

Message from Dr. Joe Misiewicz

Indiana Broadcast
Pioneers Chairman

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BROADCASTBEAT

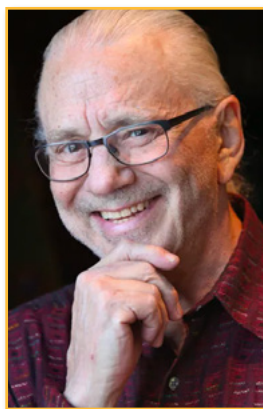
Letter from the Editor

by **Bill Shirk**

Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Broadcast Beat Editor

Charlie Burke

(A.K.A. Scott Wheeler)



I first met Scott when I came to Indianapolis to reprogram WXLW into a top 40 Station. He had a great air check so I hired him on the spot. He was so good that three weeks later the number one Station in town, WIFE, offered him a job to become one of the good guys.

The next time I met Scott I had just received a license to put on WHHH 96.3. He had just left WZPL where he was the program director, music director, and on air talent. Again, I hired him on the spot as program director, music director, and on air talent for WHHH. He was a big reason for the success of WHHH, which is well documented.

Here is a snapshot of his 50 year career that started when he was 16 years old getting a FCC license before a driver's license. WGEE (Sunday morning, board op.) WGEE-FM (weekend overnights). WNIR (weekends & swing) WIFE (Mid days and production director). WNTS (Production) WGBF Evansville (news, weekend swing) WXLW (news and weekends) WIFE (middays) WNDE/WFBQ. (production director and midday on WNDE) WENS (PD/MD & middays) WZPL (PD/MD & middays) WHHH (PD/MD & mid middays). KISS (PD/MD). WNOU (Radio Now) weekends. WENS (afternoons). WYXB (mornings and afternoons, programming) Hawaii Media Programming various formats: chr, hot AC, classic hip-hop, 80s, oldies, 90s classic hits... afternoons on KORL Honolulu and KONI Maui.

Freelance VO for 100s of clients, including Progressive Insurance, The Vatican, Gulfstream Aviation, Kingdom of Qatar, The UFC, Canadian Rail, DreamWorks, Good Morning Dubai, Coca-Cola Eastern Europe, Port of Reykjavik, Various US political groups, etc. I hope you enjoy his article in today's BroadcastBeat.

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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](https://twitter.com/irwradio).

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Support the Next Generation of Broadcasting

The Indiana Broadcasters Association is delighted to have the active engagement of an entire committee of Indiana Broadcast Pioneers who help our organization by recommending honorees for the annual Hall of Fame and also edit the “Broadcast Beat” magazine. We’re grateful for their support.

Starting this year we will no longer require dues to be an active member in the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers.

Even though we are no longer requesting dues this is a tremendous opportunity to make a difference in the life of a young person by supporting our scholarship program. For the past several years, we’ve awarded ten \$5,000 scholarships each year to deserving students enrolled in Indiana broadcasting, journalism, and production programs at Hoosier institutions. Our Pioneers contribute annually to the Reid Chapman Scholarship, with contributions matched directly by the IBA to insure that one of those scholarships is issued each year.

You can contribute by sending a check made out to the Indiana Broadcasters Foundation or by making a payment on our website at the link below.

<https://tinyurl.com/futurepioneers>





Our Pioneer Prez

by Dr. Joe Misiewicz

Recently the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers had a lunch gathering with 39 in attendance. Our thanks to our program guest **Mark Newman**, Executive Director for the Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations (IPBS) for providing information related to the budget challenges public stations in Indiana might be facing. Our plan is to have another lunch in late October or early November. Make sure this email is shared with other Pioneers who may not be on our list.

Each Pioneer shared a 'one minute' story about their career path in the broadcast industry it was clear many enjoyed lengthy careers, many had shared workspaces and the range of job titles was intriguing. The varied career paths were simply fascinating.





It's important each Pioneer share my email (drjoe@bsu.edu) with other Pioneers who did not attend or former co-workers who may not be active with the Pioneers so they can be added to our mailing list.

As the new Chair of the Pioneers, I'm hoping each Pioneer continues to make at least an annual financial contribution to the Indiana Broadcasters Foundation (IBA) to help support the ten **(10) \$5,000 scholarships** awarded each spring. Our contributions last year were more than \$3,000. Here's the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/futurepioneers>

A shout out to **Bill Shirk** for making this magazine happen. His support of the Pioneers is essential and there is no "magic" behind his professionalism to help make the Pioneer organization solid. Another note of thanks to previous Co-Chairs **Ken Owen** and **Clayton Taylor** for providing some guidance as we prepped for the lunch gathering.

Finally, several of you mentioned I did not offer any background about myself at the lunch. Simply put, I came to Ball State in 1990 as Chairperson of Telecommunications (now Dept. of Media). Retiring in 2012 I was then elected President and CEO of the Indiana Broadcasters Association passing the gavel to **Dave Arland** after 3 years. I became a Starbucks barista for almost 2 years then returned to part time teaching at Taylor University, Ivy Tech, and Ball State. I previously served on the IBA and Pioneer Board. I chaired departments at Morehead State

(KY), Bradley U (Illinois) & Central Michigan. Also taught at Eastern Michigan and Central Missouri State. My degrees are from Eastern Michigan and the University of Michigan. Wife Kerri and I have awarded 17 scholarships at Ball State along with others to Eastern, Central and UofM.

I've been fortunate to receive the IASB John Knight Award and be in the IPBS Hall of Fame and Central Michigan University's College of Communication Media Hall of Fame. Finally, the IBA has awarded me the Severino Leadership Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Oh, and remember to check out the Pioneer website! <https://tinyurl.com/futurepioneers>

Becoming the Chair of Indiana Broadcast Pioneers is simply awesome!

Have Ideas for the Pioneers?

Send a note to Dr. Joe
(drjoe@bsu.edu).

