

May 2012



# Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Newsletter

## INDY LENS LEGENDS

The Indiana Broadcast Pioneers continued their series of broadcast related panel discussions with a select group of six former and current TV news photographers from the Indianapolis area.

The May 3, 2012 event featured former Pioneer president, WRTV's Reid Duffy who gave



Reid Duffy

another award winning stand up

comedy routine to open the program before introducing Ralph Grant,, WRTV photographer, who moderated the



INDY Lens Legends

A 65 person audience of broadcasters, broadcast pioneers, friends and relatives enjoyed a session of TV news photographers, and on occasion journalists, recalling



Ralph Grant

thirty plus years of interesting, humorous and sometimes tragic stories.

Dick Baldwin WFBM WRTV, Ralph Grant WRTV, Jim Hester-WISH TV, Steve Schwitzer-WISH TV, Vernon Veal, WTTV, WRTV, WTHR and Bob Weinzierl-WTHR entertained and informed the guests with a host memories.



After lunch, guests enjoy the Pioneer program.

While recalling one of his most memorable assignments Dick Baldwin told the story of his assignment behind the "Iron Curtain" in Romania to shoot enough footage for five

documentaries. When he arrived with his mountain of gear he was told "No pictures!" ..... He still got the job done. Jim Hester said one of his "luckiest" shots was recorded when a building totally collapsed while his camera was locked directly on the scene as it happened. Jim was reaching on the ground for something and didn't see it.

Steve Schwitzer related an event he covered in 1975 and was first told CNN would be carrying a live feed from his camera. Later he was told CNN would not be taking the feed. He happened to be using another photog's tripod which was weighted differently and did not handle the same as his own. As he shot the event the tripod would on occasion tilt forward if he did not have a good grip on it and he was panning the room picking up various shots for later editing. He did not have communication with anyone and later learned that CNN changed their mind and decided to take his camera feed. Pioneer member Jimmy Mack videotaped the event. His recording of the program added to the Pioneer effort to preserve Indiana broadcast history.

If you have not attended our Pioneer events you are missing great broadcast history, great people and a great experience



Dick Baldwin



Jim Hester

The Pioneer's thank WFYI, the Indianapolis PBS affiliate and President and CEO Lloyd Wright for once again hosting our event.

Photos by Chuck Schisla



Steve Schwitzer



Vernon Veal



Bob Weinzierl



# Pioneers 2012 Hall of Fame Inductees

Eight new members will be inducted into the Indiana Broadcast Pioneer's Hall of Fame on October 11, 2012 at the Marriott Hotel behind Keystone at the Crossing. The Pioneer Hall of Fame committee met on May 3, 2012 to select this year's honorees.

The 2012 "Pioneer Broadcasters" to be honored include Mark Allen, Reid Duffy, Allen Jeffries, Jim Kartes, Dave Keister, Janet Langhart, Glen Webber and Joe Pate. Two of the recipients, Jeffries and Webber, will be awarded their Hall of Fame recognition posthumously. Below is a brief synopsis of each honoree.

## **Mark Allen**

Started his TV career in 1967 working 41 years in Terre Haute while holding multiple positions in the industry including management. A journalist and on air personality for WTOG and WTHI, Terre Haute, he hosted the syndicated "Mark Allen Show" for three years and was host of the Jerry Lewis Telethon for 18 years.

## **Reid Duffy**

A central Indiana TV personality for 30 years with WRTV and then WNDY. His "Duffy's World" program of human interest stories became "classics" which earned him numerous awards for "Best Feature Story". He has authored three books and continues to contribute to various print publishers.

## **Allen Jeffries**

Was a prominent news broadcaster in the 1940's through the 1960's. He was a prize winning editorial writer for WRTV-TV in the 70's. Jeffries was heard doing news in Lafayette, then WOWO in Ft. Wayne, WBAT in Marion, WKMO in Kokomo, WCOL in Columbus along with stations in Michigan. He is best known for his work for WISH-TV and WIRE radio in Indy during the 1950's. He was inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame in 1971 and died in 1980.

