THE LAST GREAT DAYS OF RADIO

LYNN WOOLLEY

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Lynn Woolley

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THE LAST GREAT DAYS OF RADIO

If you've ever wanted to be in radio — or ever wondered what was happening on the other side of the dial, then this book is for you. You'll find out what it's like to get that first job, to work in Texas' largest newsroom, to cover a major murder trial, to cover the President of the United States, to follow the Dallas Cowboys to the Super Bowl, and to create top-rated comedy routines. Full of inside information about the radio business, this book touches on the careers of dozens of well-known broadcasters.

Long time radio personality Lynn Woolley introduces you to the laughs and times of Texas radio in its heyday. A mixture of humor, wit, and nostalgia, this book follows the career of Woolley from the smallest station in a small market to the largest radio newsroom in Texas, and back again.

LYNN WOOLLEY is the Principal in Chandler/Woolley, an advertising, marketing, and public relations firm based in Austin, Texas. Mr. Woolley's broadcast career has spanned over twenty-five years and includes positions as anchorman, news director, play-by-play announcer, and co-host of the Children's Miracle Network Telethon. Mr. Woolley is an accomplished writer with numerous magazine and newspaper articles to his credit.

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Contents

To the memory of Rudy and Cissy and to Kristy, the granddaughter they loved.

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INTRODUCTION

It Must Be Magic

Radio has always been something very special to me. As far back as I can remember, I've always known the call letters and format of every station that could be received in my home town—as well as the name and voice of every announcer.

My first job in radio came in 1967, but it was much earlier that the love affair began. It was in the mid-fifties when I was five years old that I first noticed something that struck me as amazing: it was done without wires. The radio signal actually passed through the air from the station to my home. Magic, I thought. From that time on, every available moment was spent with my new best friend, the radio. Even as a small child, I was already beginning to study the techniques of announcing, deejay chatter, comedy, news reporting and writing, and the composition of radio commercials.

When I was a little older, I began to visit the local stations in Temple, Texas, asking to sit in with the announcers as they did their shows. I hung around local record shops and gathered surveys. And when any station did a special promotion, or brought a record star to town, I was there.

I was there on the evening of November 22, 1963 when KTON's "Towne and Country Jamboree" brought Johnny Cash to the Temple Municipal Auditorium. I can still remember the closing number that Cash dedicated to the late President, slain earlier that same day.

At the age of fourteen, I decided to try for a job, and soon learned that a license was necessary. Of the three stations in the Temple area, I could work at two (KTEM and KYLE-FM) with a "third-phone" license. The other station, KTON, had a directional antenna, and that required a much harder to get "first-phone" license. I decided to go for the third-phone, and made arrangements to stay with relatives in Dallas so I could visit the FCC office there and take the exam.

I knew I had done the right thing. I would soon be getting my third-phone, and that would put me right in the middle of the excitement. I wanted to do it all. First, I wanted to be a rock and roll "jock" on my favorite shift, seven to midnight. I wanted to read the news, and I wanted to be a great reporter. At that time, I had absolutely no concept of radio as a business—that stations had such things as managers, traffic and continuity departments, and sales departments.

My first goal was to land a job at KTEM because, like my favorite Dallas radio stations KLIF and KBOX, it played Top 40 hits. Meanwhile, KYLE-FM was playing Mantovani, and the announcers could hardly be called deejays. Besides, no one had FM radios. If only I could have looked into the future.

Among the changes I would have seen:

1. The decline of the AM Top 40 giants
2. The rise of FM radio
3. The death of radio news as I knew it
4. The onslaught of consultants
5. Government deregulation of radio

In these pages, you'll see how one young boy managed to break into broadcasting in a small town and finally realized his dream of making it big in Dallas and beyond.

To begin, we go back to the sixties. It all started at a 1,000 watt radio station in Temple, Texas . . .

CHAPTER 1

Breaking In

Thirteen floors is as high as you can get in Temple, Texas. And that's precisely the reason that the owners of KYLE-FM, Temple's brand new radio station, decided to build the station where they did. In the penthouse of the busy Kyle Hotel, from which the station drew its call letters, it took only a short length of cable to reach the rooftop tower.

I'll never forget my first visit there. It was 1964, two full years before I would head for Dallas to take my FCC license test. A young man named Jack Handley was busily installing equipment and soldering connections. As we talked, I asked him how old someone had to be to get into radio. "Well, I'm fourteen," Jack said. That gave me a great deal of hope; after all, I was fourteen, too.

It wasn't long after that meeting that KYLE-FM began broadcasting. Its first announcing staff included some awesome talent: Jack Handley and a young Hispanic with a big booming voice named David Garcia.

Garcia came to KYLE from KTEM, a block formatted AM station also located in Temple. A "block format" simply meant that the radio station tried to be all things to all people. KTEM ran Mutual Network news and played adult music during the day, switching to Mutual during late evenings for long news programs.

In between, for just a couple of hours in the early evening, Garcia hosted a program just for teens. The show was called "Nite

Flite" when hosted by local radio legend Chuck Baker. When Garcia took over, it became "The Original Nite Flite." He spiced it up with an instrumental theme record ("Let's Go" by Floyd Cramer) and embellished the theme with sound effects of rocket engines. In addition, Garcia added the touch of taking dedications by phone.

Someone would call in a dedication for "Lynn and Lana" almost every night. "Lana" was Lana Scott who had a crush on me and apparently used "The Original Nite Flite" to let me know. We're talking seventh grade here, and I was not about to let Lana know that I was quite flattered by her attention. (Later, Lana became the steady of another radio guy—Jack Handley.) Like me, most other teens were glued to "Nite Flite," as David Garcia ruled the Central Texas airwaves.

KYLE hired David Garcia away from KTEM, but apparently not for his ability to woo the preadolescent audience. The station signed on with the typical (for the early '60s) FM format of "good music" in stereo.

It was only a matter of time before someone in a major market found out about David. That major market turned out to be Dallas. Garcia was hired by the conglomerate that owned the *Dallas Morning News*, a company that had intentions of making him a television newscaster. After a successful career at WFAA-TV, there was only one more step on the ladder, and David took it. Joining ABC news, he worked a variety of domestic beats including the White House, and he worked for a time as a foreign correspondent. After leaving ABC, he headed west to Los Angeles, to work in the news departments of two network-owned stations, KCBS-TV and KNBC-TV.

Jack Handley, meanwhile, was not so lucky. Jack went to Waco to work at KBGO for a while, and later he became a private pilot. In the early '70s, he crashed his light plane, killing himself and his wife.

By the time I did my first air shift at KYLE, Garcia and the rest of the original staff were long gone. It was 1967, and at the age of 17, I had reached that first big milestone: I had a job in radio! Never mind that it was a tiny FM station in a small market.

And never mind that the station bookkeeper hired me while the manager was away. That first job was always the toughest, and I felt like I had finally made it. And so I went to work three nights a week from 6 p.m. until midnight, playing album cuts to snooze by.

The station was short on equipment and people. The office staff was comprised of the aforementioned bookkeeper and the general manager, Boyd Porter, Jr. Sure enough, KYLE had a program director, music director, and a sales manager—but Porter was all of them.

Since most of the announcers were high school kids making minimum wage, Porter also recorded most of the commercials. Still, we often had to read the spots live out of a notebook. Sometimes, we'd have as many as three or four per hour.

I didn't think too highly of Boyd Porter's taste in music. I was a teenaged rock and roll addict who wanted to be up the street playing the hits at KTEM. But, instead, I was relegated to hours of such fare as Percy Faith, Lawrence Welk, and Mantovani. One night I stayed late, after the station had signed off the air, and did a thirty-minute rock program as "Bobby Scott," which I taped. But AM stations in the area were not impressed, and I remained at KYLE.

The highlight of each hour was the news at :55 from the "Texas State Network" originating from Fort Worth. TSN had a crew of anchormen who delivered news from the Dallas-Fort Worth area, read wire copy, and aired voice reports from aspiring newscasters at every little podunk station that happened to carry TSN. I thought it was big time to have a "voicer" carried on a TSN newscast. Guys like Joe Salvador and Bob Barry became heroes to me. Barry even did a late night talk show over TSN's flagship station, KFJZ, which I could listen to on the "cue" system in lieu of Percy Faith. (Later, I would work for Joe Salvador, and with Bob Barry.)

I'll never forget the night of April 4, 1968. The newscast from TSN, always over precisely at the top of the hour, ran long. The network was reporting the first big news event of my radio career—the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

KYLE continued to procure better air talent than it deserved. Mike Richardson was another high school kid with a great voice who got his career started then left, as did most of us, for the greener pastures of KTEM. From there, he went (as Mike Bradley) to KIXL in Dallas and then to Fort Worth to anchor the news on TSN.

Yet another big voice belonged to Walt Canady. Walt had been at two small AM stations prior to his arrival in Temple. The first was in Mineola and had the rather rural call letters of KMOO. After working at KSST in Sulpher Springs, Canady moved into teaching high school speech; in fact, he was my speech teacher at Temple High School. Being only a few years older than his students, he tended to alienate the administration by running around with the guys in his classes and dating the girls. Walt was a sharp guy, and had, to my young ears, a major market voice. Walt thought so too. Once, he had his class help him prepare old radio tapes, known as air checks, to send to all the Dallas radio stations. With that voice, I figured he was a shoe-in. But none of the stations responded, so I managed to get him a part-time shift at KYLE.

I was there for his first station ID, and he spoke so softly that the VU meter hardly moved. Some nights later, I paid him a visit during his shift. The studio was a mess. Record albums were spread all over the control room, completely out of Boyd Porter's meticulous order, and Walt was sitting on the floor reading liner notes about Percy Faith and his ilk. I left as quickly as I could, hoping Porter wouldn't blame me. Canady didn't go to KTEM; in fact, he never seemed to hang around one town very long.

Even with all the major talent that passed through, working at KYLE was not the radio job of my dreams. However, when I left the station in May of 1968, I was only eighteen. And I kept right on dreaming.

