

August 2012



# Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Newsletter

## Broadcast Pioneers Share 175 Years

**HAL FRYAR** celebrated his 85th birthday on

June 8, 2012 by having a pie (or several pies) thrown in his face. Hal, or "Harlow Hickenlooper", of the striped jacket and broken straw hat, chose an appropriate place for the celebration, the Indiana Historical Society. A group of friends, fans and fellow broadcasters were there to honor Hal and join in the fun.



1 to r Pie, Hal



A channel 6 sandwich. (1 to r)

The Indiana Broadcast Pioneer Howard Caldwell, Hal, & Kevin Gregory Hall of Fame member began his career as a teenager working for WIRE radio in Indianapolis. After his graduation from I.U. he became a disc jockey at a Sandusky, Ohio radio station. Next was Youngstown, Ohio, hosting programs for young audiences. Then it was back to Indianapolis and in 1960 he began a 12 year stint as "Harlow Hickenlooper", for WFBM TV. He was a stumbling, fumbling, loveable character who hosted the popular "Three Stooges" movies and took a prodigious pie pummeling over the years. The program also featured co-hosts Curly Meyers and Jerry Vance as Captain Starr with the three of them performing skits and singing songs for a live studio audience.

As a result of his "Three Stooges connection" Hal landed a role in the Stooges' 1965 feature film *"The Outlaws Is Coming."* Fryar was also the host for several other children's shows during his 43 years in local television, including appearances as "Grandpa Harlow" on WFYI-TV. The



"21 Pie Salute at IHS.

party ended with a "21 pie in the face salute. Fryar continues to perform and is a member of the Indiana Broadcast Pioneer board.



Hal at 85

**JIMMY MACK** had a birthday party on

July 1, 2012 at his daughters house beside the white river in Indianapolis. He is 90 years old and you'd never know it. Still active and in good health, Jimmy, an avid collector of broadcast memorabilia and a member of the Indiana Broadcast



The birthday party.



The man and his

Pioneers Board, still shoots and edits video of our Pioneer activities.

A graduate of Columbia Radio and Speech College in Chicago Jimmy began his career at WCFL radio in that city before moving to WHFB in Benton Harbor,

Michigan., then moved to WOOD radio and TV in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Other stops include WLMG radio in England while in the service during WW II and WFAB in his hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska. Arriving in Indianapolis



Jimmy at WOOD

he worked in both radio and TV at WIRE, WXLW, WISH radio and TV and WLWI TV. A man of many talents his



Hosting "Teen Twirl"

programs included variety shows, talent shows, teenage dance programs, DJ, and working as a producer, writer, announcer and weekend weather man. That's enough to make you feel old!

This article would not be complete without mentioning Jimmy's wife Peg, also a broadcaster. The two of them were able to share their careers and their lives together. Peg passed away in September of 2009, the year Jimmy was inducted into the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame.



Jimmy and Pioneer board members Sue Staton, Bob Warren, Dave Smith and Bob Smith



## WLFI TV Small Market # 188\*

In 1953 the inauguration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower was televised, Queen Elizabeth II was formally crowned as The Queen in England, Playboy Magazine's 1st issue featured Marilyn Monroe on its cover and the first color television sets went on sale in the U.S. for about \$1,175. The top rated TV show at that time was "I Love Lucy" and at 6:00 p.m. on June 15, Lafayette residents got their first glimpse of locally broadcast television on WFAM Channel 59. The first day consisted of four hours of programming one of which was "Ringside with Rasslers". There were 20 employees but only one had any television experience. The station was owned by O.E. Richardson who received a permit to broadcast from Lafayette.



WFAM Studio Camera

WFAM radio was originally assigned to South Bend, Indiana until 1941 when WSBT was granted full time status. The license for WFAM was then sold to Richardson; one of the owners of WJOB (formerly WWAE) in Hammond, Indiana. In 1942 Richardson moved the station again, this time to Lafayette, Indiana in early 1942 where the call-letters were changed to WASK and the station was granted full time operating status. In the 50s the station was sold to Sarkes Tarzian who changed the call letters back to WFAM when he built a television station, WFAM-TV, Channel 59.