## **Jim Kartes**

Started his career as a cameraman in Minneapolis before joining the news staff of WISH-TV in Indianapolis in 1961. He left WISH to freelance in 1966 and by 1974 he was in the forefront of nearly every major news story. Walter Cronkite eventually requested Jim as his personal news photographer and Jim traveled the world with Cronkite including Nixon's visit to China. He also worked on numerous CBS documentaries and filmed many of the original "60 Minutes" stories earning six television Emmys.

## **David Keister**

Personally built WCBK-AM/FM in Martinsville, Indiana and put the stations on the air in 1967. In his 41 years at the 'helm' Dave has put his stamp on 10 different Indiana communities while solely owning 26 different AM and FM signals in the state. Mid America Radio held 19 radio stations in Indiana until 2009 when the 7 stations in Kokomo and Marion were sold. His company totally believed in being 'local' with coverage of local events.

## **Janet Langhart**

Joined WISH-TV as the first African-American to host her own daily show in Indy doing the "Indy Today" program. She won the CASPER award her first year on the show for her tough questioning of guests. Her success led her to host a similar show in Boston for just over 4 years. In 1996 she married U.S. Senator William S. Cohen and became known as the "First Lady of the Pentagon" She initiated her own series of interviews on Pentagon TV.

## **Joe Pate**

Was sports director for WBST-TV and radio in South Bend from 1962-73 and then became Director of Sports Development and Media Director at Cranfill Advertising in Indy. He was a main player in developing TV and radio broadcasts for Purdue and I.U. basketball and football and was the voice of Purdue basketball and football for 18 years on a statewide network. Joe was responsible for establishing and implementing the sports networks for the IHSAA beginning in 1977 and managed these networks through 1997. He was inducted into the Indiana Basketball HOF.

## **Glenn Webber**

Spent 20 years at WRTV-TV as a newscaster/announcer. He teamed with Joe Pickett on WFBM radio (owned by WRTV-TV) to start the "Pickett-Webber Thing" which soon became the great morning drive team in Indy radio. The stayed atop the ratings for nearly 20 years and then Webber was the announcer for the Indiana State Police for a number of years before joining Emmis when they launched WENS-FM in 1981. Glenn was part of the original staff anchoring news updates during morning drive. Glenn died in 2011 at age 90.



## Indianapolis Motor Speedway Radio Network.

The first radio broadcast of the Indianapolis 500 race was in **1922**,



**1923 Single Tube  
Crosley Radio**

aired on two short-lived stations, WOH and WLK. Very few people even had a receiver to pick up the fragmented race descriptions. By **1925**, periodic race updates were broadcast over two stronger stations, WFBM of Indianapolis, and WGN of Chicago.

In **1928** NBC covered the final hour of the race with legendary voice Graham McNamee. He continued to cover the race through the **mid 1930s**.

**1936**: CBS Radio covered the race for the first time with Ted Husing as commentator.

**After WWII**, the race was covered exclusively by Mutual Radio Network, with all-new WIBC Indianapolis as its flagship station. Bill Slater was their first announcer.

**1950**: Sid Collins, who had previously worked as a turn reporter for Mutual, joined Slater in the booth as co-anchor for that "500." It wasn't until **1953** that the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Network staged the first flag-to-flag, non-stop coverage of the "500." beginning at 10:45 AM, and ended in Victory Lane at 3:45 PM. When other local radio stations in Indianapolis became dissatisfied with WIBC's monopoly of the event. The Network reacted by combining the efforts of several stations in the Indianapolis area, using announcers and technical staff from WIBC, WFBM, WISH, WIRE, and WXLW to begin a united effort that remains in place today. For **1953** the broadcast increased to 135 stations across the country, including the Armed Forces Radio Network in Europe and Asia.

**1954**: The number of stations increased to 210.

**1955**: All 48 states that comprised the United States at the time were accounted for by at least one radio station, for a total of 239 affiliates. Due to the increased number of affiliates, the network needed to script an "out-cue" to alert station to insert local commercials. WIBC was in charge of marketing, and young staff member Alice Green came up with the phrase "Stayed tuned for the Greatest Spectacle in Racing." Sid Collins used the famous phrase during the 1955 broadcast.