TEXAS HOTLINE

TEXAS AP BROADCASTERS **FEBRUARY 1984**

Richardson directs network

Veteran Texas broadcaster **MIKE RICHARDSON** is settling in to his newest job, director of the Texas AP Network.

Richardson joins the AP from KOKE-FM in Austin, where he was operations manager. That position followed eight years with the Texas State Network where he went from morning news anchor to news director, then operations manager and director of affiliate relations.

He took charge of the Texas AP Network on Dec. 1 and his first priorities were hiring the rest of the staff and supervising completion of broadcast studios, built in offices adjacent to the Dallas bureau of the AP.

Richardson is a native of Temple where he began his broadcasting career at KYLE-FM in 1965. He said the Texas AP Network will be modeled after AP's national radio network, the largest in the country.

"Nationally, AP's network is a proven concept and I'm eager to put it to work on the state level," Richardson said.

The network studios were custom-designed and allow full duplication between two on-air newsrooms in AP's Dallas offices at Southland Center. The network began operations Feb. 1, 1984 to provide world and state coverage of news, sports and special Texas features for local broadcasters throughout the state. It will be distributed on the AP's extensive satellite system.

"We wanted to find a well-rounded Texas broadcaster to head this important new service and I'm sure we've found the right person for the job," said **ROY STEINFORT**, vice president and director of Broadcast Services.

"Mike was exactly the person we were looking for," added Deputy Director **JIM HOOD**. "We realized that as soon as we talked to him.

"All his experience is in Texas, he's well-known and respected in the state and he knows all aspects of the radio business – news, sales and operations. Plus, his experience in running a state news network will be invaluable," said Hood.

However, Richardson notec that the

See RICHARDSON, Page 2

RICHARDSON

Six join AP in Dallas, Houston

There has been some movement within the Texas AP staff recently, as two correspondencies were filled by Texas Bureau Chief **JOHN LUMPKIN** and five newcomers joined the Dallas and Houston bureaus.

El Paso's new correspondent is **JUDY GIANNETTINO**, 25, who joins the Texas staff after a year with the Santa Fe bureau of the AP. Giannettino replaces **RANDALL HACKLEY**, who has taken a job with a newspaper in southern California. Giannettino joined the AP at Albuquerque, N.M. in 1981 after a year at the Albuquerque Journal.

And **SYDNEY RUBIN** is the new correspondent for the lower Rio Grande Valley, based in Harlingen. Rubin joined the AP's Dallas office in June after a varied reporting career that included jobs with the San Antonio Express, the Laredo News and WNET-TV in New York. She has degrees from the University of Texas and Columbia University in New York.

Rubin replaces **CAMILLA ROSSIE**, who moved to the AP Foreign Desk in New York in preparation for another assignment.

DAVID SEDENO joined the Dallas bureau's news staff Jan. 16. A graduate of Angelo State University, Sedeno has worked as an intern for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and comes to the AP from the San Angelo Standard-Times, where he was news editor.

CARLOS OSORIO, 27, also joined the Dallas bureau in January. The photographer spent more than three years at The Dallas Morning News and also worked for the Brenham Banner-Press. Osorio is a 1979 University of Texas graduate.

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Mike Richardson, whose career began at KYLE, went on to become news director of the Texas State Network and the Texas AP Network.

CHAPTER 2

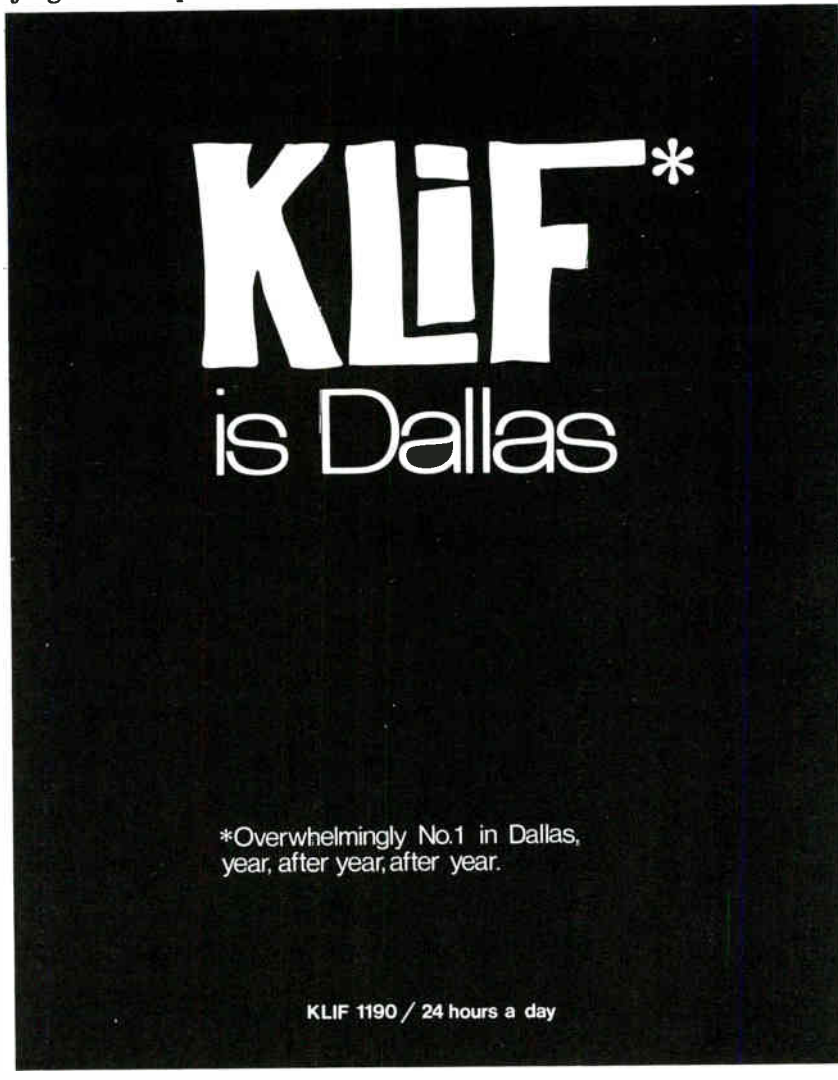
AM Radio: Rockin' the '60s and '70s

While the '60s loom as legend, the decade of the '70s provided the last great days of AM radio. FM stations like KYLE were discovering that frequency modulation was indeed capable of carrying something other than beautiful music. It would still be a few years before the listening public would become sound conscious enough to buy FM receivers with woofers and tweeters, and so, AM radio continued to roll (and rock) for just a little while longer.

In the 1960s, Temple was a town of 35,000, and by the time KTEM started playing hit music at night, it was forced by the Federal Communications Commission (the FCC) to cut its power back from 1,000 watts to 250 watts. A thousand watts, or one kilowatt, was enough juice to send a listenable signal into Austin, 70 miles away. But 250 watts barely covered the area around the transmitter. But that was Temple. In America's big cities, high powered AM stations with signals as powerful as 50,000 watts were pumping out the hits and creating rock and roll legends.

The nearest big city was Dallas where Gordon McLendon had been a '50s pioneer of a new format known as "Top 40." During the decade of the '60s, his 50,000 watt AM station, KLIF, often set the pace for Top 40 stations all over America. KLIF, known to its fans as "Big Cliff" or "The Mighty Eleven-Ninety," always played hit records before the competition, had the best and brightest

deejays, a large and strong team of newscasters and reporters, and was always innovative. The station joined forces with a Dallas production house called PAMS (Production, Advertising, and Merchandising Service) that had begun in 1951 and supplied jingles and promotional music to radio stations all over the

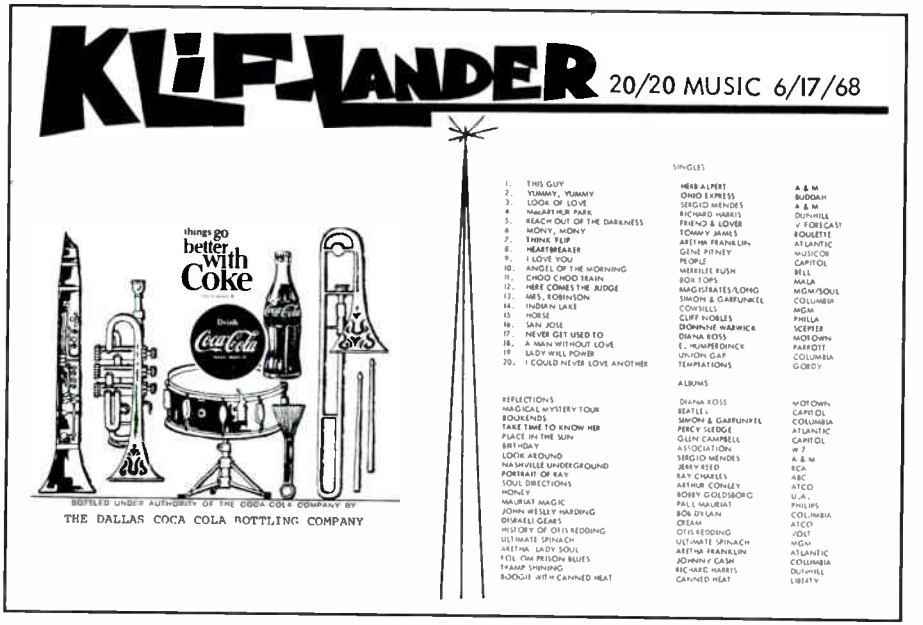


KLIF house ad, January 1970.

country. KLIF's jingles combined instruments with voice to sing lines like "KAY L-I-F, eleven ninety, whoopeeeeee." It was a '60s sound not to be forgotten and it translated into big ratings. KLIF was always giving something away, and it seemed that every time, the prize was larger, finally culminating in an early '70s promotion called "KLIF gives away the world."

And those deejays!

Morning show teams were rare in the early '60s, but KLIF had one of the best with "Charlie and Harrigan." In fact, the show was so successful that it was copied on other stations. Sometimes the names were changed; sometimes they weren't. A morning show called "Hudson and Harrigan" popped up on Gordon McLendon's Houston station, KILT, which had similar programming to KLIF. The duo proved so popular that every time one of the team would leave the station, his replacement would assume the name. So KILT had dozens of Hudsons and Harrigans over the years, continuing to this day.