In 1957 WFAM moved to Channel 18 and then around 1967 the call letters were changed to WLFI-TV. The station was owned by Block Communications from 1979 until 2000, when current owner LIN Television acquired WLFI. Through the years WLFI was a CBS and DuMont affiliate. During the late 1950s, the station was also briefly affiliated with the NTA Film Network.

Some recognizable names spent some time at the Lafayette station and most are still in Indiana. The list includes, Angela Buchman, Meteorologist, WISH-TV, Kevin Gregory, Chief Meteorologist, WRTV, Paul Poteet, Meteorologist, WRTV, Mary McDermott, anchor, now at sister station WISH-TV, Angela Ganote, anchor/reporter, now at WXIN-TV.



Brian Lamb  
Hosting "Dance Date"

Another WLFI alum is Brian Lamb who at the age of 17 held a radio disc jockey job at WASK radio station in Lafayette. During his junior year at Purdue in 1961-62, Lamb approached WLFI station owner Dick Shively with an idea for an American



Bandstand type TV dance show. Shively liked the idea and gave Lamb the go-ahead and a time slot. The show was titled "Dance Date", and the now producer Lamb, named himself as host. The program aired on weekday afternoons for a half-hour and was a hit with viewers. Later in his varied career Lamb created C-SPAN, the public affairs television network. He was inducted into the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame in 2005.

WLFI TV remains on the air as channel 18, and is the CBS television affiliate in West Lafayette, Indiana that serves the Lafayette, Indiana metropolitan area. It operates on digital channel 11. Its transmitter is located in Rossville, Indiana and is now owned by LIN Television, who also owns WISH-TV in Indianapolis, WANE-TV in Fort Wayne and WTHI-TV in Terre Haute.

\*Nielsen 2012

## Burl Ives, Indiana Broadcaster

Born in 1909 in Jasper County, Illinois



Burl Ives spent many hours during his early years singing with his mother while doing farm chores. In 1929 Ives was

in his junior year at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College, he was sitting in English class and suddenly realized he was wasting his time. He got up and walked out the door. Sixty years later, the school named a building after its most famous dropout. Pursuing his dream of a singing career he was in Richmond, Indiana

on July 23, 1929 where he did a trial recording of "Behind the Clouds" for the well known Gennett label. The recording was later rejected and destroyed. Ives traveled about the U.S. as an itinerant singer during the early 1930s, earning his way by doing odd jobs and playing his banjo. Around 1931 he began performing on WBOW radio in Terre Haute, Indiana where he also went back to school, attending classes at Indiana State Teachers College (Indiana State University).

During the late 1930s Ives also attended the Julliard School in New York. In his long and diverse career Mr. Ives made 32 movies and more than 100 record albums, appeared on Broadway and performed on radio and television. Two of his big hits were children's songs, "Frosty the Snowman" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." His last recording, "The Magic Balladeer," was issued in 1993, shortly before his 84th birthday. A long time pipe and cigar smoker, Ives died of mouth cancer on April 14, 1995.



## IBP Hall of Fame

The 2012 Richard M. Fairbanks Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame ceremony will be held on October 11, 2012 at the Marriott Indianapolis North Hotel. (behind Keystone/Crossing) The IBA/ Pioneer HOF Committee selected 8 broadcasters for Induction this year.

The 2012 Honoree's are,

Mark Allen, Reid Duffy

Allen Jeffries (posthumously)

Jim Kartes, David Keister

Janet Langhart, Joe Pate

Glenn Webber (posthumously)

Scott Blumenthal has been selected to receive the IBA 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Registration for the event will begin

September 1, 2012.

Registration forms will be sent to all Indiana Broadcast Pioneer members prior to the event.

## IBA President Linda Compton Retires

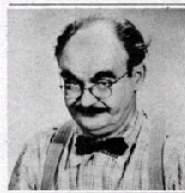
The Indiana Broadcasters Association board has announced the retirement of Linda Compton as President and CEO. Linda has 30 + years in the association management field.

She moved to Indiana from Michigan in 1978 and formed, and was President of, L. Compton & Associates. The company served 11 trade and professional associations.

She began her tenure with the IBA in 1991. Ms. Compton, speaking of her retirement, was quoted as saying, "It is time for a change." The IBA experience has been wonderful personally and professionally and I will certainly miss the broadcast personalities as I pursue other challenges".

