoosier involvement in America's military exploits and the stories of Native Americans in Indiana – The Land of Indians – were absent. Ice Age Indiana was a haven for mastodons, saber cats, dire wolves and a myriad of additional predators and prey all now long extinct. None were present in the ISM's exhibits in 2000. Space for educational programming close to displays was nonexistent.

Discussions that often degenerated into heated debates about what topics to include in the new museum became daily rituals. The ISM staff was stunned by the passionate cadre each of the interests brought to the table, looking for a place in the new gem being created. It quickly became evident the museum couldn't satisfy everyone. The task was to not disappoint the institution's entire constituency.

As described in "A Brief History of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame (Part 1, 1981-2000)" that appeared in the previous issue of Broadcast Beat, in the 1980s the Indiana State Museum was an overgrown county historical society in serious need of exhibits the building could accommodate. Fortunately, the history of Hoosier radio was a perfect subject for the task and Reid Chapman, Jim Phillippe and other Indiana Broadcast Pioneers (IBP) stepped up.



From 1954 to 2016, WOWO Fort Wayne's, Bob Chase, called some 5,000 hockey games, 10 years of Big Ten football, 17 years of high school basketball and the Indy 500 for 27 years. Chase is pictured here interviewing Elvis Presley after a 1957 concert at Fort Wayne's Memorial Coliseum.



From 1955 to 1960, Butler University alumnus, Jim Mathis, was a salesman, announcer and children's program host at WASK, Lafayette and then WTTV-4, Bloomington. From 1960 to 1978, he held executive positions at WFBM, Indianapolis until leaving to form Broadcast Communications, Inc., where he was executive producer of the 500 Festival Parade, Notre Dame coaches' shows and other programs.

With the advent of a new modern museum, there were loud voices from within and without the organization that argued it was time to jettison stale subjects in favor of new, and it was claimed sexier, subjects. Luckily, there were also advocates to insist that the history of mass communications was an exceedingly relevant topic. Besides, broadcasters were with the ISM when the institution needed them most and it would have been unethical to abandon them now that so many other pursuits were clamoring at the table.

Of course, money speaks loudest in any debate. And once again broadcasters and their friends saved the day. The Richard Fairbanks Foundation made a critical contribution, as did former Thomson Consumer Electronics professionals, led by one of the company's vice-presidents, Dave Arland. Helen Campbell, the widow of Indiana Broadcast Pioneer, Eldon Campbell, was most generous.

As important as the financial support proved to be, museums tell their stories through the exhibition of 3D artifacts and photographs. Absent an influx of new material, displays become dated. When it became clear the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame would move to White River State Park with the ISM new treasures surfaced.

In a second instance, Dave Arland proved to be the Broadcasters – and the ISM's -- white knight. As Thomson was vacating their headquarters in Carmel, Arland arranged the donation of nearly a dozen historic RCA TVs, including a CT-100, the first commercially viable color set, which was assembled in Bloomington, Indiana.

Indiana broadcast pioneers also continued to provide iconic artifacts. Indiana's first female DJ, Ann Wagner Harper donated the complete cowgirl costume she had worn on "Circle B Ranch" when the state's first TV station, WFBM-TV Indianapolis debuted in 1949.



Indianapolis native, Madelyn Pugh Davis, graduated from Shortridge High School and Indiana University. Her first writing job was at WIRE-AM, Indianapolis. Davis moved to Los Angeles in 1943 and by 1951 her script writing had evolved into "I Love Lucy" for which she co-wrote 179 episodes.



(Continued from page 8)

Bob Glaze sported a fringed jacket easily recognized by his fans from schoolkids to college undergrads. Along with “Windjammer,” “Tumbleweed,” and “Sourdough The Singing Biscuit” Cowboy Bob’s “Chuckwagon Theater” anchored WTTV-4’s daytime programming for 23 years. The stylish icon has been rotated through the ISM’s broadcast exhibition for nearly a decade.

A collection of photographs, including images of a young Carol Burnett on “The Garry Moore Show,” were donated by Durward Kirby. In 1949, WFBM’s Gilbert Forbes became the state’s first TV news anchor. His descendants provided a large collection of photographs and when the Indianapolis Press Club closed its doors the ISM obtained one of Forbes’ early microphones, which has been exhibited at the museum for several years.