KLIF-LANDER 20/20 MUSIC 6/17/68

things go better with Coke

Drink Coca-Cola

BOTTLED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE COCA COLA COMPANY BY
THE DALLAS COCA COLA BOTTLING COMPANY

SINGLES

1.	THIS GUY	HERB ALPERT	A & M
2.	YUMMY, YUMMY	OHIO EXPRESS	BUDDAH
3.	LOOK OF LOVE	SERGIO MENDES	A & M
4	MacARTHUR PARK	RICHARD HARRIS	DUNHILL
5.	REACH OUT OF THE DARKNESS	FRIEND & LOVER	V FORECAST
6	MONY, MONY	TOMMY JAMES	ROULETTE
7.	THINK PUP	ARETHA FRANKLIN	ATLANTIC
8.	HEARTBREAKER	GENE PITNEY	MUSICOR
9.	I LOVE YOU	PEOPLE	CAPITOL
10.	ANGEL OF THE MORNING	MERRILEE RUSH	BELL
11.	CHOO CHOO TRAIN	BOX TOPS	MALA
12.	HERE COMES THE JUDGE	MAGISTRATES/LOMG	MGM/SOUL
13.	MRS. ROBINSON	SIMON & GARFUNKEL	COLUMBIA
14.	INDIAN LAKE	COWSILLS	MGM
15	HORSE	CLIFF NOBLES	PHILLA
16.	SAN JOSE	DONNHE WARWICK	SCEPTER
17.	NEVER GET USED TO	DIANA ROSS	MOTOWN
18.	A MAN WITHOUT LOVE	E. HUMPERDINCK	PARROTT
19	LADY WILL POWER	UNION GAP	COLUMBIA
20.	I COULD NEVER LOVE ANOTHER	TEMPTATIONS	GORDY

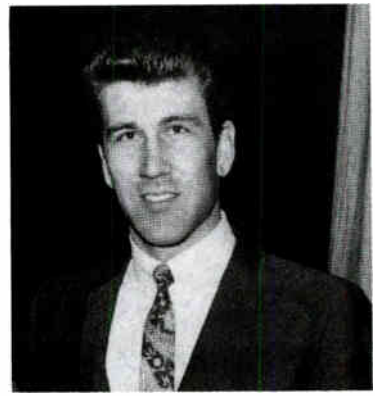
ALBUMS

REFLECTIONS	DIANA ROSS	MOTOWN
MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR	BEATLES	CAPITOL
BOOKENDS	SIMON & GARFUNKEL	COLUMBIA
TAKE TIME TO KNOW HER	PERCY SLEDGE	ATLANTIC
PLACE IN THE SUN	GLEN CAMPBELL	CAPITOL
BIRTHDAY	ASSOCIATION	W 7
LOOK AROUND	SERGIO MENDES	A & M
NASHVILLE UNDERGROUND	JERRY REED	RCA
PORTRAIT OF RAY	RAY CHARLES	ABC
SOUL DIRECTIONS	ARTHUR CONLEY	ATCO
HONEY	BOBBY GOLDSBORO	U.A.
MAURIAT MAGIC	PAUL MAURIAT	PHILIPS
JOHN WESLEY HARDING	BOB DYLAN	COLUMBIA
DISRAELI GEARS	CREAM	ATCO
HISTORY OF OTIS REDDING	OTIS REDDING	VOLT
ULTIMATE SPINACH	ULTIMATE SPINACH	MGM
ARETHA LADY SOUL	ARETHA FRANKLIN	ATLANTIC
FOLSOM PRISON BLUES	JOHNNY CASH	COLUMBIA
TRAMP SHINING	RICHARD HARRIS	DUNHILL
BOOGIE WITH CANNED HEAT	CANNED HEAT	LIBERTY

"KLIF-Lander" survey, June 1968.

Other deejays who dominated the daytime airwaves in Dallas included Michael O'Shea, Dick Heatherton (Joey's brother?), Chuck Murphy, the rapid-fire Paxton Mills, Tony Booth, Mike Selden, and Charlie Van Dyke. Van Dyke was a native Dallasite who had a huge bass voice which he parlayed into the afternoon drive slot at KLIF. (The term "drive" refers to the two prime times in radio: the morning and afternoon rush hours.) Van Dyke not only had the voice, but great deejay patter as well. It seemed he was always in total control of his show and could never be caught off guard. In fact, in the '70s, when KLIF did a series of "Family Portraits" bringing back all the legendary announcers of the past, some seemed uncomfortable on the air. Not Van Dyke. He flew down from Chicago, where he was doing mornings at WLS, and sounded precisely as if he had never left. Later still, he returned to KLIF for a brief morning show stint. Today, Van Dyke can be heard doing promotional announcements and station ID's on television stations all over the United States.

It has always seemed to me that there's something special about AM Top 40 radio, and the nighttime. Unlike FM waves that travel in straight lines, AM signals will hop, skip, and jump wherever they can. So at night, clear channel and regional channel AMs would transmit with enough power to hit the ionosphere. That caused a bounce or "skip signal" that could literally shoot the signal anywhere on the continent. High powered stations almost had a third drive time, and they looked for announcers who could attract and hold a vast audience. KLIF helped define the "cookin' " nighttime jock with guys like Russ Knight, Johnny Dark, and Jimmy Rabbitt. Deejays often had a schtick, and Knight's was a goatee beard that produced the nickname "The Weird Beard." And, quite frankly, he was weird. He



Johnny Borders as Johnny Dark from KLIF's golden age. Courtesy Radio Ink, November 2, 1992.

called himself "the savior of Dallas radio," and he was a master of fast talk, rhyme, and sound effects. He talked up the record beds (that means he talked over the instrumental until the singer began) to keep his show at a fast pace. He made fun of the competition on the air. And he owned the nighttime airwaves in Dallas. The Weird Beard was so popular that in 1970 Increase Records chose him as the subject of its 1962 version of "Cruisin'," a series of re-creations of AM radio legends. Jimmy Rabbitt came later with his "electric show" and made a name for himself as well. Other night voices on KLIF included Jim Taber, the "Bama Boy," and "Sweet" Randy Robins.

KLIF was not only innovative in music programming, but in news as well. When McLendon realized that all the other radio stations ran newscasts at the top and bottom of the hour, he went to a "twenty-twenty" format with a full newscast at twenty after the hour and headlines at twenty till. (The news later became Twenty-Twenty Double Power News, and finally Flower Power News.) Newscasters like Chuck Wheeler, Ted Agnew, Ron McAllister, and Scott Hodges read the news with a flair. And although the reports were never out of the mainstream, they were never dull.

As the "KLIF-Lander" survey proudly proclaimed, KLIF had been "number one in Dallas since who knows when?" But it did have competition. KBOX had a weaker dial position (1480) and only 5,000 watts. But it had a flair and personality of its own and often gave KLIF a run for its money. In the early sixties, no radio station in America could surpass KBOX for sheer cacophony. Take KBOX news, for example. A dateline such as "Los Angeles, California" would be read in deep tones with reverb added for effect. Then, a music intro would precede the story. For example, when Sam Rayburn died in 1961, KBOX had a somber music intro. A mysterious music bed might precede a crime story. The newscast was scored—almost like a movie. Every story was read as though it had just broken and the fate of the world was hanging in the balance. And KBOX had some outstanding deejays as well—people like Dan Patrick, Bill Ward, Bill Holley, Johnny

Borders (later Johnny Dark at KLIF), and Frank Jolle (pronounced: Jolly) who cooked in the nighttime.

While KLIF ruled and KBOX challenged in the early seventies, a sleeping giant was struggling to wake up. WFAA radio had a signal—and a parent company—that could challenge KLIF. WFAA was owned by the A.H. Belo Company and was affiliated with the *Dallas Morning News* and WFAA-TV, Channel 8. But even more important, the radio station was emerging from an antiquated arrangement with a Fort Worth radio station, WBAP, that was unique in the history of broadcasting.

The arrangement dated back to the early days of radio in Texas. The *Dallas Morning News* had a partnership with the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* that called for WFAA to share a frequency with the *Star-Telegram's* station, WBAP. For years, the two stations split the broadcast day. When WFAA was on the air, WBAP was silent. The other half of the time, WBAP existed and WFAA did not. Both stations were broadcasting on clear channel 820 with 50,000 watts, easily the nation's biggest radio signal at that time. But imagine trying to build ratings with such an arrangement.

In 1935, things changed. The two newspapers purchased KGKO, a station in Wichita Falls north of Fort Worth that broadcast at low power on 570. They moved the station to Dallas-Fort Worth and increased the power to 5,000 watts. A few years later, phase two of this unusual arrangement was begun: KGKO would go dark, and WFAA and WBAP would share two dial positions. So now, when WBAP was broadcasting at 50,000 watts on 820, WFAA would be at 5,000 watts on 570. They would often switch at noon or midnight and it would sound like this: "This is WBAP, 820, Fort Worth. [Tone, followed by a different voice.] Now, this is WFAA, 820, Dallas." Had you been listening to 570, you would have heard the same ceremony in reverse. Again, a ratings nightmare. It lasted until the early seventies when ratings began to take on more importance. Finally, the two stations made a business decision to each settle on a frequency. Obviously, the 820 frequency was to be preferred because of its high powered transmitter. But the farther left you go on the dial,

the better range the signal has, and so the 570 frequency was nothing to sneeze at either. In fact, it was almost the equal of 820 during the day, and at night, it still covered North Texas and reached southward to Austin. WBAP ended up with 820 (allegedly, WFAA brass hauled in some big bucks and also figured they'd get cheaper electricity bills with the smaller transmitter), and WFAA settled for 570. Now, the two stations could get on with the business of programing and building an audience. WBAP decided to go country.