**1957**: The affiliate count topped 300 stations, including Latin America.

**1960**: The first rebroadcasts to South Africa added more stations. In the early 1960s, the race began to be shown live on closed-circuit television in various theatres around the United States. The Speedway Radio Network has remained the provider of free, over-the-air live coverage.

## Ken Beckley Pitches a "KNUCKLEBALL"

Former Pioneer president Ken Beckley enjoyed a career in television news and served as executive vice president of H. H. Gregg as well as president and CEO of Indiana University's Alumni Association. He is the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Service Award from Indiana University and the Sagamore of the Wabash award from Governor Mitch Daniels and he is an inductee in the Indiana



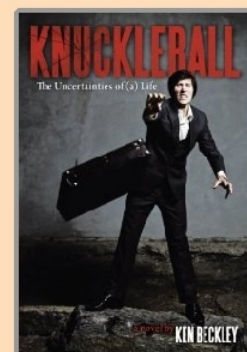
**Ken Beckley**

Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

His first book, a fictional novel, is now available.

Knuckleball—The Uncertainties of (a) Life, is a story, filled with humor, sadness, and surprises all the way through the Epilogue.

KNUCKLEBALL is an inspirational story of how one man learns to live through the unexpected and, in the end, discovers it is never too late to realize a dream.



It is 1955 in rural Indiana. As he stands on the pitcher's mound on a hot August afternoon, fifteen-year-old Davie Miller focuses intently on the catcher's mitt and grins when he sees his favorite sign --three fingers pointing toward the ground. KNUCKLEBALL. In a matter of seconds, Davie tosses his third no-hitter of the season. As he celebrates, Davie is already painfully aware of life's uncertainties but he has no inkling of what lies ahead for him in the next thirty-five years.

The book can be found at [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com) (the publisher), but is also available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) in hardcover or paperback. Ken says, "Simply type in my name and the title will appear. You should also be able to order the novel at virtually any bookstore. If not available as an e-book yet, it should be soon."



### Early Commercial FM Stations in Indiana

Licensed or Authorized by FCC as of Jan 1, 1946.  
**WMLL Evansville 8 (M).** Licensed to Evansville on the Air (WGBF), 519 Vine St. Telephone: 2-1171. Channel 234 (94.7), 8400 sq. mi. Went on air August 1940, operates six hours daily.

Personnel: Clarence Leich, president, general manager and commercial manager; Pat Roper, program director; Erwin Schoeny, chief engineer.

**WOWO-FM Ft. Wayne 2 (M).** Licensed to Westinghouse Radio Stations Inc., 925 S. Harrison St. Telephone: Anthony 2136. Channel 240 (95.9), illegible sq. mi. Went on air Oct. 15, 1942, operates six hours daily. Personnel: Paul E. Mills, general manager; Carl Vandergift, program director; Bruce H. Ratts, chief engineer.

**WABW Indianapolis 4 (M).** Licensed to Associated Broadcasters Inc., 445 N. Pennsylvania St. Telephone: Lincoln 7886. Channel illegible., 8400 sq. mi. Went on air Oct. 1 1945, operates eight hours daily. Personnel: R. M. Crandall, president; Gordon Cullogen, advertising manager; Martin R. Williams, chief engineer.

**WSBF South Bend 26 (M).** Licensed to South Bend Tribune (WSBT), 225 W. Colfax. Telephone: 3-6161. Channel 267, 7250 sq. mi. Went on air May 10 1943, operates six hours daily. Personnel: F. Miller, president; Franklin D. Schurz, general manager; Robert H. Swintz, commercial manager; Mark Boyden, program director; Herbert G. Cole, chief engineer.

### PioneerNewsletter to be Archived

The Allen County Indiana library received a copy of the previous Pioneer newsletter and has since requested permission to begin archiving our quarterly publication.

Kathy Burd, Genealogy Center, Periodicals Allen County Public Library, said the newsletter would be cataloged, binded and shelved in their permanent collection. which will securely and safely make the invaluable information available to researchers for years to come. We agreed and have added Kathy to our email member list.