If a museum doesn’t evolve the danger of reverting to a dusty archive remains pervasive. 21st century technologies to present the IBP Hall of Fame to visitors and interactive experiences, especially those targeted to visitors too young to fully understand the golden age of radio, are critical to the health of a modern institution.

Messrs. Bill Shirk and Dave White recently created a fund to upgrade the technology used to present the IBP Hall of Fame at the Indiana State Museum. In addition to these Indiana Broadcast Pioneers, Jeff Smulyan, Ken Beckley, Ken Speck and the Bob Ross Foundation have contributed additional assets.

Museums are living organisms and it’s very difficult to predict what the future holds for any particular organization. A 20th century museum of quilts, rocks and “arrowheads” with accompanying labels typed on card stock bears little resemblance to a 21st

century museum that incorporates cutting edge audio\visual\interactive interpretations.

Priorities change, as does the public taste. The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame has been a feature of the Indiana State Museum for 38 years. With imagination and dedication that partnership should endure well into the future

The Indiana State Museum continues to collect memorabilia from Indiana Broadcast Pioneers.

Contact this writer for more information.

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Marv Bates became sports director at WGBF, Evansville in 1949. He called University of Evansville and high school basketball and football games, and Evansville Triplets AAA baseball. Using taped sound effects and teletype copy he simulated live broadcasts of “away” baseball games. Bates was among 29 killed in the 1977 crash of a plane carrying the U of E basketball team.

The ISM continues to collect memorabilia from Indiana Broadcast Pioneers. Contact this writer for more information. Rdogden53@gmail.com 317-699-0534



Barbara Boyd was born in Illinois in 1929 and after graduating from IU, settled in Indianapolis. She joined the WRTV 6 News staff as a consumer reporter in 1969. Among Boyd's many pioneering features was her piece on breast cancer. During the broadcast, Mrs. Boyd reported from her hospital bed one week after her own mastectomy.



Durward Kirby's family moved to Indy when he was 15. He began broadcasting at WBAA, Purdue University and later WFBM Radio, Indianapolis. With NBC in Chicago, he did everything from DJ to covering the 1940 Democratic National Convention. Kirby is remembered for his roles as announcer-sidekick on "The Garry Moore Show" in the 1950s and "Candid Camera" from 1961-1966.

In 1940, Hilliard Gates joined WOWO/ WGL, Ft. Wayne, as a studio announcer and sportscaster. In 1947, he was hired as WKJG station manager and sportscaster. WKJG-TV was signed on by Gates in 1953 and he later became VP and GM. Gates called pro basketball, IU, Purdue, and Notre Dame football, and high school basketball. He did an NBA All-Star game and twice handled play-by-play of Rose Bowls on NBC.



Photos shown here and/or historic artifacts have been donated to the Indiana State Museum by Indiana Broadcast Pioneers or their families since 2000.



Family Ties (Part 2, 2000-2024)

by Mike Piggott

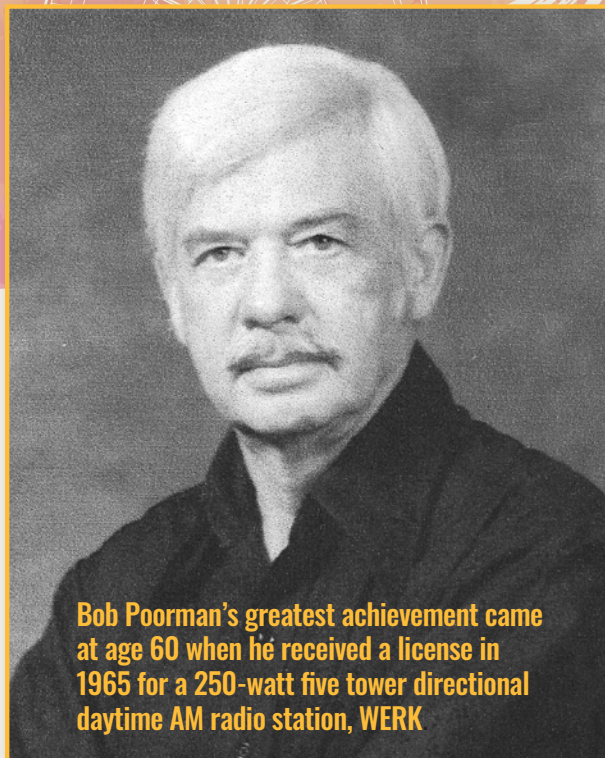


In a recent edition of this newsletter, I told you of five Indiana broadcasters who inspired sons or daughters to follow them into the field. There are several more of these pioneers who saw their offspring join them in the Indiana broadcast arena.