By the early seventies, KBOX had changed to a country format as well, so WFAA decided to take on KLIF. Armed with an "All-American" jingle package and a full-time frequency, WFAA became a Top 40 station. The announcing staff was excellent, in fact, some of the air staff had ties to KLIF. The night jock, for example, was a screamer named Gene Holmes who had been known as "Captain Weekend" on KLIF. The station really sounded good, and with its superior signal, it garnered a good audience across the Southwest. But in Dallas, the KLIF tradition was too strong, and not enough dials made the journey leftward from 1190 to 570. After a too short time, the station decided to go adult contemporary. When that happened, KFJZ, the Top 40 station in Fort Worth, put an ad in the trades looking for Gene Holmes, but apparently, they never found him.

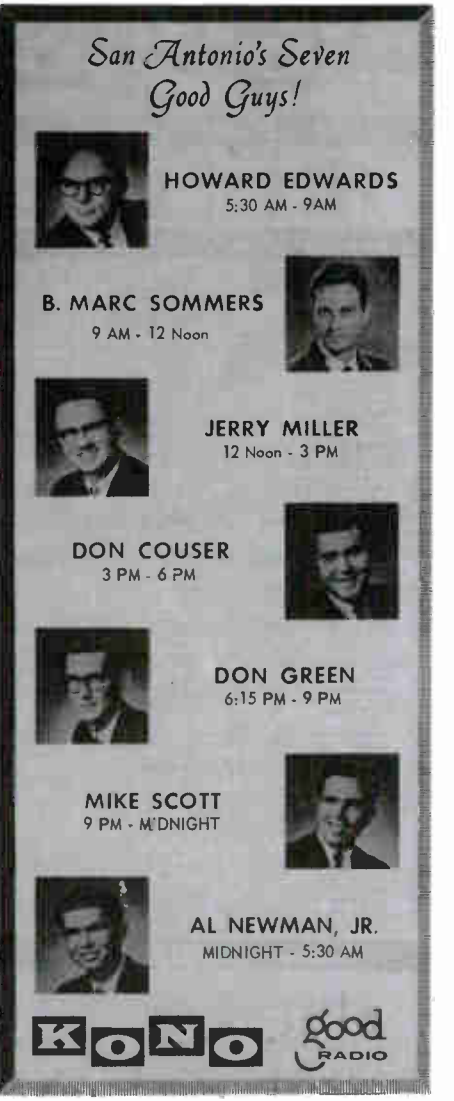
Elsewhere in Texas, it was two other McLendon stations and a few pretenders, weaving Top 40 legends in their cities. Houston, the state's largest city, had McLendon's KILT at 610 on the dial. Hudson and Harrigan handled the mornings with an announcer known only as "Michael" during the day and Steve Lundy on afternoon drive. Lundy made a big enough name to later head for Chicago and WLS.

Down south, in San Antonio, the third link in Gordon McLendon's "Texas Triangle" was KTSA, once known as KAKI (because of the khaki uniforms of the San Antonio military population) until it was learned that those call letters had a bad connotation in Spanish. Broadcasting at 550, KTSA had most of the listeners in its part of the state just as KLIF and KILT did in theirs. KTSA (later to be sold by the McLendon organization, just

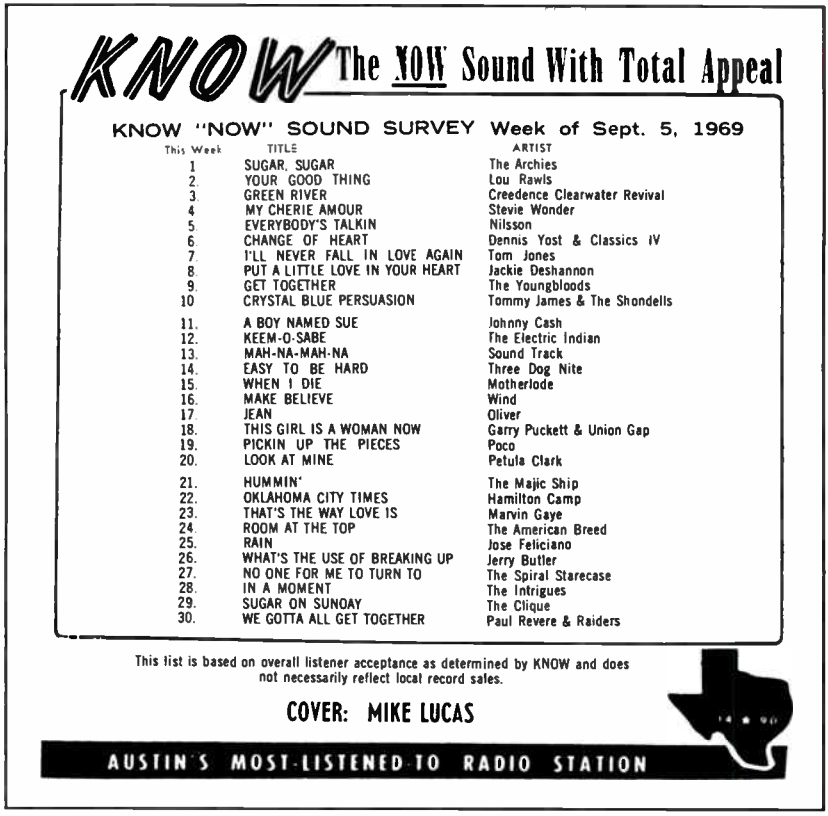
as KILT and KLIF would be) got a big boost in 1968 when the World's Fair known as HemisFair came to San Antonio. The city built a huge observation tower, ala the Seattle Space Needle, and dozens of other attractions for the Fair. And with hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world flocking to San Antonio, KTSA was cookin'. They had Top 40 jocks from across the country do recorded "drops" saying things like: "Hi, this is John Doe of WXXX in Cleveland. And when my listeners come to San Antonio to visit HemisFair, I tell them to listen to KTSA." In late 1968, just as I was about to graduate from high school, I got a case of the mumps that was one for the textbooks. I had to lie flat on my back for six weeks. I studied some, but mostly, I listened to the radio. KLIF and KILT came in from time to time, but KTSA had the strongest signal. I remember Bruce Hathaway, Ricky Ware, Bobby Magic, Larry Kent, Johnny O'Neil, Kahn L. Hamon, and several others, plus KTSA 20/20 news (just like on KLIF and KILT). But there was a difference. KTSA's jocks didn't have a lot of leeway when it came to their ad-libs. The station always had a promotion going, and the jock always had to tie the promotion name to the call letters and the time. So it would be: "KTSA Break the Bank time is 3:30, with Kahn L. Hamon," or "KTSA Diamond Disc time is 1:20 with Bobby Magic." They said it over and over and over until it was thoroughly packed into your brain, the better to write down in a ratings diary. Yes, it was boring, but it still worked, and half the kids at Temple High, 150 miles away, listened to KTSA. Across town, San Antonio's "Seven Good Guys" on KONO, 860, were putting up a good fight, but KTSA always seemed to have an edge.

Texas is a big state with a lot of big cities, and several other markets had pretty decent Top 40. In Austin, KNOW (1490) had a 1000 watt signal, a pretty good staff, and a great news department. Jocks like Chuck Boyle, Mike Lucas, and Jay Allen ruled the Texas capital. KNOW had beautiful studios built in the late sixties, and they featured a "showcase" control room—the room where the announcer did his show. If you visited the station and waited in the lobby, you could watch the announcer work. And so, the station would put up an easel with the announcer's name on

a posterboard. Jay Allen (real name: Jerry Snyder) would wear a full suit to his midday shift. After all, there's no business like show business.



KONO "Hit List" survey, September 1963.



KNOW The NOW Sound With Total Appeal

KNOW "NOW" SOUND SURVEY Week of Sept. 5, 1969

This Week	TITLE	ARTIST
1	SUGAR, SUGAR	The Archies
2.	YOUR GOOD THING	Lou Rawls
3.	GREEN RIVER	Creedence Clearwater Revival
4	MY CHERIE AMOUR	Stevie Wonder
5.	EVERYBODY'S TALKIN	Nilsson
6.	CHANGE OF HEART	Dennis Yost & Classics IV
7.	I'LL NEVER FALL IN LOVE AGAIN	Tom Jones
8.	PUT A LITTLE LOVE IN YOUR HEART	Jackie Deshannon
9.	GET TOGETHER	The Youngbloods
10	CRYSTAL BLUE PERSUASION	Tommy James & The Shondells
11.	A BOY NAMED SUE	Johnny Cash
12.	KEEM-O-SABE	The Electric Indian
13.	MAH-NA-MAH-NA	Sound Track
14.	EASY TO BE HARD	Three Dog Nite
15.	WHEN I DIE	Motherlode
16.	MAKE BELIEVE	Wind
17	JEAN	Oliver
18.	THIS GIRL IS A WOMAN NOW	Garry Puckett & Union Gap
19.	PICKIN UP THE PIECES	Poco
20.	LOOK AT MINE	Petula Clark
21.	HUMMIN'	The Majic Ship
22.	OKLAHOMA CITY TIMES	Hamilton Camp
23.	THAT'S THE WAY LOVE IS	Marvin Gaye
24.	ROOM AT THE TOP	The American Breed
25.	RAIN	Jose Feliciano
26.	WHAT'S THE USE OF BREAKING UP	Jerry Butler
27.	NO ONE FOR ME TO TURN TO	The Spiral Starecase
28.	IN A MOMENT	The Intrigues
29.	SUGAR ON SUNDAY	The Clique
30.	WE GOTTA ALL GET TOGETHER	Paul Revere & Raiders

This list is based on overall listener acceptance as determined by KNOW and does not necessarily reflect local record sales.

COVER: MIKE LUCAS

AUSTIN'S MOST-LISTENED-TO RADIO STATION

KNOW, "The Now Sound" survey, September 1969.