We are working on an event to celebrate the refresh of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers exhibit at the Indiana State Museum.



indianabroadcastpioneers.org



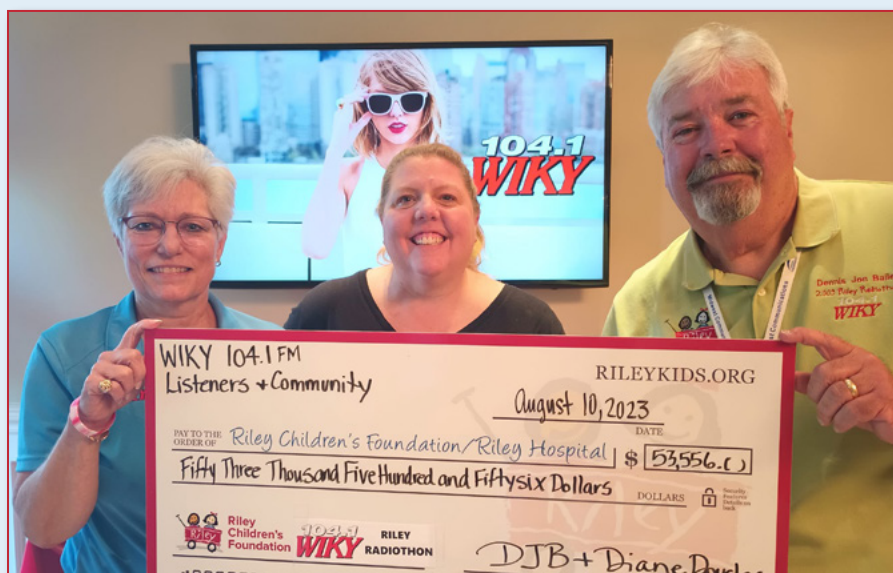
A Brief History of The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame (Part 3, The Future)

by R. Dale Ogden

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

If you've been involved with the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers (IBP) for the past 40 years, or more likely a consistent reader of Broadcast Beat, you're familiar with the history of the IBP Hall of Fame and its partnership with the Indiana State Museum (ISM). In that case, you may be curious about what the future has in store for this alliance. While predicting coming events is always risky, reviewing the current status of our collaboration does offer an indication as to what the future might hold for the relationship.

At present, installation of a relatively modest updating of the broadcast history component in the ISM's exhibit program is underway. The "New Indiana State Museum" is now 22-years old. An entire generation of Hoosiers has no memory of the ISM being anything other than what it is today. The institution's permanent galleries have been fine-tuned over the past two decades, but they are substantially as they were installed in 2002. That's not a sustainable model for a modern multidisciplinary museum.



Dennis Jon Bailey grew up all over the world as an "Army Brat." On the radio virtually every day of his adult life, including on WIKY, Evansville since 2004, "DJB" and co-host, Diane Douglas were named 2011 U.S. Small Market team of the Year by the National Association of Broadcasters and received that Indiana-specific designation from the IBA in 2019.

A glass-panel timeline of Indiana broadcast history circa 1921-2010 has been damaged by repeated maintenance and is obsolete in any case. It needs to be repaired, enhanced and brought up to the present if it's to have any role in conveying this aspect of the Hoosier story.

In addition to information conveyed through text, the exhibit's graphics haven't

been updated since 2010. Howard Caldwell was a titan of television news in Indiana, but broadcast journalism didn't end with his passing nearly a decade ago. None of the Hoosier newsmen and women, nor any Indiana broadcasters who've been inducted into the IBP Hall of Fame since 2010, are currently represented in the ISM through labeling or a key

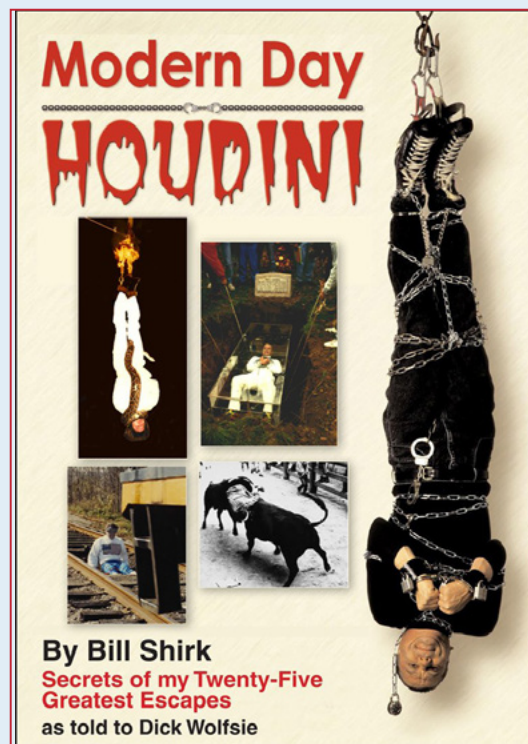
image. Those upgrades are long overdue.

While these developments are important, they're largely cosmetic. Additional aspects of the project must be addressed as well if the IBP Hall of Fame is to remain relevant at the ISM. The interactive kiosk on which text and images pertaining to all inductees is available to any guest willing and able to navigate the system is unwieldy, physically unattractive and for some intimidating. These matters need attention beyond a couple of new photos and a few lines of text.

More critical than current issues with hardware is the need to address the Hall of Fame software, which remains as it existed when the kiosk was developed in the 1990s. Modern technologies evolve at breakneck speed and often become obsolete overnight. Broadcasting is a highly technical enterprise and the ISM is utilizing mechanics developed over a quarter century ago to convey its history.

Beyond the physical presentation of artifacts, photographs and didactic text, no modern institution can remain relevant absent a vibrant website. At present, the IBP, ISM and Indiana

In 1965, Bill Shirk's parents obtained a license for WERK, Muncie where he began as a janitor. Over the next 4 decades, he owned or worked in every capacity for 10 radio and 2 TV stations in Greenwood, Greencastle, Cloverdale, Lebanon and Indy. C. 1970-2000, Shirk was also the World's #1 Escape Artist, setting 8 Guinness Book of World Records. His feats have raised thousands of dollars for Hoosiers in need.



Broadcasters Association (IBA) all maintain independent websites that interpret, in whole or in part, Indiana broadcast history. Each of these sites has strengths and weaknesses when it comes to telling the stories of individual broadcasters and their stations. Additionally, websites are expensive to build and maintain. Conveying similar content on multiple platforms simply isn't efficient.

Conversations regarding merging the information offered on each of these organization's websites onto one platform are in the initial stages. Drawing from each

group's strengths will result in a resource greater than the sum of its parts. The new presentation will eliminate the current media kiosk and instead will offer a QR code for visitors to scan. This code will point to the IBP Hall of Fame website, accessing biographies and videos of inductees. This allows for annual updates to be done quickly.

A new media component will feature graphic overlays of period technology (radios and TVs) that will play selected audio and video clips. This feature will replace the ambient media and scrim graphics that are currently presented in the gallery.



A Brief History of The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame *(continued)*

None of the improvements suggested above will occur free of charge. There is no free lunch. The ISM has committed resources to, at a minimum, short-term upgrades and the IBA has been a source of support for many years. As was stated in the previous issue of Broadcast Beat, individual broadcasters and/or their organizations have stepped forward to help fund these and associated endeavors. Foremost among these benefactors are Bill Shirk, Ken Beckley, Jeff Smulyan, Dave White, J Chapman, Ken Speck and the Bob Ross Foundation.