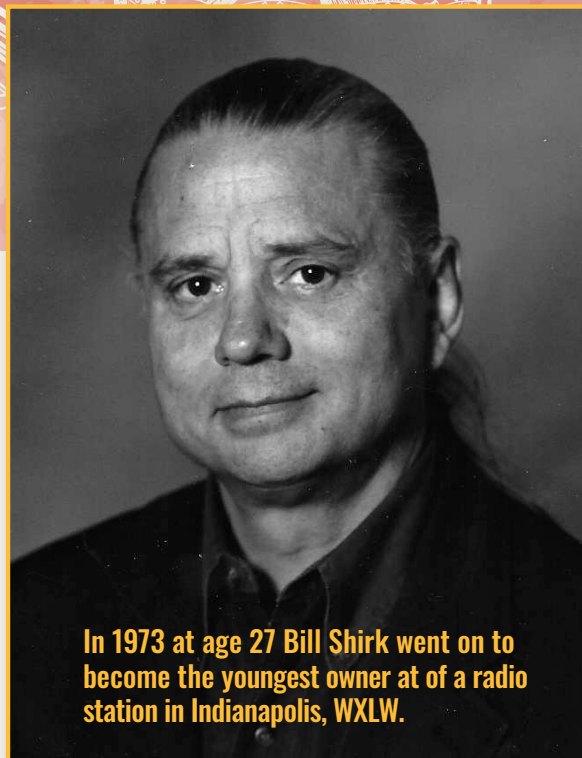
The Chapmans are unique in that both Jerry and his son J are members of the Indiana Broadcast Hall of Fame. Jerry got his start as a disc jockey on WIRE in Indianapolis before moving to WFBM as program manager. He was named general manager in 1973 and held that position for 18 years. Son J says his father gave him his first job in the business mowing the grass at the station's transmitter site. Once out of college, J worked on-air at several stations before moving into sales. He eventually became owner of the 12 station Woof Boom radio group, a name drawn from the WFBM legacy.

Bob Poorman and his son **William Shirk** Poorman, known in broadcast circles as Bill Shirk, have a similar story.

Robert James Poorman, owned the largest advertising agency in Muncie with accounts like Coke, Pepsi, Marsh Supermarkets, Ball Brothers, Marhoefer Meats and Jen Air. He built the first 36 lane bowling alley in town and was the head of the Civic Theatre. Robert was also President of the Elks Club that was responsible for all the circus' and carnivals that came into town as well as the Delaware County Fair. His son **Bill Shirk** would spend all week at the fair with the dare devil and freak shows. Bob Poorman's greatest achievement came at age 60 when he received a license in 1965 for a 250-watt five tower directional daytime AM radio station, WERK. The rest is history. WERK became the highest billing and rated daytime radio station in the state of Indiana with ratings as high as 70 percent.



Bob Poorman's greatest achievement came at age 60 when he received a license in 1965 for a 250-watt five tower directional daytime AM radio station, WERK



In 1973 at age 27 Bill Shirk went on to become the youngest owner at of a radio station in Indianapolis, WXLW.

◆ • **Bob Poorman (left) and his son William Shirk Poorman** ◆ •

Alumni at WERK radio included Tom Cochran, Dave Letterman, Bruce Munson, Larry McCabe (Y100 Miami, KRIZ Phoenix, KHJ, Kiss, KRTH, KFI, KFWB, KRLA, and KMPC all Los Angeles and also house announcer for the LA Lakers home games), John Irwin (General Manager of WERK, WOWO, WBZ Boston and WNBC New York). Bill Shirk became the general manager, program director and radio personality on WERK. The station was sold in 1980 for \$1.3 million dollars. Three years later it sold for \$300,000.00 and now it is a 10 watt station on the top of a church worth nothing.