With Compton's retirement current Vice President Gwen Piening and new IBA President Dr. Joe Misiewicz will form a management partnership, "The Achievement Group." to oversee IBA operations.

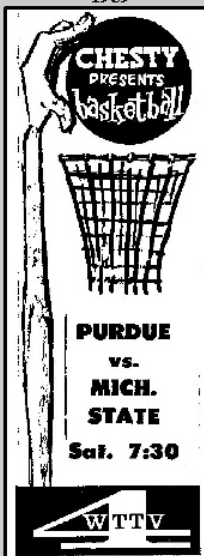
## "Hoosier Hank"



**Daily Chuckles**  
with  
**Hank Biedinger**  
at a new time  
9:00 (8:00) a.m.  
Monday - Friday



1959



1962



VISIT WITH  
**SELWIN**  
EVERY FRIDAY  
11:15 P.M. (10:15)  
Channel 8

1959

## Early Indianapolis TV

Fomer Indiana Broadcast Pioneer President, and broadcaster, Dave Smith continues his passion for publishing with his third book

"Indianapolis Television".

His first book, "Hoosiers in Hollywood" and then

"Sitting Pretty", the life of

Indiana native and movie

star Clifton Webb, preceded this new publication.

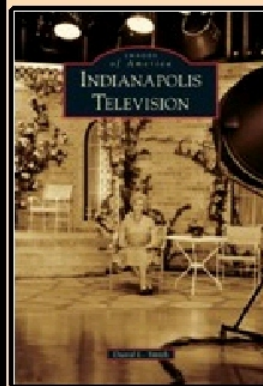
Arcadia Publishing's popular Images of America series has released this pictorial

history with a collection of more than 200 vintage images.

The photographs are from several sources including Indianapolis, media, the Indianapolis stations, former and current broadcasters and from the collection of Ray



Broadcaster and author  
David L. Smith



Hollywood star Frances Farmer on the set of WFBM TV's

"Frances Farmer Presents" in 1958

Conolly a local media photographer.

The first photo in the book is from 1945 and shows P.R. Mallory employee Jerry Smith operating a TV camera in his home. A corner insert says "Mallory Leads City in Television", the company was using closed circuit TV to reach the homes of Mallory employees. Photos of many of the very early Indianapolis broadcasters who became household names are included as well as those who became famous, owners, managers, those in front of the camera and those who were behind the scenes.

A great book for those who want to remember and those who want to learn.

## Death Notices:

Ronald H. Carrell 75, Fishers, beloved husband and father, passed away on May 27, 2012.

Born November 16, 1936 in Indianapolis, Ron married Kathy (Dickman) Holverson August 23, 1995, who survives.

Ron's career started at WIRE Radio and WXLW Radio before retiring from the Indianapolis Water Co. as Vice President of Customer Relations November 1995 after 27 years. Ron graduated from Tech H.S. and attended Butler U. and Wabash College. Ron enjoyed family, golf, and traveling with his wife.

Ron was a radio network announcer for Indianapolis Motor Speedway for 27 years and Ron Carrell, a member of the Indianapolis 500 broadcast team in the 1970s and 80s and died, ironically, on Race Day.

He was a member of the Indianapolis Press Club, National Assn. of Water Companies, and the Christ Church Cathedral Choir for 27 years.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clyde and Wilma (Mendel) Carrell, and brother, Jack. He is survived by his son, Kevin and daughter, Leslie (Kirk) Jenkins; step-children, Stefanie (Chris) Richart and Brent (Lisa) Holverson; granddaughters, Jackie Carrell and Beverly Jenkins; step-granddaughters, Dakota and Kennedy Richart and Sierra Holverson.



Ron Carrell

**Henderson Sheridan Davis, Jr. 61**, of Evansville, passed away Thursday, July 19, 2012, at Golden LivingCenter - Woodlands. He was born February 20, 1951, in Dayton, OH. He was a Evansville radio personality, artist, thespian and playwright. Henderson is survived by his sisters, Vinita Holman of Nashville, TN, Martha Davis of Indianapolis, IN and Lydia Davis Eady of Chicago, IL; nephews, Dwayne(Emily) Williams of Indianapolis, IN and Andrew and Matthew Eady of Chicago, IL; and nieces, Shirley Carter of San Francisco, CA and Kenetha (Jeff) Carr of Nashville, TN.