Indy native, Tony Lamont broke into radio in the 1970s on WXIR, Indianapolis, a leading contemporary Christian music station at the time. In 1980, he began a decade as WTLC's morning DJ. Respected for his efforts on behalf of Indy's youth, Lamont remains on the city's airwaves six days a week hosting gospel programs on AM 1310 and 95.1 FM



As of 2024, in his 35th season as the Indiana Pacers radio play-by-play announcer, 5-time Indiana Sportscaster of the Year, Mark Boyle has called over 3,100 NBA games. Teaming with color commentator, Bobby "Slick" Leonard for nearly three decades, the duo formed the most iconic broadcast team in Indiana sports history.

Michigan-born, Debby Knox began her broadcasting career at stations in Elkhart and South Bend. Joining WISH-TV, Indianapolis in 1980, Knox eventually co-anchored WISH's 5 p.m., 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts before retiring in 2013. Returning to Indy TV in 2015, the 3-time Emmy winner served as WTTV-4 news anchor for another 8 years.





The son of fellow Hall of Famer Jerry Chapman, J Chapman has been on-the-air in Indy, Madison, South Bend, Kentucky and Pennsylvania and co-founded WPDS-TV (WXIN-TV). Since 2013, J has been owner and President of Woof Boom Radio (in honor of his father's employer, WFBM), which serves several communities in central Indiana.



Mishawaka-born, Deb Miles started in radio doing news at WNDU, South Bend and eventually became a news anchor at WGN, Chicago. She has been at WBYT, South Bend since 2000, hosting a variety of country music programs. During her 24 years with B-100, Miles has helped raise over \$5 million for charities like St. Jude's Hospital.

The Indiana State Museum is a multidisciplinary museum and as has been previously recognized there are many agendas at play. Civil War enthusiasts, classic car aficionados, fans of Ice Age mammals, devotees of Native American history, costume and other textile disciples and a myriad of other special interests would all like to see additional physical space, staff and other resources dedicated to their passions.

The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers, Indiana Broadcasters Association and Indiana State Museum have partnered in teaching the history of Hoosier radio and television broadcasting for 40 years. Resources, attention and commitment will be required from all if this valuable endeavor is to continue into the foreseeable future.

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



Rights to these photos were acquired by the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers to produce videos that accompanied induction of new Hall of Fame members, primarily in 2023 and 2024.



Broadcasting Decades

by Scott Wheeler



WNDE staff after walkout

Almost any person who has worked in broadcasting for a number of years has encountered some memorable people and unusual situations. Over the years I've worked many formats and every daypart on-air. My first major job was at WIFE, a very successful Indianapolis top 40 station owned by Don Burden, a sometimes fiery owner. Because the five request lines were always flashing, we had request line operators helping the on-air person answering the phones at peak hours. One day while I was on-air

the owner saw the lines flashing and stormed into the studio next to me where the "operator" sat. Even through the soundproof glass I could hear the owner yelling "next time answer the #%% phones" as he ripped the phone out of the wall. A few months later we had a cash giveaway contest running. Mr. Burden called the air-staff into his office and threw a big stack of \$100 bills in the air. As the c-notes were fluttering down, he screamed "we're giving away ##@## money! Make the %%% contest sound more

exciting!". We considered him to be a crazy old man (he was about 45), but in reality, he was a very smart operator who was passionate about his radio stations, the kind of passion that's rare in today's world of mega companies owning hundreds of stations. WIFE's air studio was surrounded by floor to ceiling glass, looking out on 1440 North Meridian Street. To the right was a former piano showroom, with a similar glass front. At one point WFYI-TV was doing their live fund raising telethon from that former showroom. I happened to be in the adjacent WIFE radio studio when I noticed a pretty girl wearing a trench coat walk up to their window. She opened the coat, smiling and exposing her otherwise unclothed body to the public television people as they were on air live. Within a couple of seconds I saw a chaotic situation as all telethon participants seemed to drop what they were doing as they turned to the window. At least one camera operator abandoned his camera, causing it to swing wildly as he ran toward the window. After about 10 seconds, the girl closed her coat and jumped into a waiting car. To this day I still wonder what that episode looked like on live public television.

A few years later I was on-air one day at WNDE when an engineer came into the studio, telling me that there were two FBI agents in the lobby insisting they needed to question me immediately. I couldn't leave the studio so I asked him to bring them in, as I wondered what terrible crime I might have committed. They actually had just one question for me. They wanted to know what time the station had played "Disco Duck" that morning. A young girl had been kidnapped. She managed to escape, and told the FBI she was blindfolded while her captor stopped his car to pick up an accomplice. She remembered what song was playing on WNDE at the time of that stop. The FBI needed to know the time to help them determine approximately how far the captor had driven before picking up his accomplice. A few months later at a station event a woman approached me and told me that that information had helped convict her daughter's kidnappers. At another point while I was working at WNDE, a new GM came in and immediately fired the PD, who was very popular with the air-staff. On a Saturday around noon, the airstaff gathered at the station and voted to quit en masse. I was on the air so not at the meeting, but agreed to go along when the others came into

the studio to tell me. They had prepared a continuous loop cart with that same by now hated song, "Disco Duck", and a legal ID on it. The cart went on and the entire staff drove away. No laws were broken as a union engineer was on duty to take transmitter readings, something required at the time. He was an older guy who knew nothing about the format, so Disco Duck ran over and over and over until the new GM was able to track down the incoming PD and have him take over. At the time, this incident was believed by local and national media outlets to have been a publicity stunt, but it was real.

A couple of us did return to the station after a week or two. I stayed for about another 4 years and through a total of 5 PDs. Our sister station was WFBQ. There were a number of "celebrity" visits to the stations. One evening Greg Allman's road manager called me saying Greg would like to go on-air. I suggested WFBQ was the station for him. Q jock Roberta agreed to the idea. Greg arrived about 30 minutes later, having had more than a few drinks. He insisted that Roberta let him sit down and run the board. I was monitoring from down the hall as he slurred a lot but didn't violate any obscenity rules.