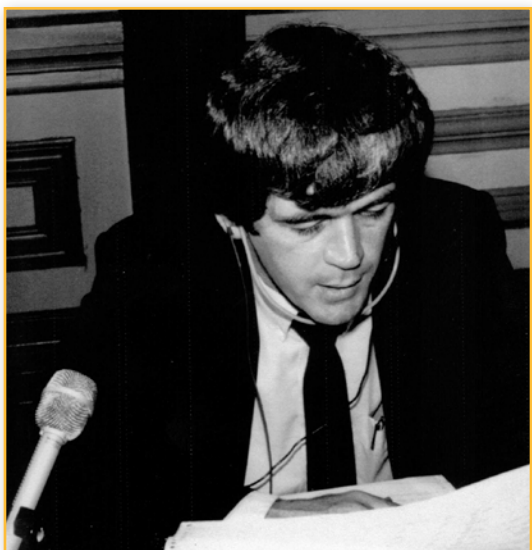
In 1973 at age 27 Bill Shirk went on to become the youngest owner at of a radio station in Indianapolis, WXLW. In the 1990's and 2000's Bill Shirk brought 3 commercial FM signals, 106.7, 100.9, 96.3 and 3

non-commercial FM signals, 89.1, 90.5 and 91.1 to the Indianapolis Metro, as well as two low power television channels. The time he had spent in the fair and carnival in his early days also lead to an escape career in which he set eight Guinness world records.

Another Indiana Hall of Famer, **Mark Boyle**, is the son of Minnesota sportscaster Joe Boyle. Mark is the play-by-play voice of the Indiana Pacers. At the time of his father's death in 2017, Mark wrote in a Facebook post, "He would listen to my tapes, which I'm sure were excruciatingly painful to sit through in those early years and offer blunt critiques. He would always manage to find something positive but was unsparing in his observations about what I could do better."



(Continued from page 12)



Now retired broadcasters Mike and Jim Piggott, sons of Hall of Famer Joe Pickett

Dillion Welch can certainly look to his dad **Vince Welch** as a role model in his motorsports announcing career. Vince is known nationwide as a college basketball and motorsports announcer. His three-decade journey began in Richmond and included stops at WISH, WNDY and WIBC. Dillion graduated from Ball State in 2016 and after calling USAC Sprint Car races for 3 years, transitioned to the Motor Racing Network calling NASCAR events on the national radio broadcast and also doing NASCAR, IndyCar and IMSA events with NBC Sports. He says of his mentor, "My dad ultimately showed me that there could be a career for me in racing without having to drive myself. I've driven race cars since age 7 but ultimately, like many others, got to a point where it wasn't financially feasible anymore. Growing up watching my dad on TV talk about the sport I love so much showed me an avenue to continue to be involved in it without being behind the wheel."

Dan Modlin was influenced into two careers by his father, long-time Indiana farm broadcaster Harry

Martin. As Dan tells it, "I learned a lot from my dad about editing, enunciation, and editorial integrity. I had the chance to work with him for 16 years at his Rural Radio Network, which provided agricultural news and programming to 52 Indiana radio stations. I later moved into public radio news and worked for 23 years as the News Director for the NPR affiliate at Western Kentucky University. My dad is a member of the Indiana Broadcasters Hall of Fame and I'm a member of the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame, so I feel like he was an amazing role model and teacher."

Bob Kiley was the youngest general manager of a radio station in the country when he headed market-dominating WIFE in the 1960s. He eventually partnered with his brother and uncle to operate an advertising agency, Kiley Communications. His son Greg was interested in radio sales, but at the request of his father took the position of Media Director at the agency, which turned into a 10-year relationship. In 1992, the agency dissolved, and Greg began a career in television sales including the last 26 years at WISH. He is currently Regional Sales Manager.

“seeing what our dad’s did was larger than life and we wanted to be a part of it.”