Up I-35 in Waco, there were three stations slugging it out. Aptly named WACO usually got the best of it with its 1000 watt signal on 1460 and a solid staff of announcers. Once, they ran a "vote for your favorite announcer" contest. I remember hearing "vote for Dick Tooker" over and over. At 1010 on the dial, KAWA was a daytime only station that gave WACO a run for its money. Its slogan was "10,000 watts—sounds like a million." It did well with a solid local staff and a syndicated show from Dick Clark. The other station was KBGO, "the Big Go," which was way up the dial on 1580. Jack Handley worked there for a while, as did an announcer who went by the name of Ebenezer Gooch. Gooch was

really Jackson Bain who later became an anchor at KCEN-TV in Temple, before moving to larger markets, NBC, and then settling down in Washington, D.C. KBGO, unlike the McLendon Trio, was on the wrong end of the dial and faded out before you reached the Waco city limits. Later, it sold and became KRZI which pretty well described anyone who would buy it.

Thirty miles of freeway separated Waco from Temple, but that was enough to keep me from getting most of the Waco stations at night. So when I wasn't dialing around for a skip signal, I was faithfully tuned in to local legend Chuck Baker on KTEM. Chuck was the first jock I can remember on the "Nite Flite" show—and he was a cooker. A KTEM survey dated August 3, 1963 proclaimed, "(It's) your party & you can cry if you want to . . . you may have to." That same survey points out how mellow Top 40 could be with "Songs I Love" by Perry Como listed as album of the week. After both Chuck Baker and David Garcia had retired from Nite Flite, a young announcer by the name of Davy Jones took over. Jones was into what might be called "initial-ese." He would name his show something like the Davy Jones Nite Flite Radio Program Of The Air, which would become the D.J.N.F.R.P.O.T.A. I always wondered if he used cue cards, because he never stumbled over all the initials. Other announcers of the period included Johnny Ford, Bob Watkins, weekender Craig Bean (now at Austin's KVUE-TV), and later, Bill Galyon and Joe Lombardi who came to Central Texas from Galveston.

While Texas rocked, the rest of the nation was into Top 40 as well. Los Angeles had the legendary KHJ, and New York had WABC, programmed for twenty-two years by Top 40 genius Rick Sklar. But it was the nation's other "supermarket" that sent a nighttime skip signal into Texas.

It billed itself as "The Big 89," and it was. The call letters WLS even stood for size—"World's Largest Studios," "Station," or "Store," depending on which story you believed. And "LS," as it was often called, sounded as big as Chicago. Owned and operated by the ABC network, the station had a powerful 50,000 watt clear channel voice and the money to hire the best deejays in America. The jingles were smooth, and they played over and over: "Eighty-

WLS "Hit Parade" survey, December 1968. Note the promo for radio legend Larry Lujack.

WLS RADIO 89 abc
HIT PARADE

DECEMBER 23, 1968

THIS WEEK			LAST WEEK
* 1.	I Heard It Through The Grapevine	Marvin Gaye—Tamla	1
* 2.	I Love How You Love Me	Bobby Vinton—Epic	2
* 3.	Things I'd Like To Say	New Colony Six—Mercury	4
* 4.	Stormy	Classics IV—Imperial	7
5.	Abraham, Martin & John	Dion—Laurie	3
* 6.	I'm Gonna Make You Love Me	Supremes/Temptations—Motown	14
7.	Cinnamon	Derek—Bang	5
8.	For Once In My Life	Stevie Wonder—Tamla	6
* 9.	Son Of A Preacher Man	Dusty Springfield—Atlantic	10
*10.	Crimson & Clover	Tommy James/Shondells—Roulette	22
11.	Till	The Vogues—Reprise	11
12.	Both Sides Now	Judy Collins—Electra	9
13.	Witchita Lineman	Glen Campbell—Capitol	13
14.	Love Child	Diana Ross/Supremes—Motown	8
*15.	Hang 'Em High	Booker T & The MG's—Stax	18
16.	Can't Turn You Loose	Chambers Bros.—Columbia	17
*17.	Soulful Strut	Young Holt Unltd—Brunswick	24
18.	Cloud Nine	Temptations—Gordy	20
19.	Scarborough Fair	Sergio Mendes/Brazil '66—A&M	19
*20.	Going Up The Country	Canned Heat—Liberty	27
21.	See Saw	Aretha Franklin—Atlantic	12
*22.	Ray Of Hope	The Rascals—Atlantic	30
*23.	Hooked On A Feeling	B. J. Thomas—Scepter	26
24.	Shake	Shadows of Knight—Team	16
*25.	Bella Linda	Grassroots—Dunhill	31
*26.	If I Can Dream	Elvis Presley—R.C.A.	32
*27.	Condition Red	Goodees—Hip	34
28.	La Mucha Que Te Quiere	Rene/Rene—White Whale	29
29.	Goody Goody Gumdrops	1910 Fruitgum Co.—Buddah	15
*30.	Worst That Could Happen	Brooklyn Bridge—Buddah	39
31.	Who's Makin' Love	Johnny Taylor—Stax	21
32.	Papa's Got A Brand New Bag	Otis Redding—Atco	35
33.	Too Weak To Fight	Clarence Carter—Atlantic	33
34.	Someone To Love Me	Bobby Vee—Liberty	38
*35.	My Favorite Things	Herb Alpert—A&M	—
36.	Stand By Your Man	Tammy Wynette—Epic	37
37.	Goodnight My Love	Paul Anka—R.C.A.	40
38.	Chewy, Chewy	Ohio Express—Buddah	26
39.	Hey Jude	Wilson Pickett—Atlantic	—
*40.	I Started A Joke	Bee Gees—Atco	—

top 89 hits of 1968 on back of survey

hear larry lujack announce the hit parade award winners on thursday december 26th beginning 2 pm

Records listed on the WLS Hit Parade are selected by WLS after evaluating and considering record sales, listener requests and the station's own opinion of their audience appeal. Sale or resale of this survey is prohibited. Violators will be prosecuted. *DENOTES FASTEST MOVERS.

nine, double-you, ell, ess." Later, the station became "The Rock of Chicago" prompting dozens of smaller stations to become the rock of wherever they happened to be.

The morning show I remember most featured Larry Lujack and Lyle Dean. Lujack had a great voice, a great delivery, and, like Johnny Carson, had a knack for making the most out of any fumble. On one show, he played an Elvis record and then talked for a while. When the next record began, it was Elvis again. Lujack stopped the record and called newsman Dean to ask if he hadn't just played that record. They decided that he had, and so he went on to something else. That same morning, he lost his weather forecast and found it wadded up in the trash. Dean, meanwhile, had one of the bigger voices of any newscaster in the country, and he often read the news on the ABC network. Other jocks included Art Riley, Art Roberts, Chuck Buell, John "Records" Landecker (Records is his middle name), and McLendon alumni Charlie Van Dyke and Steve Lundy. Across town, the competition was another 50,000 watt station, WCFL. "The Big 10" was owned by the Chicago Federation of Labor, and though its signal didn't match that of WLS, it certainly had its followers. In 1971, the station brought in Dick Biondi to do afternoons. Biondi, like Russ Knight at KLIF, belonged to that exclusive club of deejays who had "Cruisin' " albums done in their honor. Biondi's was a re-creation from his 1960 stint at WKBW in Buffalo.

So these were the stations I listened to throughout the sixties and into the seventies. I knew their announcers and newscasters well enough to post a shift schedule. I collected their printed surveys and knew their playlists. I dreamed of being Charlie Van Dyke or Larry Lujack. By 1970, I was plenty tired of KYLE-FM and Percy Faith. Armed with my "third-phone" license and a fake aircheck, I headed to KTEM determined to become a Top 40 jock.

CHAPTER 3

The Natural

In all my years in radio, I've never come across anyone with more natural talent than Jackie Sprott.

Jackie was a fifteen-year-old member of the Temple High School student council when he dropped by KTEM to record a public service announcement. Station personnel must have received something of a shock when listening back to Jackie's tape. He didn't just sound good on the radio; he sounded *real* good. Announcer Joe Lombardi suggested to management that Jackie be offered a job.

At first, he worked some weekend shifts using a nom de plume (I think it was Britt Reid) and later, after nailing down the night shift, settled in as J. Hugh Sprott. (In a self-promoting "drop-in," he referred to himself as Jay Who What.) From day one, he made KTEM sound like a major market radio station.

Shortly after Jackie came to KTEM, program director Don Maples hired me to do the night shift on Saturday and Sunday. It was 1970, and though neither of us realized it, we were beginning the last great decade of AM Top 40 radio. Even though, at the age of 20, I was several years older than Jackie, I had a great deal of respect for his talent, and we became friends. We used to listen to airchecks, Crusin' albums, and out of town stations, plotting all the while to make KTEM into a great Top 40 station, in spite of management.

During this time, I had the opportunity to introduce Jackie to a first cousin who had come to town to visit his parents—Steve

Woolley. I knew Steve pretty well when we were kids, but I hadn't seen him in years. Seeing him again for the first time, I shook hands and asked what he did for a living. "I'm a disk jockey," he answered. "So what do you do?" Steve was an army brat and had literally lived all over the globe including one long stint in Turkey. Somewhere along the line, he had been bitten by the radio bug and, like me, had hung around a radio station until they put him on the payroll. Steve was working at WBBS in Jacksonville, North Carolina, and like Jackie, used his middle name (he went by Steve Wray) as part of his air name. And, like Jackie, he would later work a prime time shift in Sacramento, California: Jackie as an anchorman on Channel 10 and Steve doing morning drive on KSFM. When I introduced them, Steve asked Jackie why he tried so hard to sound like WLS. "Why, thank you," replied Jackie, who really didn't have to try very hard at all.

I had entered the University of Texas at Austin as a junior by this time, and it became difficult for me to hold onto an air shift in Temple. For a short while, I was replaced by an ex-soldier from nearby Fort Hood who went by the name of "Bubble Head Ed." His show sounded amazingly like his name, and I was soon able to reclaim my weekend shifts. But a few months later, when Don Maples left to go across town to country KTON (where Steve Wray would later work as well), a new program director named Bruce Earle was brought in. Bruce was something of a loose cannon, but when it came to radio, he meant business.

Bruce set up strict "jock clocks" that told us what we should be saying and playing at any given moment. And he wasn't too understanding about my campus life at the University of Texas.

