



Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Newsletter



PIONEER ACTIVITIES



The February 3, 2017 Pioneer Board meeting included a discussion about what the Pioneers might do in 2017 to be more involved as an organization, and/or of how the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers might use its branding to establish a better focus, or scope and commitment to our industry and the public beyond the Hall of Fame.

Former IBP President Lee Giles offered the suggestion of a spin off from Ad page in the HOF/Spectrum luncheon program that we hoped would better purpose our mission: The ad stated, "The achievements of those we honor create the foundation for our future."



Lee Giles

Lee explained he was attempting to suggest this is a time that we in the media NEED to be concerned about our industry since we may be at the lowest level of public acceptance and understanding of our role and address that issue in a positive manner that the Pioneers could essentially "front."

It was suggested that we consider writing and produce radio TV spots from :02 ID's to a maximum :20 or :30 in length for both radio and TV that would, for talking purposes of the moment, emphasize that "The Media Matter to You." The audio and/or video spots would simply remind the public of how and why we do matter, from news to public affairs to communication links during severe weather and other crises of events, and yes, entertainment and public service that hold us together from local communities and throughout Indiana. The completed announcements would make the point of "The Media Matter to You," perhaps followed with something like "The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers." The Indiana Broadcasters Association would be asked to become involved by urging its members to air the spots as a public service giving both the IBA and the Pioneers subtle on-air credit. Print options would also be considered for message.

The above project is being considered by both the Pioneers and the IBA but at this point is only in the planning stage.

Pioneerer Board member Dave White announced some design changes to Indiana Broadcasters.org, with the aim of adding a direct link to the Pioneer Facebook page to the home page of the IBA website.



Dave White

The intent is to help with visibility for the Pioneers, especially with IBA members and those coming to that site hunting for jobs. (Job Postings are the most visited section of the association's website.)

I'm not sure that will materially change our very favorable numbers, but it may remind IBA members about the Pioneers and our collective interest in the history of Hoosier broadcasting.

LUKE WALTON

IT AIN'T EASY BEIN' IN RADIO !



Luke Walton

Luke Walton was in high school when he took a class in journalism. His interest in the class led him to apply for a job covering sports events for the local newspaper. He was hired and the papers's editor assigned him to cover a high school football game. He loved it, and that early experience led him to consider writing sports stories as a vocation.

He enrolled at Depauw University and began playing in a dance band. The group landed a summer job playing at the Columbia Club in downtown Indianapolis and at the end of their stint the band was asked to stay on through the winter. They took the job. Walton transferred to Butler

University to continue his studies.

At that time students were broadcasting a campus Newscast over WGBF, the Evansville, Indiana AM station.

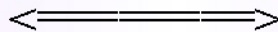
The original license holder for the station was G.B. Finke who owned a local furniture store. Finke and his wife eventually owned radio stations in Indianapolis, Terre Haute, and Decatur, Illinois.

After graduation Luke tried a career in sales, selling syndicated news paper stories to newspapers in Iowa. Then the depression hit. No financing was available and no one had any money. Luke returned to Indianapolis not knowing what to do but decided to apply for a job in broadcasting, although he said he didn't know anything about it. He contacted Jim Carpenter who was the manager of WGBF and Carpenter sent Luke to their Terre Haute station for an interview. There were no openings but

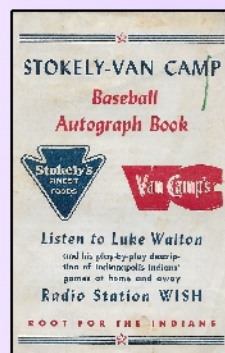
Manager Bill Behrman sent Luke back to Evansville as an announcer. It didn't last long. Two days before the annual Thanksgiving football game between Bosse and Evansville high schools Luke was

called in to the President's office and was fired. Being told he wasn't adapting to radio. Walton said he didn't care, he didn't like Evansville anyway. He was given two weeks notice and told he was scheduled to cover the annual football game. Lyle Ludwig was assigned to do the play by play and Walton was running up and down the sideline with a microphone. The weather was horrible.

Luke ran up and down the field carrying his microphone and dragging the cable behind him. There was snow, sleet, rain and cold, he was soaking wet and freezing. At half time Lyle told Walton he was turning the play by play over to him. So Luke began by telling the audience something he noticed earlier from the field. Central was running something similar to a "Flying Wedge". They put the ball in the middle of a "V" formation and ran straight down the field. He kept talking, embellishing what few highlights there were. When it was time to start the second half Ludwig wasn't around. He had gone home to get warm. Walton stayed in the booth doing the play by play until the game was over. When he returned to the station he started up the steps to the offices and saw the President of the Station waiting for him. During the second half of the game the stations phones were ringing off the hook, praising Walton's coverage of the game. Instead of being fired the President told him he was being sent to sister station WBOW in Terre Haute. Walton said, "That would be alright, I didn't particularly like Evansville."