Dennis Goins had a lengthy career as a news and sports photographer at several stations in Indianapolis, Lafayette and Lexington, Kentucky. He now teaches broadcasting at Ben Davis high school. His son, Ben, obviously learned a lot from his father. He played three seasons of football at UIndy, then gave it up to become the team photographer. Graduation from UIndy sent him into the sports production field and he now works as a production assistant with ESPN in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Hall of Fame broadcaster **Joe Piggott** (Pickett) has the distinction of being the father of two retired broadcasters. Son **Mike** retired in 2001 after a 50 year career in radio and television in Lafayette and as Purdue University’s Director of Community Relations. Son **Jim Piggott** spent several years as a news reporter in Indiana before moving to Jacksonville, Florida. He retired in July from WJXT where he worked as city government reporter. The mayor of Jacksonville issued a proclamation noting, “Jim Piggott’s career has been marked by his unwavering commitment to accountability in local government, with over 6000 visits to Jacksonville City Hall to ensure the public is well informed.”

J Chapman summed up the attraction to the media by all of these second generation broadcasters when he told me, “seeing what our dad’s did was larger than life and we wanted to be a part of it.”



Several Indiana Broadcasters, including Jerry Chapman welcome President Gerald Ford in South Bend at Notre Dame - 1975



J Chapman speaks on Capitol Hill at a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing



Jerry Chapman



The Chapmans are unique in that both Jerry and his son J are members of the Indiana Broadcast Hall of Fame.



Broadcasting Prepares John Stehr for Next Chapter: Politics

So, nearly 50 years after the first time I cracked a microphone at a 1,000 watt AM radio station in Erie, PA, I'm still telling stories. Except now, it's the story of Zionsville. The great things going on today – and the vision what will carry us into the future. On some level, it always comes back to communication.



I have spent most of my adult life telling stories—of people, places and events. Just about every year, that included the story of election night. Primaries, generals, local and national. I had a front row seat for all of it. In a journalistic career that lasted for more than 40 years, I covered campaigns and elections in places like Erie, Pennsylvania; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Salt Lake City; New York City, and, of course, for a quarter century in Indianapolis. As a political science and communications major in college (quite a few years ago), election night was always one of my favorite nights of the year.

While covering politics was a professional rush, I prided myself in being a journalist of the “Walter Cronkite model,” always taking great pains to never share publicly my own political preferences. But, as a citizen, I never missed a vote. Never. I am proud of having an unblemished record of voting in every primary, municipal, special, presidential and midterm election since I first became eligible to vote in 1976. Too many Americans sacrificed too much to give us that right. Exercising it ties us to them—and helps build a foundation for the future of our democracy. Through it all, I never imagined that one day I would be on the other side of the process. But a few years after retiring from broadcasting, circumstances put me there. Instead

of counting votes cast for others, it was my name on the ballot. I've gone from “frying pan” (an air-conditioned television studio) straight into the “fire” of being a politician.

Before I took that leap, I leaned on some of the people I had gotten to know in politics over the years for advice on what it really takes to run a campaign. I looked up a friend who has held significant office to ask if I should jump in. He told me to define my “why” in 10 words, and if I couldn't do it, I shouldn't run. My 10 words: “I want the town we all love to do better.” Then he said I needed to come up with 10 words for why I am the right person. “Because I have the





communication skills to do the job.” After that, he told me that I was ready. I filled out my candidate paperwork the next day.

I knew my time in Broadcast journalism would be an advantage. Obviously, there is name recognition – but also some insight into carrying a message. I’ve learned from seeing good campaigns and bad campaigns, from candidates who are able to articulate a vision to those who just can’t seem to settle on platform. With those observations in my mind, I was able to put together a set of guiding principles to which people in Zionsville responded.

What I didn’t anticipate when I began my personal political journey was the emotional investment it takes to put your name on the ballot. On dozens of election nights, I cavalierly read the numbers identifying winners and losers without really considering that there are real people behind the names -- people who have invested time, money, and a lot of mental energy offering themselves for public service, only to have their fates decided by the whims of the voters who may or may not be truly engaged in the process.

After a few months in office, I’ve learned that many skills honed during my broadcast career are serving me well now -- being a good listener, having a thick skin to criticism, and recognizing that I can’t do anything alone. Just like a news anchor has a large team behind him or her, a Mayor needs to rely on many people as well. As in broadcasting, we need to keep the people we serve at the center of everything we do.

So, nearly 50 years after the first time I cracked a microphone at a 1,000 watt AM radio station in Erie, PA, I’m still telling stories. Except now, it’s the story of Zionsville. The great things going on today – and the vision what will carry us into the future. On some level, it always comes back to communication.