UT's football team was ranked number one in the nation when I enrolled, and I was quite the football fan. I think my interest in the Longhorns had peaked the season before when the Horns finished the 1969 season as national champions. I remember watching the final game of the regular season at the home of one of my best friends, Rex Davis. Rex and I and a few other friends sweated through two halves of heart-stopping football as our top-ranked Horns struggled against the nation's number two team, the Arkansas Razorbacks. Here it was—the final regular season

game in college football's 100th year. President Nixon was in the stands prepared to declare the winner as national champs. Both Texas and Arkansas were undefeated. But late in the game, Texas was trailing 14-0. Then, Darrell Royal's wishbone offense, led by quarterback James Street, pulled out some miracle passes and a two point conversion en route to a 15-14 victory. It was considered by many to be the greatest college football game ever played.

The next year found me sitting in the stands for the rematch in Austin. It wasn't much of a game as UT whipped Arkansas 42-7. But Arkansas wasn't the only loser that day. Because I attended the game, I was late for my Saturday night air shift on KTEM. Bruce Earle fired me.

Meanwhile, Jackie Sprott was thinking television. He left his deejay job at KTEM for an anchor slot on Temple's NBC affiliate, KCEN-TV. Later, he worked in El Paso and then graduated to major markets like Denver, Boston, Pittsburgh, and Sacramento. But even Jackie, with all his talent, didn't find the road to TV stardom to be without its twists and turns.

At the age of 21, Jackie had accepted a job at Channel 9 in Denver in the summer of 1974. The station's news director, Carl Akers, was obviously planning some great things for Jackie—like a prime time anchor position. But first, he wanted his young discovery to get some experience on the noon news, and as a general assignments reporter.

Things might have worked out for Jackie in Denver, had he not been "discovered" once again.

This time, it was a news director from Boston, Mel Bernstein, who happened to see Jackie's work. Bernstein was watching TV in a Denver motel room about a year after Jackie came to town. He liked what he saw and was determined to hire the young anchorman and put him to work at WNAC-TV, the CBS affiliate in Boston. At the time, WNAC-TV was lagging behind the other two network affiliates in the local news ratings. Bernstein thought that Sprott might be able to turn that situation around.

Once in Boston, Jackie underwent a transformation. He was no longer J. Hugh Sprott; he was renamed Jay Scott, a terse and

classier airname. His glasses were taken away and replaced with contact lenses, giving him an even more youthful look. Finally, a change of hair color (bleached blond) made the changeover complete. The promotion of Jay Scott could begin.

By the early nineties, Jay Scott was handling the weekend anchor assignment at WABC-TV, New York. Photo: Courtesy WABC-TV.

The selling of Jay Scott is, in fact, where this story gets strange. WNAC elected to not promote Scott's abilities as an anchorman and reporter as much as his youth and good looks. That did nothing for his credibility. Then to make matter worse, the station proceeded to explain to the Boston public how Jay Scott had been discovered—in a motel room in Denver. There was a chance that Bostonians might take that little joke the wrong way; they did.

For the next year, Jay Scott co-anchored the news in Boston, but his viewers and the local print media never forgot that opening publicity campaign. References to it kept showing up, overshadowing his abilities as a newsman. No one was taking him seriously.

The ratings at WNAC-TV did not improve during the year that Jackie was there. So with eleven months still to go on his contract, he was released.

This story was not told just in Boston. Television writer Walter Saunders ran a two-column piece headlined "J. Hugh Sprott Saga" in Denver's *Rocky Mountain News* on September 9, 1976. Saunders opened his column this way:

> "If you're considering writing a novel about a TV anchorman, you might use the saga of J. Hugh Sprott alias Jay Scott as your subject. On second thought, maybe the Sprott/Scott story shouldn't be used. It's pretty far-fetched for fiction."

—•—

That same week, Nicholas von Hoffman ran the story coast-to-coast on the CBS Radio Network's "Spectrum" series. Von Hoffman was hard on television news in general and Sprott in particular, calling him "too pretty to be taken seriously."

Sprott seemed to take the whole episode in stride, telling a Boston writer that he was "hurt but not bitter." Still, Walter Saunders asked the question in his column: "I wonder if he wishes he never had left Denver?"

End of story. But not the end of the line for J. Hugh Sprott. He went to Pittsburgh, and then to Sacramento, where he made the

cover of the *TV-TIME* magazine in the *Sacramento Union* on October 5, 1980. Of him, they wrote:

> Our Cover
>
> Jay Scott is all settled in now.
>
> Two years ago he arrived here from Pittsburgh and Channel 10 insisted on billing him as a newcomer. Scott went along with that promotional approach . . . to a point. But he lives here, works here, loves it here.
>
> Scott, seen each weeknight on the 5 and 11 newscasts, has been called the Ted Baxter of Sacramento and the handsomest TV man in town.

—•—

He is, indeed, a natural.

CHAPTER 4

Back and Forth on Main Street

Interstate 35 is a long stretch of highway. Beginning at Laredo on the Mexican border, it cuts all the way up Texas, passing through San Antonio, Austin, Temple, Waco, splitting up to hit both Dallas and Fort Worth, and finally converging north of DFW Airport to head for Oklahoma City and beyond. Because it leads to every major city in Texas except Houston and El Paso, it's often called "the Main Street of Texas." And, in fact, my radio career never left I-35.

By late 1970, I was living in Austin, attending classes at the University of Texas, and looking for a part-time deejay job to help pay expenses. I had graduated from Temple Junior College with honors and had made plans to attend North Texas State University in Denton because it was near Dallas, and Dallas was where I wanted to work in radio. But college chum Rex Davis had convinced me to join him and another pal of ours, Ken Chupik, in Austin. My folks were ecstatic. My father had always been a Texas Longhorn football fan. (He had a clipping from the *Temple Daily Telegram* of head coach Darrell Royal with his arm around my cousin Bobby Woolley, who was a star center at Temple High. Unfortunately, Bobby was injured and saw little playing time for the Horns.) And they were both happy that I would be attending a school only an hour's drive away from home. I worked out a deal with another friend, Robert Malsbary, and we rented a one-room

apartment in the same complex as Rex and Ken. I was an only child, and I'll never forget my parents' tears as I drove off to college in my blue 1965 Ford Mustang.

The four of us drove to Austin convoy style, moved in, unpacked, and headed for Kinsolving, the largest women's dorm at UT. Later, Malsbary and I discovered that we each had brought a guitar. Both preferring folk music, and being decent singers, we embarked on a music career that lasted for more than ten years. As folk singers, we did two records but they never charted, and we eventually stopped performing. But during our two years at UT, the money came in handy.

Rent wasn't much by today's standards, but each of us began to look for additional ways to bring in some extra money for food and rent. Rex and Bob both got part-time jobs at the State Capitol working as pages for the Texas Senate and House of Representatives. I paid a visit to KNOW.

I sat in the lobby waiting for my appointment with Jeff (Bob Botik) Stevens. Through the glass showcase windows, I watched an announcer named Chuck White do the morning show. My appointment did not result in a jock job, but it did win me a second appointment, this time with Bill Watts, the News Director at KNOW. I wasn't much of a news junkie in those days, but I needed a job, and after all, it was radio . . .

Watts was a young man with dark hair, a moustache, and a nice voice who ran the city's largest radio news team—and he was looking for a traffic reporter. But Watts also wanted a weekend newscaster and he was hoping to fill both slots with one hire. He asked me to read some wire copy on tape as an audition.

This was 1970—one year after the United States government had disclosed that a war atrocity had taken place in March of 1968 during the conflict in Vietnam. In and around the hamlet of My Lai, United States troops had apparently massacred hundreds of civilians. Officers were court-martialed, and one, Lieutenant William Calley, Jr., was found guilty of murder and sentenced to prison. Unfortunately, the copy I was to read concerned this story. I mispronounced the name *My Lai* and the name *Calley*. But Bill Watts *really* needed to fill that position, and

so he shrugged his shoulders and mumbled something about working with me on my delivery. He suggested I subscribe to *Time* or *Newsweek* and read them cover to cover. I took his advice.

Chuck White publicity shot from KNOW, 1969. Chuck now does mornings on KHOM, New Orleans. Photo: Courtesy Chuck White.

Soon, I was hanging around the KNOW newsroom on a regular basis. Howard Falkenberg did the morning newscasts, Jon Meyer handled midday, Bob Shrader did afternoons, and Harrison Hurst handled the evening shift. While Shrader was working the anchor desk, I was out in a 1970 Dodge Charger listening to the police radio and doing ad-libbed traffic reports several times an hour. The afternoon jock, a guy named Bob Osborn, who went by the name "Little Oz," would play a sound bridge that was my cue to key the mike on my two-way radio and begin talking. A typical report might have sounded like this:

> Traffic is beginning to get heavier as the rush hour progresses. I-35 from Highway 183 to Oltorf is moving very slow. If you're headed in the direction of Ben White Boulevard and Congress, look for an alternate route since police report a minor accident causing difficulties there. Lynn Woolley on the streets of Austin.

The reports were always terse and to the point, and I never got to rap with the jock, or with Shrader, during his newscast. I'm surprised I did months of this type of work and never had an accident.

The weekend news anchor shift was a different world from the traffic reporting. I would work six hours, ripping the wire, rewriting the news, and making phone calls. KNOW had a strict regimen for every shift, so I always knew exactly when I was to check with the Austin Police, or the Fire Department, or the Sheriff's Office. Watts had his staff keep a morgue file of newspaper clippings on every local story. And he maintained a tedious "tickler" file for victims of newsworthy violence who were hospitalized. So every night, I would pull out a long list of patients who had been shot or hurt in car wrecks. Then, I got the nursing supervisor on the phone and went through the list. If any one of them had died, I would find the original story and use it to write an obituary. If another station beat KNOW to a story, or if any violence in the city escaped my knowledge, I would hear about it.

Nine months went by, and my junior year at UT was over. Malsbary and I sublet our apartment for the summer and moved back in with our folks. In April of 1971, I went back to KTEM and asked for a summer job.