## Robert B. McConnell Broadcast Pioneer

Robert B. McConnell, 91, passed away on May 20, 2012 in Naples, Florida. He was a business and civic leader as well as a broadcaster in Indianapolis. He came to WISH radio in 1942 before entering the Navy.

In 1945, following his service, he returned to WISH. In 1950 he became vice president and general manager of Universal Broadcasting Company, the parent company of WISH, WHBU, Anderson, Indiana, and WANE in Fort Wayne. The following year he was named president and general manager of WISH radio and television.

He retired from WISH in 1980 but remained as President of Anderson Broadcasting Corporation. A position he held from 1975 to 1986.

Following his retirement in 1980 he was named Chairman and CEO of the Indianapolis Water Company; a position he held until 1991.

He attended Arsenal Technical High School and Indiana University, where he was a member of Sigma Nu Fraternity.

McConnell remained active in civic affairs serving as President of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, the 500 Festival, Crossroads Rehabilitation Center, St. Vincent Hospital Advisory Board, the Indiana Broadcasters Association, the Columbia Club, and the Country Club of Indianapolis.

He served as a director of the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, the United Way of Central Indiana, and the National Association of Broadcasters.

He also was a trustee of Marian College and a Past Commodore of the Naples Sailing & Yacht Club in Naples, FL. He served as a director of the Florida Council of Yacht Clubs. He was a member of the Indiana State Police Board from 1981 until his passing.

He was married to Sally Hollingsworth McConnell who predeceased him in September 2005. They were married 61 years.

He is survived by daughter, Anne Barth of Zionsville, IN; two granddaughters, Frances Barth of Goshen, IN and Katie Wright of Carmel, IN; and five great grandchildren.



Bob McConnell

## Death Notices:

**Barbara J. Knapp** 57, of South Bend, IN passed away at 2:30 a.m. Friday, April 20, 2012 in her home from injuries sustained in an accident.



**Barbara Knapp**

She was born on January 21, 1955 in Elkhart, IN to Willie M. Taylor and Mary (Ebersole) Mitschelen.

Barbara spent most of her life in the Michiana area. She was a former Elkhart County 4-H fair queen and attended DePauw University in Greencastle Indiana. She worked in advertising and sales with WSBT-TV, WLBC in Muncie and WISH-TV in Indianapolis. After returning to the Michiana area she started her own advertising firm named Midwest Market Strategies.

Barbara is survived by her daughter, Melissa (Adam) Shea of Griffith, IN and son, Matt Szymanski of South Bend, IN; two grandchildren, Adam Shea Jr. and Alix Shea; her mother.

**Kelly James Merritt, 59**, died Thursday, February 23, 2012 in Indianapolis. Kelly was born in Evansville, IN. He was raised in Indianapolis and attended the Washington Township schools as well as Indiana University.



**Kelly Merritt**

Kelly enjoyed a colorful and interesting career that reflected his love of the arts. He owned several companies that demonstrated his love of photography, including Family Photo Productions both in Indianapolis and Port Jefferson, New York. Among his many other accomplishments was his stints in radio where he was the on-air host of the show, "Taking Care of Business" in Springfield, IL. But, he was most proud of his radio show, "The Kelly Merritt Show," aired in Indianapolis. He was a talented writer and produced a weekly column that appeared in many local newspapers. In addition, he published and was chief Editor of "Pulse Magazine" located in Indianapolis. Kelly's also performed Stand-Up Comic routines in many clubs across the Midwest. He liked nothing better than to make people laugh.

**Sharon Rossi**, a longtime rock 'n' roll disc jockey whose deep voice filled the airwaves of Fort Wayne, died February 23, 2012.



**Sharon Rossi**

Rossi was at St. Joseph Hospital surrounded by family when she died from breast cancer, said J.J. Fabini, who worked with her at WXKE-FM – 103.9.

Fabini, the station's midday host and music director, paid tribute to her Friday, reading a letter she'd written fans and playing songs she had picked in advance for the occasion.

"Because of her sense of humor, the first one was Clash, 'Should I stay or should I go,' " he said.

Rossi spent 17 years with the station as a radio personality who played classic rock until she was let go in 2000. At the time, she was told she was being replaced by a computer.