In my first career, I was humbled knowing that people would tune into our broadcasts, and I am humbled that my Zionsville neighbors chose me as their Mayor in my second. My latest story is still being written and I will be proud to share it as it evolves.





Advent of the Two-Person Anchor Team

by Ken Beckley

Member, Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame



Anyone 60 years or younger likely would not recall when two-person news anchor teams did not exist in Indianapolis. I am unaware of the history of the other television markets in Indiana.

The concept was not new nationally when WISH-TV apparently became the first to introduce it in Indy. I've been unable to find a definitive article or newspaper ad that pinpoints it, but it appears it was the late 1960s when Mike Ahern and Rolland Smith were paired. My station, WFBM-TV (now WRTV), followed suit on October 5, 1970, when I joined the highly respected and popular Howard Caldwell on the early evening news. WFBM-TV (NBC affiliate) had witnessed the success of the Chet Huntley-David Brinkley team from

1956-70 as they competed for ratings with the equally competent Walter Cronkite on CBS. In those years, female news anchors were practically non-existent, anywhere.

ABC News tried a three-man anchor team in the late 1970s – Peter Jennings, Frank Reynolds, and Max Robinson – but the concept was later abandoned.

I had joined WFBM-TV in 1967 after two years of reporting and co-anchoring at WLOS-TV, Asheville, NC, preceded by two years at WTHI-TV, Terre Haute. (During the summer of 1962, I was a WFBM-TV news intern.) On April 29, 1968, I began anchoring the late evening news, an unheard of one-hour broadcast for that time of day, programming that lasted

approximately one month, as I recall, as Indiana and television stations wrestled with the U.S. Department of Transportation over where the time zone line(s) should be drawn through the state. The early evening news was thirty minutes during that period.

Howard and I were paired October 5, 1970, and I continued to solo anchor late evening, then he joined me there September 3, 1973. We were a team until WRTV brought Clyde Lee to succeed me and I became the station's first executive news producer in April 1976.

Something else that is now a staple in the television studio – the teleprompter – was not introduced at WRTV until the 10:00 p.m. newscast, May 1, 1975.

Looking back, the advent of co-anchors and much later, teleprompters, produced moments of humor, although frustration then.

Directors of newscasts had been accustomed to simple setups of studio cameras, since there was one news anchor, one sports anchor, and one meteorologist. Banter among the three was unheard of, so two cameras could handle any situation. Audio and video switchers likewise had long dealt only with one on-air person at a time; now there were TWO.

Our script pages were marked at the top with H for Howard or K for Ken, indicating who would be reading each story. When one finished reading his story or stories, the other anchor immediately started reading his. Sometimes the director would fail to call for a camera or audio switch to the correct anchor, leaving



WFBM /WRTV Hall of Famers

(*)

Dick Baldwin	(Ken Beckley)	Howdy Bell	Barbara Boyd
Howard Caldwell	Eldon Campbell	Tom Carnegie	Jerry Chapman
Norman Cox	Bill Crawford	Reid Duffy	Bob Flanders
Hal Fryar	Bob Gamble	Marthabel Geisler	Jim Gerard
Allan Jeffries	Dick Lingle	Linda Lupear	Harry Martin
Jim Mathis	Bob McLain	Don Menke	Joe Piggott
Jack Rinehart	Frank Sharp	Gene Slaymaker	Glenn Webber

one on-air while the other was reading off-camera. Or one of us might have failed to recognize that the next story belonged to the other and we'd both start reading it at the same time. The most hilarious of all was a night when Howard finished his story, I started with mine. As the producer of that newscast, off-camera he then began figuring how much time we had left in the segment and failed to turn the page in his script. When I finished, he read the same story.

In regard to the advent of the teleprompter, copies of our paper news scripts were fed through a machine and onto a prism that projected the words onto a large screen across the camera lens. This enabled us to keep our eyes centered on the lens as we read. As with any technology, there can be problems. We always had a paper copy of our scripts in front of us, and as one finished reading his story from the teleprompter, we would turn the page on our desk script. This served well if the teleprompter paper jammed and we tried to calmly look down to find our place on the handheld script. The arrival of the digital age has made it so much easier for today's anchors, not that problems don't occur from time to time.