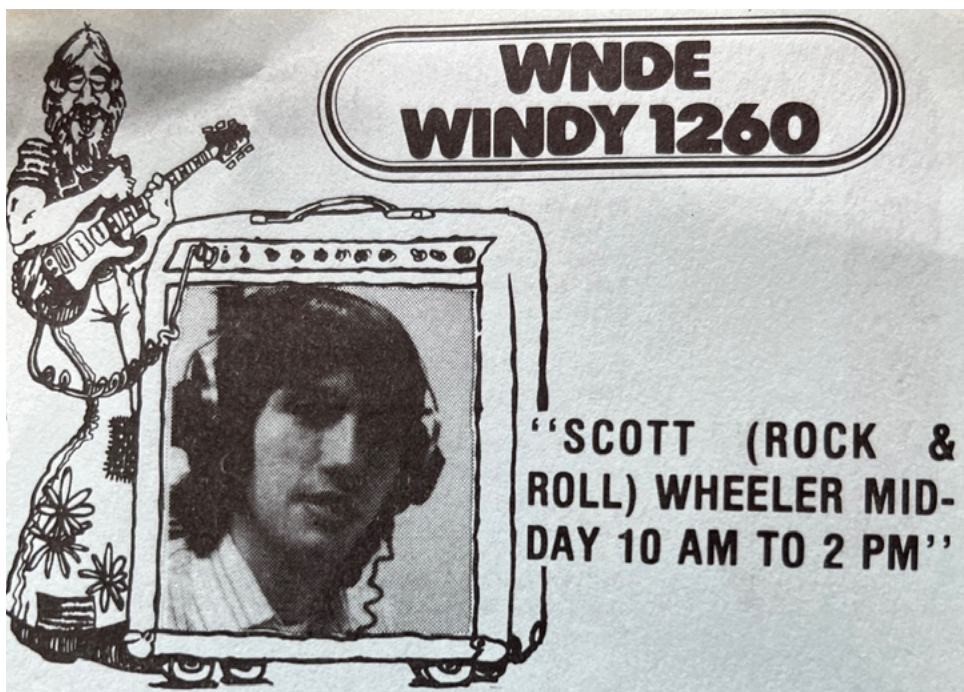


Scott Wheeler WHHH



Broadcasting Decades *(continued)*

They were playing vinyl at the time, made obvious when Greg knocked the tone arm across the record that was playing. Roberta ran down the hall and asked me how she could get Allman to leave. I don't remember how she finally convinced him to leave. I still have an aircheck of that incident. I was on-air on WNDE one Saturday morning when Eddie Money burst into the studio asking me where the cold beer was. I told him I had none. He was disappointed but asked me if I wanted to play his new song. It was a vinyl



test pressing, the only one in the state he said. I put it on a rarely used turntable we had in the studio but the record was terribly warped. I put a dime on the tone arm but that didn't work. Eddie handed me a quarter so I was able to play his new song "Two Tickets To Paradise". Eddie was pleased but probably not as pleased as if I'd had cold beer in the studio. And there was the day teen idol Leif Garrett visited the studios

at 6161 Fall Creek. So many girls arrived at the station hoping to get in, that the back door had to be locked for the first time. In the parking lot, a girl jumped in front of his limo, hoping she would be injured and he would get out and carry her into the limo with him. Her plan didn't succeed, and luckily she was not injured.

Those are just a few of many radio memories from the 70s. Things were just as interesting in the next few decades.



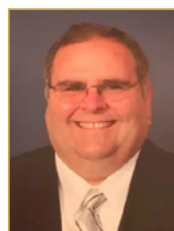
David Rodgers, 87, died May 16, after a courageous cancer battle. After graduating from Williams College, Mr. Rodgers owned radio stations under the Whitewater Broadcasting banner, including WIFE-FM in Rushville, WZZY-FM in Winchester, WFMG-FM and WKBV(AM) in Richmond, and WLPK(AM) in Connersville. Mr. Rodgers (or “Chief” to his employees) recently sold the stations to the longtime Whitewater Broadcasting Director of Programming Rick Duncan and his wife, Heather. Obituary link: <https://www.doanmillsfuneralhome.com/obituaries/David-A-Rodgers?obId=42588765>



Dan Reynolds, 71, died February 23. “Doppler Dan” was a meteorologist for WTWO-TV/Terre Haute for 32 years. He was passionate and loved his career. Obituary link: <https://www.greinerfuneralhome.com/obituary/Danny-Reynolds>

John Coleman, 82, died February 7 after a long illness. Mr. Coleman was a South Bend broadcaster (WJVA) and in 1964 interviewed The Beatles when they first visited the U.S. Later at WFYI/Indianapolis, Mr. Coleman was the voice of the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. He also did sales for other Indiana radio stations. Obituary link: <https://www.southbendtribune.com/obituaries/psbn1091661>

Ken Kurtz, 95, died April 7, 2025. He was the News Director for WANE-TV/Fort Wayne in the mid-1960s through mid-1970s. He later worked for over a decade in Lexington, Kentucky local television and retired in 1989.



Bruce Yowell, 67, died November 30, 2024 of natural causes. He was the Chief Engineer for Terre Haute TV stations WTWO-TV and WAWV-TV. Bruce started at WTWO in 1978.

Obituary link: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/robert-yowell-obituary?id=56916204>



Tim Tolbert, 73, died January 16, 2025. Mr. Tolbert began his radio career in the mid-1960s at age 16 in Paoli, Indiana (WVAK), followed by stops in Salem (WSLM), Jasper (WITZ), Paoli, again (WUME), French Lick (WFLQ), and volunteered at WBRO in Marengo. Obituary link: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/timothy-tolbert-obituary?id=57298298>



The Little Daytime AM Station and “The Men at WERK”

by Bill Shirk

In 1965, my mother, father, and I received a license for a WERK 990 AM; a 250 watt, six tower directional daytime AM radio station only on the air from sunrise to sunset. From the first time it signed on air that Valentine’s Day until it was sold in 1980, it became the highest billing daytime AM radio station in the state with Pulse ratings as high as 70% 12+. None of this would have been possible without the outstanding “Men at WERK” at the station. Here are the alumni of WERK in no specific order:



Dave Letterman

In 1969 after graduating from Ball State University with a degree in telecommunications, Dave Letterman started his radio career at



WERK. He was a summer replacement for Tom Cochrun, who was getting married and traveling Europe with his wife over the summer. Letterman was a DJ and reported the news.

After his radio gig, Letterman transitioned to television as a weatherman, with his quirky on air antics for WLWI (WRTV) CH 13.

After a few years, he left television and joined Jeff Smulyan’s daytime AM WNTS (News, Talk & Sports) as a midday personality. Two years later the station changed to religion and Dave was out of a job. I called Letterman and offered him the midday slot between Joe Pickett in the morning and Casey Jones in the afternoon at my station WXLW. He told me he was going to take his truck and his dog, and go to California to become a comedian. The rest is history. He became one of the greatest late-night talk show hosts of all time, receiving many Emmys and awards.

John Irwin, GM WNBC New York

In 1967, I hired John Irwin to do the news on my weekend show for WERK. I couldn’t afford to pay him anything so I gave him Burger King certificates as payment. John eventually ended up being News Director of WERK. When



I left for Indianapolis to run and own WXLW in 1972, I made John the General Manager of WERK. I got some blowback from my employees that I made the wrong choice, but time proved them wrong. After becoming General Manager of WERK, he went on to be the General Manager of WOWO Fort Wayne, WBZ in Boston and later WNBC in New York (with his office next to Dave Letterman). I guess I made the right choice. He is now the General Manager of the largest church congregation in the state of Colorado.