By 1941 Luke Walton was in Indianapolis as sportscaster/salesman for WISH, where he did play-by-play baseball coverage of the Indianapolis Indians from 1948-55 and again in 1963. For "away" games in the early days he created his vivid descriptions from an station studio using cryptic teletype messages from distant stadiums. Walton left WISH in 1956 to form his own advertising agency. However he remained a part of the annual Indianapolis 500 radio coverage. His memorable rapid-fire voice from the pit area was part of the network broadcasts for 20 years. Walton died in 1990 and was later inducted into the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame.



IBP HOF MEMBER BOB PETRANOFF

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Robert M. Petranoff 91, a long-time resident of Bloomington, Indiana, passed away peacefully January 11, 2017 at Copper Trace in Westfield, Indiana.

Bob was born on October 11, 1925 to Dr. Theodore and Nell (York) Petranoff in Indianapolis. He graduated from Indianapolis Washington High School and Indiana University.

Bob married Peggy J. (McIntyre) on November 27, 1948, who survives. Upon graduation from IU, he began a long career in communications and broadcasting at a radio station in Freeport, Illinois. He and Peggy soon moved to Bloomington when he became Program Manager of WTTS and WTTV. Bob played a key role with Sarkes

Tarzian when Mr. Tarzian launched WTTV in the '50's. At the time, it was the television station licensed to the smallest city in America.

Petranoff also produced/directed the first-ever TV broadcast of a regular season college basketball game in 1951.

A plaque recognizing the event and the broadcast staff was



Bob Petranoff

WTTV Program Manager

placed in the former I.U. Field House on the I.U. Campus.

In 1957, Bob joined the Radio and Television Department Faculty of Indiana University, teaching courses in production and station management. During those years, he also produced radio and television programs for IU for distribution to commercial stations. In 1971, Petranoff then assumed a full-time position with the Indiana University News Bureau until his retirement in 1990. Additionally, he was an investor and part-owner

of various broadcast ventures including, Monroe All-Channel Cablevision, Indiana Communications, Inc. that owned WBWB (Bloomington), and WKRY (Versailles). He is a long-time member of the Indiana Broadcasters Association, Broadcast Pioneers, Indiana Broadcasters Hall of Fame, and Indiana Football Hall of Fame.

He also served on the Boards of Monroe County United Ministries, Bloomington Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Monroe County Red Cross, IU Federal Credit Union, and volunteered with numerous other community organizations. An avid and talented photographer, he provided many photographic services for his Church as well as for friends' weddings and special events.

Survivors include Peggy, his wife of 68 years; son, Ted (Georgia) of Tucson, AZ; daughter Claudia Schenkel (Greg) of Indianapolis; two grandchildren, Doug (Carrie) of Las Cruces, NM and Laura (Keith) Johnson of Indianapolis and 4 great-grandchildren; and his sister, Naida Huber of Harrisburg, PA.

Petranoff was also an investor and part-owner of various broadcast ventures, including Monroe All-Channel Cablevision and Indiana Communications Inc., former owner of WBWB and the original WKRY in Versailles, Ind.



Petranoff at WTTS Radio

The world's first televised broadcast of a regular season collegiate basketball game. I.U. vs Valparaiso - was televised on this site December 6, 1951 by WTTV.
Paul Lennon, IU - BS '50 Play by Play
Bob Cook, IU - BA '55 Color Commentator
Bob Petranoff, IU - BS '48 Broadcast Director
Paul "Pooch" Harrell I.U. Athletic Director
Presented by Indiana Broadcast Pioneers



**L-R Dave Smith, Warren Perney, Bob Petranoff and Doug Brown
WTTV Control Room**

Longtime east central Indiana community advocate, marketing and media professional has died. Al Rent most recently served as executive director and general manager of public broadcasting at Ball State University and its public radio and television properties. His career also included multiple media and public relations positions at Ball State and as owner and vice president of WLBC/WXFN Radio in Muncie and director of public relations for central Indiana-based Marsh Supermarkets. Rent was 73.



From 1980-1995, Rent was president and chief executive officer of his own company, J. Allan Rent Advertising and previously served as an account executive for Groves & Associates Advertising & PR.

A founding member of Indiana Public Broadcasting's television flagship WIPB-TV when it went on the air in 1971, Rent was well-known for his service to the community through involvement with organizations including Meridian Health Services, the Muncie Symphony Orchestra, Minnetrista, Huffer Memorial Children's Center; the Greater Muncie Area Council on Youth Leadership and the Martin Luther King Jr. Dream Team.. Because of his strong impact on the community, his death prompted numerous tributes on social media from those deeply saddened by his death. Even famed late night talk show host and Ball State alum David Letterman took time Wednesday to remember "an excellent teacher and mentor."