KTEM was in a new building by this time, with some new equipment, and a new program director named Chuck Kelly. He did the morning show with a gruff old man character named "Tex Tallsaddle" who always referred to Chuck as "Mr. Kelly." Kelly had moved to the area from Oklahoma City where he had jocked at KOMA. Kelly's real name was Charles Herman Boyle, and he had used the name "Chuck Boyle" years earlier at KNOW. He changed it to avoid confusion with another jock who had a similar name. When Kelly heard my tapes from KNOW, he immediately

put me in the news department. KTEM was no KNOW. It turned out that I *was* the news department.

KTEM was managed in those days by a Ross Perot-like manager named Don Chaney, known to his troops as "the Little General." He believed strongly in profit. But he didn't believe in forty-hour weeks or overtime. I was put on a fifty-hour week and was on call twenty-four hours a day. I soon learned to avoid places with telephones; however, that still didn't keep me from being awakened several nights a week to cover one-alarm fires and the like. My newscasts filled a small part of KTEM's broadcast day during mornings and afternoons. But eighteen minutes each hour —the maximum allowed by the Federal Communications Commission—were devoted to commercials. Being in a small market, KTEM's rates were low. But with only one station (KTON) as competition, it was easy to get on the street and sell sell sell. Chaney's motto was "show me a program director who doesn't like to run eighteen minutes an hour, and I'll show you a former program director." Keep in mind that this type of commercial load made it difficult to work in a record or two. Today, most radio stations program no more than twelve commercials each hour, and some of those are only thirty seconds. Eventually, Chaney and Chuck Kelly had a parting of the ways, and Chaney brought in Chuck White, late of KNOW, to replace him.

What I had learned at KNOW came in handy. I wrote and delivered the morning newscasts, went to every car wreck in town, and covered school board (bored) meetings into the wee hours of the morning. It was an uneventful summer with one exception.

A few months earlier in Dallas, two men, Rene Adolpho Guzman and Leonardo Ramos Lopez, had taken some Dallas deputies as prisoners. At gunpoint, they forced them to a secluded spot along the Trinity River bottoms where they were ruthlessly shot. Three of the deputies died, but one lived and became a crucial part of the State's case against Guzman and Lopez. When the case came to trial, it was moved to Belton on a change of venue and became the first big story I covered in person.

Temple and Belton share the same city limits sign, and so the trial would be taking place well within the KTEM market area. I remember showing up at the Bell County Courthouse on the first day of jury selection. The courthouse was ringed with mobile units and station cars from WFAA, WBAP, KRLD, and others. Suddenly, I felt very tiny. Once, I got behind WFAA's Jerry Taff as we queued up to use a pay phone. I listened to him read his story to his newsroom, and then I delivered my story to KTEM. His was better written.

Two assistant Dallas D.A.'s, Jon Sparling and Doug Mulder, prosecuted the case and won convictions. But the Dallas District Attorney himself, Henry Wade, participated in final arguments and made a statement that an appeals court later cited in remanding the case for a new trial. Guzman and Lopez got some big time sentences, but escaped the electric chair.

As school started, it was back to U.T.; but this time, I didn't return to KNOW, at least, not yet. But in December of 1971, I managed to land a job at KTAP, a small daytime station at 970 on the dial. KTAP was interesting because it was a sister station to one of those hippie FM stations where the jocks played unlistenable music and burned incense in the control room, and to a television station, KHFI-TV, Channel 42. I was hired by a man named Ed Brandon, who then turned me over to Mel Pennington, who read the sports on Channel 42. During my afternoon show, I played the hits, ran ABC radio news, and generally did as I pleased. One of the other announcers was named Bret Lewis. Bret did mornings on KTAP and also was the evening weather guy on Channel 42. I even got to do some announce booth work for TV—station identification and the like. I stayed until February of 1972. Meanwhile, Brandon left the station and went to Houston where he became a talk show host on KPRC and a well-known weatherman on Houston TV.

At this point, I still had two remaining stops on my Temple to Austin connection, but my methodology used in obtaining the next job was a bit unorthodox—especially for a young man of 22.

While I was a senior at the University, a new FM radio station had signed on the air. It was licensed to San Marcos but had

studios in Austin and was programed for the university crowd. Owned by R. Miller Hicks, it was called KRMH or simply "Good Karma." I didn't know what "Karma" was, but the radio station was different and fun. The music was soft rock; the announcers were laid back so much they almost whispered. In its first ratings period, KRMH did well. Malsbary and I decided the time was right to take such a format to Temple.

We knew that KYLE-FM was going through some hard times. FM radio was hard to sell, especially in Temple, and KYLE, under Boyd Porter, was not making ends meet. The owner of the station was a Scott & White anesthesiologist named Dr. Charles Gillespie. Dr. Gillespie didn't know much about radio; he had simply bought the station as an investment and trusted Porter to run it. But by this time, he was getting anxious to see the station turn a profit. As a school project, I had designed a format and business plan for a new radio station. Malsbary and I presented this plan with few changes to Dr. Gillespie, and he agreed to let us try it.

Boyd Porter was furious. In my presence, he told Gillespie, "Lynn Woolley is not the man you need." However, a few days later, we were preparing to sign on the "New KYLE."

We didn't have the funds to hire a new staff. We named the station's former bookkeeper, Dave Metcalf, as general manager. Malsbary became sales manager, and I was program director, my first department head position. Mike Richardson's little brother, Mark, was one of the announcers, and we later brought in a big-voiced announcer from Killeen named Ray Welch who liked to listen to Gene Holmes at night on WFAA. The remainder of the staff consisted of high school and junior college kids who had formerly played Mantovani under Boyd Porter. We had a control board and two working turntables, but other than that, the equipment was sparse. Our reel-to-reel machine, an old Magnecorder, worked some of the time, but our Viking cartridge decks (literally decks that sat down into cut-outs on the counter top) rarely worked. Keep in mind that radio stations of the day used tape cartridges that "cued up" when the head read an inaudible tone that was recorded on the tape. Not at KYLE. Our cartridges

cued up when the head was struck by a piece of metallic tape that was glued onto the recording tape. I never did know where they were able to find such old technology.

It was with this rag-tag staff and sub-par equipment that "Good KYLE" hit the air in May of 1972. (The slogan lost something in the translation from "Good Karma" but neither Malsbary nor I knew it at the time.) We began on a Saturday morning about 7 o'clock. We had planned to start at 6 a.m.; however, no one had a key to the front door, and we had to call David Metcalf to let us in. We played easy rock and roll (like Rick Nelson's "Garden Party"), some crossover country (like Tanya Tucker's "Delta Dawn"), and adopted the laid-back style of KRMH. The telephones rang off the wall.

Malsbary and I concocted a rate card and hit the streets. We worked Temple, Killeen, and all the surrounding towns. It was still a hard sell. After a few months, I was frustrated with the lack of advertiser support. Malsbary had lowered the prices to $1 per thirty-second spot, but still the response was slow. After only three months I had had enough.

Dr. Gillespie's woes continued long after Malsbary and I were gone. The station underwent more format changes and eventually came under the management of one William H. Trull, whose resume listed WACO in Waco and KBOX in Dallas. A Dallas alternative newspaper, *The Iconoclast*, did a long story about Gillespie and Trull headlined "The Mysterious Demise of KYLE-FM." Deborah Goodall wrote in her opening paragraph: "A missing general manager, an apparent nonexistent financial backer and revelations of a power struggle have forced a Central Texas radio station off the air." Goodall went on to describe this "power struggle" and how it resulted in massive firings, lawsuits, and accusations. Fed up, Gillespie sold KYLE to Clint Formby, who already owned the AM station in Temple, KTEM. Formby renamed it KPLE and moved it into the KTEM building just two blocks away from the Kyle Hotel. KPLE was soon fully automated, playing syndicated beautiful music "For the Two Of Us." The power struggle was over.

Malsbary and I went back to Austin. We rented a nice apartment near the university, and Bill Watts gave me a full-time job as the evening news anchorman at KNOW. My shift lasted until one o'clock in the morning, and it was pretty boring. I became close friends with the all-night jock, Wayne Griggs, who used the airname "Rick Scott." We would get sandwiches from Arby's and lament the fact that we were making $100 per week, broadcasting on all of 250 watts. Eventually, we each had an offer to go to a bigger market for better money. Rick went from all nights at KNOW to afternoon drive at WOAI, a 50,000 watt clear channel station in San Antonio that had begun a Top 40 format. Meanwhile, a newsman at WFAA in Dallas, Jay David Joiner, informed me by phone one evening that he was planning to leave the station. That meant his evening shift would be open, and he suggested that I apply for it.

I had been dating a young girl from Temple named Jodie Chandler, and I asked her if she'd like to get married and move to Dallas. She said she would, and we did.

Lynn Woolley prepares a newscast at WFAA, circa 1975. Photo: Nancy Reynolds.

CHAPTER 5

The Road to Dallas

On the way to Dallas, we listened to Don Cristy on WFAA, as I contemplated my chances of ever working at such a huge radio station. I carried with me three copies of a tape I had made at KNOW.

We went through Fort Worth first, and I dropped off a tape at KFJZ, home of the Texas State Network (TSN) where Mike Richardson was now working. Next, we visited KLIF. Finally, we reached our final stop at WFAA.

WFAA was part of a giant complex at Young and Houston streets in downtown Dallas called "Communications Center." It consisted of the *Dallas Morning News*, WFAA-TV (Channel 8), WFAA radio, and WFAA-FM. Joe Salvador was news director, and he talked to me and listened to my tape. He told me he was looking for a young, energetic newsman to handle the evening shift. He went on to explain that there were a lot of stations in the area that competed in the news arena, and his goal was to strengthen the on-air sound at WFAA. Since he was no longer anchoring newscasts, he was essentially replacing himself. I figured that was about all the time he would waste on me. He wanted someone young, but I was probably too young. And I was quite a while away from developing a major market writing style and on-air delivery.

For some reason, he offered me the job. All I had to do was take a quick physical exam for insurance purposes and report for duty in two weeks. I accepted the job, took the physical, and reported

back to KNOW to turn in my notice and work my final two weeks. I had one interesting evening just before I left town.