She worked in record stores starting at age 17 and got into radio at 24. Doc West, a well known DJ and WXKE's program director, hired her.

When Fabini started at WXKE, he worked the overnight shift that came on after Rossi's evening time slot.

"I'd walk in the building, and she'd have my first hour of music pulled out for me."

Rossi took her diagnoses of cancer head on, Fabini said. She was really strong when it came down to stuff like that." Rossi even planned the details of her memorial services. "She just wanted to make sure that everyone's going to have good time," Fabini said.

**Frederick A. "Fred" Manahan, 77**, of The Villages, Florida, and formerly of Kendallville died Tuesday, May 8, 2012, at 4:10 p.m. in The Villages Hospital in Florida. Fred began working in radio as an announcer while still in high school. He worked for a short time for a Toledo, Ohio, radio station before



**Fred Manahan**

moving to Kendallville where he was one of the original owners of WAWK radio. He eventually became the sole owner of WAWK and WAWK-FM. He also served as President of Noble TV before selling both businesses. He was President and an active member of many organizations in the Kendallville community.



**Death Notices Continued:**

**Frances Avalon Van Duren 86**, peacefully left this world on March 4, 2012. Born on May 30, 1925, in Muscatine, Iowa, Frances earned a degree in journalism from the University of Iowa, where she met her husband, Melvin C. Van Duren. She earned her Masters in Education from Butler University and later became a local celebrity after graduation as a successful talk-show radio host until her marriage in 1949.

becoming a widow at the young age of 40, she returned to the classroom full-time and began teaching. English and journalism at IPS Schools for over 20 years, and has been a resident of Indianapolis since 1953 when Melvin became news editor of the Indianapolis Times.

Frances was known for her cheerful spirit, fun-loving attitude, and unwavering strength of character amidst some of life's most difficult challenges. Fond of telling jokes, she had a knack for bringing laughter and smiles to those around her. She will always be remembered as someone who could make anything fun and she never lost her childlike enthusiasm for life.

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**Chuck Workman, Pioneer Hall of Fame Member**

**Charles "Chuck" Workman**, a 2011 Indiana Broadcast Pioneer Hall of



Fame inductee and veteran of Indianapolis broadcasting died Sunday at his home. Chuck was best-known for his smooth-voiced radio delivery and as a spokesman for jazz.

His broadcast career began as a Cathedral High School student in 1947, doing a show for the old WIRE-AM here. As a teen he frequented the legendary jazz clubs along Indiana Avenue in downtown Indianapolis.

After Air Force service during the Korean War, when he learned more about broadcasting, he returned to Indianapolis in 1956.

His dream of becoming a broadcaster came when he went to work at WTLC FM as the stations Music Director then joined WATI-AM as an engineer with a sports show on the side. He moved into TV with Channel 4 in 1969, becoming sports director in 1974, the first African American in the state to hold such a position. During his time at WTTV he began hosting a jazz program at WIAN FM.

Workman spent 19 years with WTPI-FM, broadcasting jazz every Sunday morning, until a format change in 2005 idled him. Several months later, he was hired by WICR-FM, where his Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Workman spent 19 years with WTPI-FM, broadcasting jazz every Sunday morning. In 2005 he was hired by WICR-FM, where his Saturday evening and Sunday morning shows continued until his death. He also had been with the old WIAN-FM (predecessor to WFYI-FM) from 1970 to 1990 as a jazz radio host.

Workman helped organize the long-running "Animals and All That Jazz" series at the Indianapolis Zoo about 25 years ago, and worked with David Baker of Indiana University to put together an Indiana Avenue all-star reunion concert to kick off the first Indy Jazz Fest in 1999 and was a member of the Indianapolis Jazz Hall of Fame.

Scott Uecker, WICR-FM general manager said "Chuck was a special person -- a true professional," "We're so fortunate to have had him here, not just as a broadcaster, but for who he was as a person. He was my friend. I don't know anyone who met him who didn't think of him that way. He was just a good guy. He tried to find the good in every situation."

Doubling of Workman's on-air time since his hiring six years ago was a response to his popularity, Uecker said. "He had a lot of fans. There are a lot of people in Indianapolis who like jazz, and he was that voice for those people."