Dave Dugan

Dave Dugan was another young guy I hired to be a DJ on WERK. He later went to Indianapolis to be a part of the Bob and Tom show. Today, he still does voice characters for the show. He also does stand-up comedy throughout the Midwest.



Bill Shirk and Tom Cochran

Tom Cochran was a junior at Ball State University when he started at WERK as a weekend DJ and news. After Tom graduated, he went full time as a news director and DJ. He stayed at WERK for three years. He then left for Indianapolis' WNAP as a news commentator. Cochran made the transition to television news in 1979. He began working for the Indianapolis CBS affiliate, WISH TV, where he anchored and produced the evening news magazine. Cochran joined WTHR in 1981 as an anchor of the nightly news. He was the first person to ever win a national Emmy in Indianapolis. In 1984, he left television to run his film company, 19th Star. The Discovery Channel, PBS, TLC, The Travel Channel and other TV stations ran programming from 19th Star including popular biographies of Babe Ruth, James Dean and "The History of Houdini" featuring some of my wildest escapes.

In the late 90's, he sold 19th Star and wrote his first mystery novel "The Sanibel Arcanum". Cochran briefly returned to the Indianapolis news scene in 2003 when he became News Director of WISH TV. He stayed there three years before retiring in 2007. Tom and his wife Lana, after retirement, moved to the small coastal town of Cambria, California.

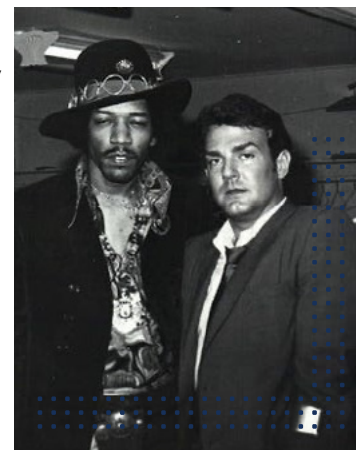
Larry McCabe and Jimi Hendrix 1968

Now we come to Larry McCabe. When WERK signed on the air in 1965, Larry McCabe was the program director, midday DJ, and did the majority of all the commercials. He was a tremendous talent and had a golden voice. He was the number one personality on WERK when he was there, and everybody in Muncie just loved the guy. He started his career at WLBC, the only other station in Muncie. He had a falling out with the owner and after went to Marion at WMRI. When my father hired Larry at WERK, he was made one of the highest paid DJs in the state of Indiana behind only a few Indianapolis personalities. He was worth every penny. His ratings were monumental, sometimes as high as 75% of the audience when he was on the air according to the Pulse rating service.

In 1971, he left for KRIZ in Phoenix and became it's Program Director and top air talent. In 1973, he was offered morning DJ from the owner, Cecil Heftel, at the legendary station, Y-100, in Miami. After that in 1974, Larry was offered middays at Boss Radio KHJ in LA, one of the number one radio stations in the US at the time. Following that, he was at KIIS, KFI, KMPC (owned by Gene Autry), KRLA and K-EARTH.

McCabe did voice-over work for numerous sitcoms including, Family Ties, The Jeffersons, Who's the Boss, Married with Children, and Fresh Prince of Bel-Air.

He was the P.A. announcer for the L.A. Lakers from 1979 through 1982, which included two NBA championships. He also did P.A. announcing for the L.A. Dodgers in 1987.





Bruce Munson

Bruce was at WMRI Marion before he came to WERK in 1968. Bruce was a young guy with tremendous talent, and he had a knack for comedy. He later ended up in Indianapolis at WNAP. He was offered a job from Dave Letterman to come to L.A. and write for him. He turned it down because he thought he'd be better off going to law school. He became a lawyer and "did time" at the state house (5 terms as an Indiana State Representative). He also ran and sold cable TV systems in the state. Now he does part-time work at WERK-FM in Muncie.



Jim Mougette

Jim was the top billing salesman at WERK and eventually became the sales manager. He left WERK in 1976 and bought the Alexander FM 96.7 station. He was general manager and sales manager of the station until he sold it. He then came to Indianapolis and started a coupon mailer that was a tremendous success.

Bernie Eagan (IBA Hall of Fame)

I was doing the afternoon shift on Top 40 WXLW. I answered the request line and on the phone was a guy, Bernie Eagan, who did an incredible impersonation of Cheech and Chong. He also did other impersonations of famous people. Since I was always looking for this type of thing to interact with on my show, I invited him to come to the station to record some of his characters. When I met him at the station I was surprised to find out that he was completely blind. I recorded his bits and he was a part of my show until he left to attend Ball State University in Muncie.

After he graduated from Ball State University with a degree in telecommunications, I had

a full-time opening at WERK. My mother who helped run the Station while I was in Indianapolis was concerned how a blind person could operate a board and be a dish jockey. After talking with Bernie, she said he could put braille on the board, the cart machines and anything else that he would need to run a program as a disc jockey. We implemented all his ideas and to everyone's amazement, he was able to do everything that a person of sight would be able to do. In fact, he ran the tightest board of any jock I ever worked with.

In July 1981, Bernie left WERK and began working at Emmis Communications, specifically with WENS FM Indianapolis. He eventually became Music Director and Assistant Program Director of WENS FM along with hosting the afternoon drive from 1984 to 2002. He also hosted Friday night retro show from 1999 to 2002.

From 2002 to 2010, Bernie hosted mornings on WYXB FM Indianapolis. In 2010, he hosted afternoons on WYXB FM Indianapolis. Bernie has since retired.

Patty Spitler describes Bernie as, "A nice guy who gives us all hope. No matter what the disability, you find something you love and you do it to the best of your ability."

Stan Sollars

I hired Stan Sollars to do weekends on WERK when he was only 14 years old. He had a deep voice for his age and a talent beyond his years. He's been at Ball State for many years as a Broadcast Professor and the morning news anchor on WBST, Ball State's radio station.

Chuck Crane

Chuck Crane was another tremendous talent I hired at WERK at only 14 years of age. He worked weekends as a DJ for many years. He wound up in Chicago at WLS as the Music Director, and then went on to New York at WAPP as a DJ. He then became a dentist in Sarasota, Florida.

Paul Mendenhall (IBA Hall of Fame)

Paul Mendenhall began his lifelong radio broadcasting career in 1970 at Carmel High School, where he worked at the school's radio station, WHJE. After he graduated from high school, Paul came to work for me in 1974 at WXLW radio in Indianapolis as a weekend DJ while attending Butler University. From there, Paul transferred to Ball State to take his first full-time job for me at WERK radio in Muncie. At WERK he became the program director and served as one of the "Men at WERK" until 1981. Paul also managed the radio station at Ben Davis High School and was a teacher for 17 years. After stepping down from teaching, Paul joined Fairbanks Broadcasting in Indianapolis working for Chris Conner at WNAP radio. He then went to WIBC radio and finally to his current professional home at WTTS radio. Paul joined WTTS in Bloomington in 2001 where he now hosts the WTTS "Morning Show".