Herb Brabander

**Herbert W. Brabander**, who was known as Jay Walker during more than four decades of broadcasting in Fort Wayne, died Wednesday afternoon. He was 74.

Walker was born in Chicago and had worked as a disc jockey in Boston and Ann Arbor, Mich., before coming to Fort Wayne in 1966.

He made his greatest mark as the weatherman for WPTA-TV, Channel 21, where, as fellow broadcasters put it, he became a beloved fixture on the news.

Walker loved his job and his audience learned to love his sometimes unconventional way of presenting the weather. The former Marine didn't predict rain. He predicted what he called spritzles and leaky skies. Instead of predicting a clear night he'd forecast a snipe night, perfect for snipe hunts.

He predicted heat waves with a red hand on a spring, and cold waves with a blue hand.

"Whatever it is that makes you great, Jay had it," said Melissa Long, an anchor at WPTA who worked with Walker from the early 1990s until 2006, when he retired. "He was lovable. There wasn't a mean bone in his body. He was the most well-known TV person in town, but he was totally humble."

Though Walker was best known as a weatherman, he got his start in the city in 1966, when he joined WLYV-AM radio, which used rock 'n' roll and a pack of young, energetic disc jockeys to beat WOWO-AM radio in the ratings inside Fort Wayne.

In 1976, Walker joined WPTA in production and became the prime-time weatherman in 1979. In the mid-1990s, he moved to WOWO as the morning talk host but returned to WPTA.

After his retirement Walker remained active by hosting local events.





## Death Notices Continued

Lynda Sharpnack Havens, 60, passed away suddenly at home on July 3, 2012. Lynda, a lifelong



Lynda Havens

Indianapolis resident graduated from Lawrence Central High School in 1969 and earned her Bachelor's degree from Butler University in 1973, where she was a member of

Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. Lynda's father, Harry Sharpnack, introduced Lynda to the excitement of the Indy 500 when she was a girl. Lynda fell in love with racing and spent over 30 years working in and around motorsports. She worked for several IndyCar teams as both a media relations representative and as a timing and scoring crew member. She was employed as a media relations professional for numerous racing venues around the U.S. as well as the American LeMans Series. Lynda was proud to have helped found the Indy 500 News Bureau, providing content for media outlets worldwide about her beloved Indy 500 and the competing drivers. She was proud to have been a leader in the News Bureau again for the 2012 race. Lynda was introduced to the beauty of Alaska by becoming a friend of and dog handler for competitors in the Iditarod Sled Dog Race, and was able to travel to Alaska for multiple starts. In the early days of the internet, she provided constant updates on the Alaskan race for fans around the country. Prior to her racing career, Lynda had been an advertising manager at Esterline Angus Instrument Co., and had worked at WTTV-4 television and WNDE radio stations. She was preceded in death by her mother Jeanne Johnson and her father Harry Sharpnack. She is survived by her adoring husband of over 37 years, Gary L. Havens, her brother Eric Sharpnack (Roxann), her sister Dianne Stephenson, stepfather Robert Johnson, as well as seven nieces and nephews, and two great-nephews

**Nancy Nitchman Leonard** departed on July 17, 2012



Nancy Leonard

and resided in Carmel, Indiana died July 17, 2012, at the age of 74. Born in Cincinnati on Halloween 1937, but a resident of Indianapolis since the age of 2, she was a graduate of Howe High School and Butler University. Her remarkable and varied career included work in the Butler Alumni

Office, work as a legal secretary, business teacher, church secretary, and director of Public Relations with the Indianapolis 500 Festival. From 1968-74, she hosted Kindergarten College, a children's morning TV show on WLWI Channel 13. Nancy's legacy though, will be the result of her 22 years of work at the National Headquarters of Alpha Chi Omega, a women's fraternal organization with over 130 collegiate chapters and over 200 alumnae chapters. She began there in 1978 as Director of Publications, and after one year assumed the position of Executive Director, working with a sizable staff of professionals and volunteers. She was the first woman to participate in the Fraternity Executives Association, and the first woman to serve as its President. She received numerous awards for work in improving interfraternity cooperation. Nancy was a member of Job's Daughters, Eastern Star, Butler University Chapter of Alpha Chi Omega, and Castleton United Methodist Church, where she worked with others to form what has become a vibrant preschool program. She was a talented pianist, playing for a wide variety of functions, but mostly just playing to the delight of grandkids, family and friends. A big sports fan, she loved golfing, and held Colts season tickets from the time they arrived in Indianapolis.