How fortunate I was to work with so many professionals who became inductees in the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame. Of the 34 eventual Hall of Famers who worked at WFBM AM-FM-TV/ WRTV, during my decade (and one summer) at the station, I served with 27(*) of them. It was a remarkable era.



Scott Alan (birth name Scott Alan McIlrath), 59, died May 27, 2024 after a two-car automobile crash. Scott was on his way to his new job as VP/Operations for the Bloomington (Illinois) Bison hockey team. Scott graduated from Butler University. Scott worked in Indianapolis WAJC and WTPI, in Lafayette at WASK and WAZY, and in Kokomo at WZWZ and WIOU. He was part of the WSHW (Shine 99) morning show for nearly 30 years. He also served as emcee and announcer for the Indy Fuel hockey team. www.shirleyandstout.com/obituary/ScottAlan-McIlrath



Jim Culbertson, 85, Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Board Member, died June 24, 2024, following illness and surgery for a broken hip. He graduated from Syracuse University, and after time in the Peace Corps in South America, he worked in Indianapolis at WISH-TV, WIRE(AM), WENS-FM, and at WTHR-TV. www.indystar.com/obituaries/psbn0866358

Indiana Broadcast Pioneers
Board Member



Robert V. (Bob) Jones, 89, died May 26, 2024. Bob worked in marketing and PR at WOWO and WGL radio, both in Fort Wayne, along with occasional on-air work, since he had a deep voice. He developed a friendship with Hank Aaron during a publicity tour he arranged while working for

Magnavox Corporation.

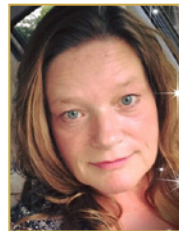
www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/fortwayne/name/robert-jones-obituary?id=55206079



Robert Glenn Lindsay, 66, died May 8, 2024. His five-decade broadcasting career began at age 16. He worked in Evansville and Owensboro radio (WSTO, WVJS), and in Louisville, Kentucky. He was one of the early on-air personalities at WSTO.

www.milwardfuneral.com/obituaries/Robert-Glenn-Lindsey?obId=31436387

[Robert-Glenn-Lindsey?obId=31436387](http://www.milwardfuneral.com/obituaries/Robert-Glenn-Lindsey?obId=31436387)



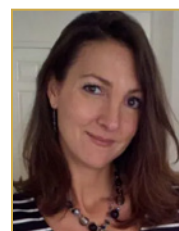
Michelle Rivers (birth name Michelle Lynn Ward Copeland), 54, died March 28, 2024. She graduated from the Columbia School of Broadcasting and worked over 20 years in radio, notably at WENS and at WTPI. www.sandersfuneralcare.com/obituaries/michelle-ward-copeland



Buddy Scott (birth name Buddy Kincer), 78, died February 4, 2024. Before a legendary career programming several Chicago radio stations, Buddy was a high energy night DJ at WIFE(AM) both in the late 1960s and again in the mid-1970s.

He then worked in Evansville at WGBF.

www.friedrichjones.com/obituaries/Buddy-Buddy-Scott-Kincer?obId=30642130



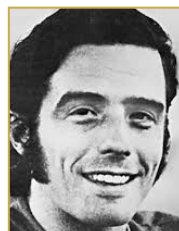
Tanya Spencer (birth name Tanya Sumner), 53, died May 24, 2024, after a cancer battle. Over a 20-year television career, she was a reporter and anchor for ten of those years in Indianapolis at WRTV-TV. Before that, she worked in Evansville at WFIE-TV. She also served District Three on the

Whitestown, Indiana Town Council.

www.cecilfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Tanya-Sumner?obId=31664843



Dan Stevens (birth name Stephen M. Coning), 76, died June 15, 2024. Dan worked in Indianapolis at WGEE radio ("JJ Stevens") and as Dan Stevens at WIRE, WIBC, and WTPI. www.arnmortuary.com/obituaries/stephen-coning



Dick Summer, 89, died May 14, 2024. Dick was one of Indianapolis' first Top 40 radio DJs. He did nights at WIBC and worked at WISH(AM) and did a dance program on WISH-TV. After working in the Hoosier state, his career continued at powerhouse radio

stations WBZ (Boston) and WNEW-FM (NYC). www.tlcfuneralhome.com/obituary/Richard-Dick-Summer