Tony Robinson

Tony Robinson was the first African-American I hired at WERK and he was phenomenal talent. He moved on to WOWO in Fort Wayne as a DJ and then later had an outstanding stand-up comedy career.

Bill Shirk (IBA Hall of Fame)

My parents made me start as janitor at WERK. Eventually, I became the general manager, program director, and on air talent. In 1972, I left to become the General Manager of WXLW and and bought it two years later. I was stuck in the daytime AM radio quagmire for 25 years.

In 1991, I was awarded an FM license for WHHH 91.1 FM after eight years of competing with 26 other applicants at the FCC. WHHH was the first new FM station in the Indianapolis market in 30 years. I then added two more frequencies to the Indianapolis Metro, Kiss FM 106.7 Greenwood

and Smooth Jazz 100.9 FM Speedway, as well as two low power TV stations, TV 53 and channel 69 (the only low power TV stations to be on cable). I was involved with all the stations as general manager, program consultant and on air talent. I sold all the stations with my partner, Bill Mays, to Radio One in 2000.

I then set my sites on bringing three brand new non-com stations to the Indianapolis Metro; Catholic Radio 89.1 FM, K-Love 90.5 FM and Top 40 91.1 FM with the famous WIRE call letters.

I then received six translators from the FCC. I later sold these to daytime AM radio stations in towns like Anderson and Crawfordsville so that they could have a 24-hour FM signal, which would help the survival of daytime AM radio stations.

In 1980 after my father passed away, we sold WERK AM 990 for \$1.2 million. This was the highest price ever pay for a daytime radio station in the state of Indiana. Three years later, the

station sold for \$300,000. Today, it is a 10 watt station on the top of a church worth almost nothing.

As for WERK, the call letters live on with one of J Chapman's "Wolf Boom Stations".... WERK FM 104.9 Muncie.



**Chuck Crane, Bill Shirk,
Larry McCabe, Steve Michaels,
Gil Hole**



Always Running on Two Tracks

by Dave Arland, IBA Executive Director



Representatives from IBA member stations meet with Senator Todd Young in Washington D.C.

It's invigorating to see our Indiana Broadcast Pioneers gather together and remember the good times, as we work to preserve Indiana's rich broadcasting heritage. Providing a voice for our Pioneers is just one service of the Indiana Broadcasters Association – where we work to advocate, educate, innovate, and celebrate.

For the past nine years, it's been my great honor to serve as Executive Director of the Indiana Broadcasters Association. Building on the work done by Gwen Piening, Joe Misiewicz, and Linda Compton, we learned quickly that helping our broadcasters meant always running on two tracks. In other words, we're always looking ahead while we're executing plans for building up our broadcaster community.

A few days ago, we finished a round of statewide sales training to encourage sales people – the lifeblood of our broadcast stations. And we recognized dozens of community service

projects undertaken by Indiana radio and TV broadcasters. As I told those who came to our Cardinal Award Community Service events in South Bend, Fort Wayne, Carmel, and Evansville, it's our broadcasters who do what TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Spotify cannot or will not do – devote their air time and resources to strengthen our communities and the important agencies who rely on our stations for support and visibility.

While a sweltering Hoosier summer is underway as I write this, we're deep into planning for the September 9 Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame event that will again be staged at The Bluffs at Conner Prairie. We'll add seven famous names in Indiana broadcasting to the Hall of Fame roster that afternoon.

And right behind that will be an amazing late October evening at The Cabaret in downtown Indianapolis where we will celebrate the



IBA Board Member Amy Dillon of WQLK-FM radio, accepts awards for community service work done in Richmond, Indiana.

annual Spectrum Awards for the Best in Broadcasting and also recognize honorees with the Tom Severino Leadership Award and the IBA Lifetime Achievement Award. Hours before the Spectrum Awards will be another “Your Broadcast Career Starts Here” IBA Career Fair at the Colts complex.

Meanwhile, on the other track, we’re “pressing the flesh” with members of Congress and working to pass important radio legislation that would ensure that electric carmakers don’t delete AM radio from vehicles – an important public safety concern. We’re also planning, along with a group of other midwestern states, to again stage another Engineering Conference in Ohio this September that will help our technical community stay informed and inspired.

Looking ahead, we’re already thinking about next year’s calendar and how we can both do things better but also do more to help our broadcasters keep their Indiana listeners and viewers entertained and better informed.



2026 Indiana Broadcasters Foundation Scholarship Recipients



Saving and Celebrating Indiana Broadcasting History (And You Can Help!)

by Ken Owen

It's a safe bet that somewhere in the home of a former broadcaster or a person who is currently working in the industry, there's a stack, or a shelf, or even a few boxes of artifacts from their careers. Those tapes, films, slides and other reminders of times gone by often sit for years; sadly, they often eventually wind up headed to a landfill.

It doesn't have to be that way.

Launched in 2021, the Indiana Broadcast History Archive (IBHA) is an ongoing project – overseen by The Media School at Indiana University-Bloomington – to collect, preserve, digitize, and showcase materials from radio and TV's yesteryear. It's designed to serve as a public site to display

"This is, in many ways, lost history. To save and showcase it is important both to celebrate our broadcast legacy, but to also make these items part of the historical record and available for modern and future generations to learn from."

and celebrate the state's broadcasting history and also be a place where media scholars and historians can conduct research.

Yes, that dusty can of 16mm film in your den is very possibly a historic artifact that can be saved, shared and celebrated.

There are more than 2,600 video and audio clips on the IBHA site (<https://ibha.indiana.edu/>) now, with a great many more in process. The IBHA is comprised of 26 separate collections, from people and organizations involved in Indiana Broadcasting. But time is critical. These time capsules of Indiana's past – films, tapes, scripts, photos, promotional materials, and more – are becoming increasingly rare.

"As the devices used to play back recordings have vanished – projectors, VCRs, and audio tape recorders – so have tapes, since people assume they've been made moot by the passage of time," notes Mike Conway, the IU Media School professor and former broadcaster who is director of the IBHA. "We are on a mission to save and preserve as much of Indiana's broadcast history as we can, and we ask those who've worked in the industry and their family members to consider adding what they have to the Archive. Most of the real gems we've received have come from former broadcasters, since many stations disposed of their archives years ago."

Prof. Conway says the majority of IBHA's collection is comprised of television clips. While the IBHA welcomes and accepts all historical materials, the needs are greatest for materials from outside of the Indianapolis area and for radio broadcasts.