Nancy is survived by her husband of 51 years, Charles; sons, Scott (wife Lisa), and Jeff (wife Sara); and 4 grandchildren who know her as "Grancy", Jesse, Natalie, Emma and Will.

## Death Notices Continued

Bernard E. "Bernie" Waldon, 77, of Brooksville, Florida formerly of Indianapolis, passed away June 27, 2012. He was born in Crawfordsville, IN. to Floyd and Agnes Waldon. He graduated from Vrawfordsville high School and moved to Indianapolis in 1965. Bernie worked in radio for several years at WILQ, WHOW, and WIRE in Indianapolis and WZIP in Cincinnati. He was a musician working with several Country and Blue Grass groups, mainly The Indiana band and Bluegrass Partners. He appeared on radio and TV, was a guest on the Grand Ole Opry and Renfro valley barn Dance.



**Bernie Waldon**

Bernie retired from Emery Worldwide in 1977, prior to that he worked for Puralator Courier. Bernie was a private pilot and past president of the Indiana Chapter of the Antique Airplane Association of which he was a national life time member. He also belonged to the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the Experimental Airplane Association and the Luscombe Association. He served eight years in the national Guard.

Bernie is survived by his wife of 45 years, Hurma "Mac" Waladon - two stepsons and two stepdaughters, Kathleen (Steve) Gerald, Pat (Jennifer) McCotter, Laura McCotter and Mike (Nannette) McCotter; sister, Joyce (Jim) Northcutt; stepmother, Genetha Waldon; 11 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; numerous cousins, nieces and nephews

### **Pioneer Contact Information**

**Newsletter:** Bob Smith

13448 Lantern Road  
Fishers, Indiana 46038  
twobsmiths@aol.com

**IBA Office:** Gwen Piening

3003 E. 98th Street  
Suite 161  
Indianapolis, IN. 46280  
317-573-0119



**'Big Jim' Wilson**

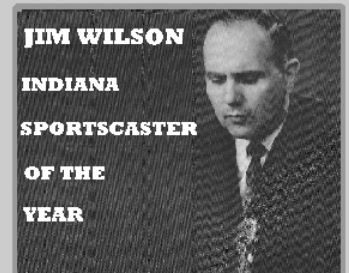
**James A. 'Big Jim' Wilson** 83, of Westfield, passed away on Saturday, June 2, 2012 at St. Vincent Hospital in Carmel. He was born on January 20, 1929 to James A. 'Pud' and Dora (Schurman) Wilson in Lafayette, Indiana. His parents

precede him in death.

Jim was a 1947 graduate of West Lafayette High School and a 1951 graduate of Purdue University. He proudly served his country as a Captain in the U.S. Army and a Korean War veteran. Among his many accomplishments, he had been the Sports Announcer and Director for WSBT & WSBT TV in South Bend for nine years; the Sports Director and Anchor for WISH-TV in Indianapolis for 11 years; the CEO of a television production company for 11 years; and had worked

independently as a

producer/director until his retirement. He was named Sportscaster of the Year in Indiana five times by the National Sportscasters &



Sportswriters Association, of which he was a charter member, and served on their governing board for 10 years. He had been the pit announcer for nationwide Indy Car racing for ABC-TV, CBS-TV, & TVS; and the pit announcer for nationwide Theater TV of the Indianapolis 500. He was a member and Past-President of the American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association and a member and current President of the Indianapolis 500 Oldtimers. He was also a member of Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Westfield; John Purdue Club; Purdue Alumni Association; Phi Gamma Delta; American Legion; Veterans of Foreign Wars; and the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Barbara Wilson; sons, Jim (Barbara) Wilson & Doug Wilson; daughter, Kathy (Ed) Collins; son, Joe Wilson; four grandchildren, Eddie Collins, Casey James Collins, Dylan Hobbs & Jessica Hobbs; and one great-grandchild, Landon Nealson.