Rent was a volunteer. He was a leader. He was the go-to guy for the community to emcee big events. He was a public broadcaster. And he was a dear friend to many.

To Garfield creator Jim Davis, he was "the nicest guy he ever met." Davis and Rent, who were friends for more than 50 years, overlapped while attending Ball State. Though they were acquaintances in college, they became closer friends after graduating. They shared an office while working at the Muncie Mall, Rent working in promotions and Davis in advertising. Then, Davis worked for Rent while handling art direction and publishing for Marsh Supermarkets' magazine, where Rent was director of public relations. Later, the two were co-owners of local radio station WLBC-FM for 12 years. Davis called working for and with Rent a joy. Davis said Rent was "always prepared, very well-organized and always "a ray of sunshine."

"I just marveled at how much he could do and how well he could do it," Davis said. It was that kind of positivity that shined through Rent's long-lasting broadcasting career.

Rent was Ball State's Public Information Services coordinator of radio and television news from 1967-1970. He left and became a founding member of WIPB-TV in 1971. Rent returned to Ball State in 1993 as assistant to the vice president for advancement and director of marketing.

"He was called Mr. Muncie for a good reason because he cared deeply about the community," Gora said. "He represented the community so well. I think Al will always be remembered as a person who brought joy to every interaction he had."

Most recently, Rent was the university's executive director and general manager for public broadcasting operations, overseeing WIPB TV and Indiana Public Radio, WBST.

"For his strong community involvement, Rent was the first-ever recipient of the "Al Rent Spirit of Muncie Award" in 2002, as well as the winner of the sixth Muncie-Delaware County Chamber of Commerce's Chamber's Legacy Award in October 2016. Rent was also The Muncie Star Press Person of the Year for 2010, (The Legacy Award) is a culmination of truly a lifetime of an attitude of being positive and service-driven.

With Rent's passing, community members agree "Mr. Muncie" will be greatly missed, but what reassures these members is the legacy Rent will leave in the city, the state and beyond.



L-R Twin brother Andy and Al



Al feeling right at home.



L-R Al, Morrie Mannies & Brad Groninger,

Jinsie Bingham -Update With Comment



I really look forward to your newsletters and always learn something. Tho I sold my station WJNZ 22 years ago the now-owners let me voice a PSA once in a while. My son Doug Wokoun has now been a broadcaster longer than I was.

I don't think today's crews had as much fun

as we did but I'm not ready to get up early to go back!

As a broadcaster and owner of WJNZ Radio (later WREG), Greencastle, Jinsie Scott Bingham in 1977 became then first woman in Indiana to purchase and operate a commercial radio station. Bingham was president of the Indiana Chapter of American Women in Radio and TV, served on the Greencastle City Council, and has had leadership posts in many community civic organizations. She retired from broadcasting in 1994.

Death Notices

Michael Lee Gradison, son of Rita Jane Murphy Gradison and Jules Turoff Gradison, passed on Sunday, February 12th, 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana. His early years were spent on a farm on the West side of the city. He attended Claremont Grade School, Speedway High School, and graduated with a degree in Political Science from Brown University. During his years at Brown Michael was Program Director of the campus AM radio station. In that role he contributed to the successful launch of an FM station, WBRU, which is on the air to this day. Following graduation he served in the U.S. Army at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. Michael devoted his life to supporting civil liberties, education, and the arts serving on countless boards and commissions throughout the city and around the state.



Michael Gradison

A staunch supporter of civil liberties, he served as the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana continuing as an active member of that board for many years. He was a co-founder of The Indiana Repertory Theater and became President of the Board of Directors. In recent years, Michael became a dedicated member of the Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis.

Ken Coe, Local Radio Legend, Dies.

Ken grew up in Crown Point and cut his teeth in radio in Gary, Indiana, but LaPorte is where Ken was king of the airwaves.

The 78-year-old president of WLOI-AM and WCOE-FM and



Ken Coe



WCOE Radio

member
of the
Indiana

Broadcast Hall of Fame

died early Thursday. He is remembered not only for his

decades as host of the popular call-in program "Sound-Off" and commitment to heavy coverage of local news and sports, but also for his jovial and warm personality. "He was sort of like a teddy bear in lots of ways. You just couldn't help but like the guy," said former LaPorte Mayor Leigh Morris.

Coe was in grade school when he'd tag along with his father, Dee, on Saturdays to his job as general manager of WIND-AM in Gary. His dad, also a member of the Indiana Broadcast Hall of Fame, later formed a group that founded WWCA-AM, also in Gary, where Ken, then in the seventh grade, began getting coffee for staff members and running other errands.