The heavy lifting of digitizing, organizing and presenting the materials that come in is done by Josh Bennett, IBHA's Archivist. The launch of the IBHA in 2021 was funded in part by a grant from Indiana University's Arts & Humanities Council and the New Frontiers in the Arts & Humanities Program.

Conway's students have also conducted video oral histories with more than 60 veteran Indiana broadcasters, so the IBHA also contains important, colorful and personal recollections of the industry and how it developed. Those who covered Tony Kiritsis or oversaw changes in technology or the makeup of newsrooms provide valuable insights that often can't be gleaned from the clips of the day.

"It's a fulfilling thing to be a part of, and I'm excited to see what's happening as more people



Josh Bennett, Ken Owen, Anne Ryder, Mike Conway

learn of IBHA and want to add to our collections,” said Bennett. “This is, in many ways, lost history. To save and showcase it is important both to celebrate our broadcast legacy, but to also make these items part of the historical record and available for modern and future generations to learn from.”

Old clips have great power. I’ve presented a great many to IBHA, and this story is one of many.

Several years ago, before he sadly passed away, I was given a box of tapes from Indiana Broadcast Hall of Famer Dave Smith. One of the things he had recorded and saved was a WTTV multi-hour 50th anniversary special from 1999 which included a number of commercials from the station’s very early days. Months later, I received a message on social media from a complete stranger – a woman who said she’d spotted an ad for Schuster’s Concrete Block listed on the IBHA website and wondered if she could see it. Her dad – who died when she was very young – was listed as being in the ad.

I found the clip and sent it to her and, minutes later, received a note back. She reported that she was crying as she was watching her father move and hearing a voice she had no recollection of.

The work we did even decades ago is powerful still.

If you have materials or questions about IBHA, please reach out to Mike Conway (mtconway@iu.edu) or Josh Bennett (jbennett@iu.edu). I’d also urge you to visit the Archive’s website, which is searchable by name, or station, or even keyword. You’ll need to register to view many of the clips due to copyright issues.

Broadcast history is being preserved and will be available to be discovered and reviewed by future generations. That’s an exciting and powerful thing, just as the notion of serving a community over the airwaves is.

Dig, my friends. And thanks!



Questions or donations?

Mike Conway (mtconway@iu.edu) / Josh Bennett (jbennett@iu.edu)



A Short and Incomplete Biography of Ted Linn

by Ted Linn, Indiana Broadcaster

“How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good NEWS!” (Romans 10:15; Holy Bible)

God is in the news business. In fact, God is the biggest-ever breaker of news. God has made news from the start, from creation and all the way to today. I don’t know that my feet are beautiful, but taking His lead I suppose, as a 22-year old college graduate upstart, I chose the television news business and as such, I was privileged to witness and participate in and play a small role in news distribution for a career.

A career. 1977 to 2020. Really it is just a speck of time, even though it feels like a lot more to me. I worked more than 43 years in broadcast news and without interruption from my career start in Kokomo, IN to a natural and timely retirement in Fort Wayne, IN; four cities, four markets, building from news bureau manager and on-air reporter to producer and #2 in the WISH-TV newsroom in Indianapolis and eventually to News Director in Fort Wayne, IN for 16 years.

Who else has spent more time in each of Indiana’s two largest markets; Indianapolis (21 years) and Fort Wayne (16 years)? If you can’t tell, I’m a proud Hoosier. Ask anyone who knows me, and they’ll quickly confirm that.

Back to God for a moment. For some reason, in early 1975 He orchestrated my dismissal from an out-of-state Bible college (long story) to transfer to Butler University (love those Dawgsl) and an internship at WISH-TV under the legend himself, Lee Giles and a career was born in 1977. I cannot thank God enough for making that happen and Mr. Giles for his mentorship over my career both professionally and personally.



At Hall of Fame induction, 1

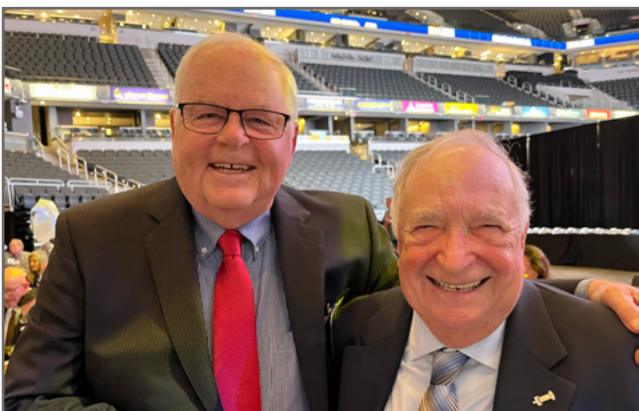
And when we moved to Fort Wayne in 2004, I could not have worked for a better General Manager than Alan Riebe at WANE in Fort Wayne. Alan and I are cut from the same cloth, both Hoosier kids who love the state and its high school basketball. We enjoyed success together guiding WANE to market dominance.

Honestly, no matter where you go, the news is all about the same. No one ever knows what will happen on a given day. Some of the bigger days during my career include the Blizzard of '78, the move of the Baltimore Colts to Indianapolis, 65 election nights (from Ronald Reagan, #40

to Donald Trump, #45), September 11th, 2001 (in Nashville, TN at news management meetings), and all 46 Indianapolis 500's which I have attended. Awards nights, ratings wins, contracts, egos, humility, diversity, balance, teamwork, and above all, friendships! All of these factored into a long and successful and meaningful broadcast career.

Humbly, I'd like to think I've mentored a few of my own as I am proud to report I hired exactly 100 people into my Fort Wayne newsroom during my 16 years in the Summit City. It is these people who mean everything as each created equally, but with separate and diverse skills and who did so much to utilize their skills for our mutual benefit. And it paid off! Reporters, anchors, photographers, producers, sports, and weather, all exhibiting the best of the business. I'm rewarded virtually every week with some sort of contact with these fine people. Oh, and I live with the woman I often called my Assistant News Director. My wife of 50 years, Kathy, had(s) an opinion on everything she sees on local TV news.

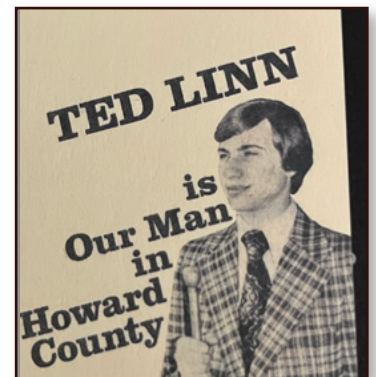
As I said, God loves news, especially TV news, I think. I wouldn't change much of anything over my 43 years in the fray of it. "All glory to God!" (Galatians 1:5; Holy Bible)



The two men I worked for most of my career. Alan Riebe (left) GM at WANE. And Lee Giles (right) ND at WISH.