The family later became owners of four radio stations in Gary, LaPorte and South Haven, Michigan. But after Ken's father died in 1981, only the LaPorte stations were kept to have a more reasonable workload.

After turning 70, Coe took a back seat to running the radio stations, but still remained active in some of the decision making and stopped in from time to time. Get news headlines sent daily to your in box "I don't know if I've ever worked for a guy like Ken that I had so much fun with," said Dewey Moede, another close friend who worked mostly in sales with Coe during the 1980s. Moede, now a pastor, said he spoke to Ken two days prior to his death and much of their conversation was about old times, the importance of serving the community and faith

Death Notices

Harry Edward Riser "Huck" 88 passed away
November 26, 2016.

Harry's love of Big Band Jazz started at an early age and was a major theme throughout his life. He made a second career out of his passion for Big Band Music. For over 25 years he produced and was the Radio Personality of "The Grand Big Band



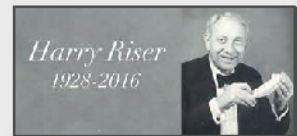
Radio Hour" on WICR "The Diamond" at the University of Indianapolis. Harry's shows included personal interviews with Band Leaders, Singers and Musicians. In 2014 he was inducted into the Indiana Jazz Hall of Fame. Harry coined many phrases as a DJ and signed off "Keep On Digging the Good Stuff".

The amazing Harry Riser was born March 12, 1928 in Vincennes, IN. Husband, Father, Grandfather, Magician, Jazz Aficionado, Art Collector, Radio Show Host & True Gentleman; he was the son of the late Harry and Jessie Reel Riser. After graduation from Vincennes High School in 1946, He attended Indiana University and earned a Business Degree in 1950.

Harry married Mary Margret Shroyer on February 8th 1951; they were happily married for over 62 years before her passing. He has two children (son) John Riser & (daughter) Susan Riser and a (grandson) Conrad Riser. He was a devoted and peaceful family man.

After college, Harry first worked for Arvin Industries and lived in Portland. He then transitioned into the insurance industry which took them to Seattle, Dallas, Chicago, Detroit and finally settling back in Indianapolis where he retired from a long career at the NyHart Company as the Executive Vice President.

Harry had several lifelong passions. He was one of the leading



"sleight of hand" Magicians in the world and wrote two critically acclaimed books "The Feints and Temps of Harry Riser" and "Secrets of an Escamoteur". Harry

wrote a Magic Column for the MUM Magazine for many years. He performed, mentored and lectured for magicians internationally throughout his life. He was inducted into the Society of American Magicians Hall of Fame in 2016. The local Indianapolis Magic Club is named in his honor.

Harry began collecting art in the early 1960's and amassed a world class collection that included many works from the "Hoosier Group". Harry served as the President of the "Hoosier Art Solon" and generously donated paintings to art shows throughout his life. Harry was a member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity, Society of American Magicians, MUM and Highland Country Club.



The western and central parts of parts of Indiana had a new TV station to watch in 1953.

On February 26, of that year the FCC granted Midwest Television a permit to construct a television station on channel 3. This would ultimately be central Illinois first and only commercial VHF station. all four television networks had expressed interest in becoming an affiliate of WCIA.

Just a few months later, WCIA would become CBS television network affiliate number 106. The original transmitter site was for a 810-foot tower just south of Illinois route 47



near Seymour, Illinois. After the FCC approval of the move to near White Heath, Illinois, Mr. Meyer agreed to move back to the original transmitter site but with a broadcast tower of 1,000 feet! There was more than likely an engineering study which showed Meyer that the increase in antenna height would make up for the slight increase in distance and still deliver a "Grade A" signal across Decatur as well as Champaign-Urbana. and parts of Indiana. After weeks of test pattern broadcasts and tests of equipment, Midwest Television would turn on the switch at 10:45am, Saturday, November 14, 1953. The first day of broadcasting included the broadcast of a short 15-minute film, "Round South America" (a travel log), followed by the first CBS show, "Big Top" (circus show for kids), and a local presentation of a western movie, "Trail of the Silver Spur." The move was followed by a test pattern from 1pm to 5:45pm, when programming resumed with a formal live welcome featuring community leaders and the officers of Midwest Television. At 6pm the movie, "Overland Trail" was broadcast ahead of the first CBS prime-time program, "The Jackie Gleason Show." It was followed by "Two for the Money" and WCIA's first off network rerun, "Amos and Andy." WCIA currently broadcasts its news from its studios in Champaign. In 1953 WCIA was a welcome addition to West Central Indiana viewers who owned a TV set..

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