With Walter Cronkite at promo shoot early in my career for WLFI on the set of CBS Evening News. Summer 1979.



Readers Digest promo pic of me as a reporter for WLFI, the Howard County bureau (Kokomo). 1977-1979



Kathy Linn and me at our 50th wedding anniversary party May 30th, 2025 in Shipshewana. In the article I call her my assistant News Director.



What's in Your Closet?

by Clayton Taylor

After working in newsrooms for the first 13 years of my career, I was able to move into an office. It didn't take long for any office I occupied during the subsequent 32 years to be notable for its clutter. Among the stacks were work tapes, airchecks and composite reels from my time spent as a reporter, producer and executive producer. My efforts to clean up often resulted in tapes being boxed up and tucked away in another part of the station.

Not long after retiring, I used some of my spare time to digitize many of the tapes I had stashed away. Thanks to the willingness of WFYI to loan me a portable Beta tape player, I was able to digitize an array of stories and assorted productions dating back nearly four decades. Fortunately, I had dubbed some of my oldest work to VHS years ago. It lost some technical quality, but at least it still played.

It is humbling to see one's early work – or at least it is for me. But despite the imperfections, I was pleased to become reacquainted with some of the individuals I was lucky enough to have met over the years: Drina Abel, a thrill-seeking grandmother who fulfilled a dream to walk on the wings of a biplane; Evelyn James, an elderly artist who recalled meeting Buffalo Bill



Stacks of tapes in Clayton Taylor's office. The difference between clutter and important broadcast history depends upon whether tapes are saved digitally.



Even routine day-to-day broadcasts provide fascinating glimpses into the eras in which shows were produced



Clayton Taylor and Doug Blake edit a story for broadcast on WFIE-TV, Evansville

and drawing his picture as a little girl; and Virgil Everhart, a cantankerous man who tried to saw his house in half as part of a “division of property” with his ex-wife. I also worked on stories and documentaries about the big issues of the day – but large or small, each story was part of the tapestry of life in Indiana and Kentucky – the two states where I worked.

Radio and Television are ephemeral, with broadcasts

being sent through transmitters to viewers and then disappearing into the cosmos. Digital distribution platforms have created more permanent repositories, but content from the analog era is often preserved by chance. Broadcast stations have been known to relegate archival tape collections to dumpsters or keep them boxed up in their basements. Individual broadcasters may have saved



Ken Owen

some of their favorite work, later stowing them away in closets. Unlike wine, these things don’t improve with age.



“I want it to be of value to Hoosiers, to anyone who cares about history,” said Conway. “The idea with the website is you don’t have to scroll through endless video clips. We try to tell stories. We try to tell people stories.” – Mike Conway



Mike Conway interviews Ken Beckley for Indiana Broadcast History Archive

Ken Owen began his journey into digitizing old video clips more than 20 years ago in his job as Executive Director of Media Relations at DePauw University. As he began to digitize the university’s tape collection, he popped in some of his own tapes during off hours. Soon, with used gear he acquired, Owen began a quest to digitize and post online material from his own archives (as well as from other tapes he’s salvaged) via Ken’s Classic Video Vault on Rumble and through daily Facebook posts for Indiana Broadcast Pioneers. He explains his fascination: “It’s



Aircheck being digitized

a window into different times in our lives and important history that has been, in a majority of cases, seen once and vanished. For broadcasters and casual viewers, it’s a snapshot of another time -- what happened and how it was presented. For

historians, these clips are literally time capsules buried in the past.”

Owen has donated his voluminous collection of digitized videos to the Indiana Broadcast History Archive (IBHA) at Indiana University. The archive was launched in 2021, and is the dream of Professor Mike Conway, a former broadcaster with a passion for history. “Radio and TV were the most important way we got information in our communities. So, it is a very important part of our history for future generations. And we want to save it and try to make sense of it,” Conway explained.

Conway works with IU Media School archivist Josh Bennett, who oversees the digitization of both audio and videotapes, adding metadata and posting them to the IBHA archive. The archive and website are constantly being updated with both broadcast clips and oral histories of broadcast professionals who worked both on-air and behind the scenes. “I didn’t just want to save stuff so we could tell war stories. I want it to be of value to Hoosiers, to anyone who cares about history,” said Conway. “The idea with the website is you don’t

have to scroll through endless video clips. We try to tell stories. We try to tell people stories.”

Students from the IU Media School conduct most of the oral history interviews. Those interviews are used to feed into multimedia stories about seminal events in the state. But some airchecks stand on their own. “I did get the three-quarter inch tape of Captain Jack (Hanes) interviewing Larry Bird in 1979 on WTHI,” Conway said. “I call it the Holy Grail.”

The IU Media School is also in the process of acquiring the massive sports broadcast history collection of 93-year-old Indiana native John Miley, which includes over 44,000 broadcasts spanning more than 90 years. Even with the Miley collection, Conway is still actively seeking out material from Indiana radio and TV stations. “I’d encourage anybody to get in touch with me. If we can make it work, we’ll do it. I feel it’s a race against time, because the equipment is not going to last forever. So, I’m trying to move to get stuff digitized as quickly as we can.” Ken Owen concurs: “Once those tapes are gone, it’s lost history. All this stuff has been captured. We just don’t want to lose it.”



IU Media School Archivist Josh Bennett with Howard Caldwell's daughter Ginny Hingst, as she donated his archive in 2019



Ken Owen delivers tapes and hard drives to IU Media School Archivist Josh Bennett

How you can help:

If you have tapes stashed away and would like to donate them to the Indiana Broadcast History Archive, **contact Mike Conway at mtconway@iu.edu**. Conway encourages donations of material from radio and television stations from around the state.

Conway also welcomes volunteers from IBA and Indiana Broadcast Pioneers, particularly regarding oral histories. He is looking for suggestions for individuals from across the state to be interviewed. Those interested in conducting interviews can receive some basic training. The interviews will then be added to the collection.



About the author: Clayton Taylor began his career in 1976 as a reporter at WTHI in Terre Haute. He reported and produced newscasts at stations in Evansville, Fort Wayne and Indianapolis. Taylor became the first managing producer for WISH-TV's investigative reporting unit, the I-Team, in 1991. In 2001, he became Vice President of Production at the public television station WFYI and worked there until his retirement in 2021.

**Clayton Taylor,
retired Vice President of
Production, WFYI-TV**

Resources:

Indiana Broadcast History Archive <https://ibha.indiana.edu> The IBHA also houses the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers collection.

Add any information about the IBA's Broadcast Pioneers website?

Ken's Classic Video Vault on Rumble <https://rumble.com/c/vhsmemories>

Indiana Broadcast Pioneers website: indianabroadcastpioneers.org



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