Every year, during the Texas State Fair, the University of Texas plays a football game with the University of Oklahoma at the Cotton Bowl, a stadium located on the fairgrounds in Dallas. The tickets are split evenly so that half the Cotton Bowl's 72,000 seats are Longhorn fans, and the other half are Sooner fans. Since both Texas and Oklahoma are usually ranked in the Top 10, a major network is almost always on hand to televise the game. It's a very unique rivalry, and each year, it attracts many more students and fans than the stadium can accommodate. So they party in downtown Dallas on the night before the game.

This year, KLIF decided to do live broadcasts from the scene of the Friday night celebration, and hook up with radio stations in Oklahoma City and Austin. WKY sent an announcer to Dallas to be a part of the remote broadcast. KNOW didn't go that far, but did carry large segments of the feed from KLIF. I remember Jim Taber saying, "Well, one fan gave us a sign that indicates his team is number one." And Mike Selden did the station ID that said, "This is WKY, Oklahoma City; KNOW, Austin; and KLIF, Dallas." After midnight, Rick Scott and I called KLIF's all-night jock, Cuzzin' Linnie, and did some taped bits with him during which he professed to be an Oklahoma supporter. It was all good fun and made me anxious to get started in my new career in Dallas. Just days later, I was packing my bags and heading north.

It was October of 1972, and at the age of 22, I had realized my biggest dream: I was actually working in Dallas radio. And better yet, I was at one of the city's larger radio stations. I'll never forget my first night.

The afternoon guy, Bill Blanchard, showed me the equipment and explained station procedures. There were two other guys who had just been hired (Steve Sheppard and Joe Edwards) who were also learning the ropes. As we practiced recording some stories, I was somewhat embarrassed because I thought both the other guys had better voices than I did—yet I seemed to have the best anchor shift. Later that evening, after everyone but Blanchard and I had left, Bill let me do my first newscast. I was too scared

to be nervous. I came out of the anchor booth and asked Bill how it sounded, and he said fine. So Bill went home, and there I was, alone.

Suddenly, the significance of what had happened to me struck me with the impact of a sledgehammer: I was now in total charge of the evening newscasts at one of the larger radio stations in the Southwestern United States. And the only guy who could help me had just gone home. I looked at the names on the station's mail boxes: Don Cristy, Jeff Dale, Tony Lawrence, Ted Agnew, Don Norman, John Allen, Bill Blanchard, Joe Salvador. These were major market people and I wondered if I deserved to be with them. I hoped nothing big would happen that night. Then, the police hotline came on.

I knew what the police hotline was because KNOW had one. It was a phone line that connected the police station to small speaker boxes located in all the newsrooms around the city.

"Dallas police to news media," it said. "We have a report of a major accident at____." So suddenly, I had a story to try to cover. I remembered the strict rules at KNOW, and I had no doubt that they would be even stricter at a big station like WFAA. So I called the police department, rolled my tape machine, and tried to get an interview about how severe the wreck was and how bad it had traffic tied up. While I was on the phone, I heard, "Dallas police to news media. We have a report of a major accident at____."

Another one, I thought. So I tried to track down some details on that one as well. Before the night was over, my nerves had been frazzled by police reports of major accidents every five to ten minutes.

The next evening, when I came to work, I explained the situation to Bill Blanchard, who began to laugh. He explained that Dallas was too big a city to cover major accidents; they happened all the time. KNOW's rules simply did not apply at WFAA. From that time on, I never paid attention to accident reports unless there were multiple fatalities, or unless we were doing traffic advisories.

There was one other name on those mailboxes that I was familiar with. The name was Max Williams, and I knew him as

the night news anchorman at the station—the job I had been hired to do. It soon became apparent that Joe Salvador had hired me to replace Williams, who was then bumped to the overnight shift. At first, Max was cool to me. But he soon realized that I had nothing to do with bumping him, and we became friends.

As it turned out, Max was from Waco, and his real last name was Tooker. He was related to Dick Tooker, who had been at WACO years earlier. Eventually, Max returned to Waco to become news director of KRZI (formerly KBGO), and later to anchor the evening news on KCEN-TV.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1972, I volunteered to cover the Dallas Cowboys-San Francisco 49ers game at Texas Stadium. This was a treat for me since it was the first major sports event I had ever covered in radio. I called in reports from the plush press box at what was then the NFL's newest stadium. Craig Morton was listed in the program as the starter for the Cowboys, but the legendary Roger Staubach got playing time as well, trying to win the game in the final moments. Two current NFL coaches also played for the Pokes that day—Dan Reeves and Mike Ditka. For the 49ers, Steve Spurrier called signals in place of the injured John Brodie. The only other things I remember are that the Temple High School band marched at halftime, and Dallas was beaten, its first loss ever in Texas Stadium.

I continued to work the night shift, taking off in December to get married and move out of my uncle's house and into a new apartment. About that time, Joe Salvador hired a young newscaster from Toronto to work afternoon drive. His name was Frank Gifford, and for obvious reasons, he had changed his air name to Frank Gentry. Salvador's decision not only affected Frank but was a major turning point in my radio career as well.

Frank was still in his early twenties but had already worked at several large radio stations including CHUM, the Top 40 station in Canada's largest metropolitan area. There, he had worked for a guy named Dick Smyth, who Frank credited with teaching him the finer points of radio news. If that is the case, then I also owe Smyth a debt of gratitude, because working with Frank Gentry marked the beginning of my transition from a

young, green announcer to a mature and seasoned reporter, writer, and anchorman.

Frank Gentry believed in tape. A radio newscast without tape, he felt, was like a television newscast without film (or video) or a newspaper without photos. I had worked with tape at KTEM and KNOW, but I had no concept of a "right way" to utilize it. But since my shift overlapped Frank's by a couple of hours, I soon began to learn the principles of radio news that Frank had brought with him from Toronto.

Frank believed in choosing a lead story very carefully. Because radio is the most immediate news source, it should always be a breaking (developing) story or something new about an older story. In order to present the news as fresh and up-to-the-minute, Frank always wrote his stories in present tense. And he always included cuts of tape that enhanced the sound of the newscast and made the listener feel as if he had been at the scene. A Frank Gentry tape cut was always terse. He would pull fifteen seconds from an hour-long interview. Or he would use a thirty-five-second "voicer" from one of the station's field reporters. He was also fond of another style of tape that is rarely heard: the ROSER (Radio On Scene Report) where a station reporter merely describes what he has seen or heard, without the benefit of a written script. Frank also liked to use the "wild sound" of sirens or bells or the wind from a hurricane. On New Year's Eve, he would call a bar in New Orleans and ask someone to hold up the phone so he could record the sound of the celebration. And the pops and clicks you hear in many radio newscasts today were not acceptable to Frank. He believed that a well-written and produced newscast also meant technical perfection. I soon learned that handing Frank a tape cartridge with a technical defect meant doing the work over until it was right.

Working with Frank was like working at a network. On his very first day at the station, he asked if he could read one of my newscasts. And since I would be free for a while, would I mind heading over to the Statler-Hilton to cover a speech by former President Lyndon Johnson? I drove by the Hilton and caught a glimpse of Johnson, but never managed to get inside the hotel.

Frank Gentry in the back lot at WFAA circa 1972. Frank is now with the Mutual Network. Photo: Courtesy Frank Gentry.

Once, during Frank's shift, a congressman was shot in Washington, D.C. So we called several radio stations until we found one that had some taped interviews they could "feed" us down the phone line. After his airshift, Frank stayed to help me get more updates on the story, and we actually beat the networks.

At this time, WFAA had an older news anchor on the morning shift who was the exact opposite of Frank Gentry. His name was Ted Agnew, and he hated tape. Agnew had been at KLIF during its heyday and brought a very recognizable voice and delivery to WFAA. But Agnew depended entirely on his style of reading; he read tons of wire copy, and even if he had tape cuts available, he rarely used them. Once I was asked to back up Agnew on the morning shift during a period of severe weather. Dallas had suffered a severe ice storm that had frozen the city solid and made the freeways impassable. My job was to do phone interviews and generate tape cuts for Agnew. I proceeded to call the sheriff, the Dallas police, and local hospitals. Agnew, apparently convinced

that WFAA's morning audience would rather hear his voice than tape cuts, told me to cool it.

WFAA had some other interesting news personalities. John Allen and Don Norman had been with the station for many years as announcers, disk jockeys, and finally, newsmen. Allen had become public affairs director and later did some outside reporting duties. Norman had moved into news from the all night deejay shift where his dry humor had won him fans all over Texas. I used to listen to Don on my way home from KYLE. He would read hilarious letters while he drank his trademark "tepid kumquat juice" and described the contents of his lunchbox. His news reporting was just as dry, and I always thought it was a tremendous waste of a great talent to take Don away from jocking. The station's view was that both John and Don were waiting for retirement, and they felt the best place for them to do the waiting was in news.

My most interesting evening on the night shift was during the final hours of the Vietnam war. I remember ABC radio reporter Lou Chioffi coming across with some key reports that the end of the war was a done deal. I kept ABC's radio feed turned up in case something big broke. It finally did on January 27, 1973 when the United States, North and South Vietnam, and the Viet Cong signed a cease-fire agreement.

It was somewhat ironic that the President whose political career was destroyed by that war didn't live to see the end of U.S. involvement. Only five days earlier, on January 22, I got a call from Bill Blanchard. "We need you," he said. "President Johnson is dead." I rushed to the station to help get phone interviews. One of the people I interviewed was Federal Judge Sarah T. Hughes who had sworn Johnson in after President Kennedy was assassinated. I saved reports from the LBJ ranch from ABC's David Garcia and Bill Gill because they were so well done.

On March 3, 1973, I gave up the night anchor shift and became an outside reporter. My first assignment was to cover a meeting of the Dallas County Commissioners Court. That story was dull, but several others were not. For example, I learned from Joe Salvador that Amanda Dealey, who was married to one of the

Dallas Morning News publishing heirs, had been kidnapped. The WFAA crew, along with other newsrooms, had been asked to keep the story quiet because Mrs. Dealey's life had been threatened if the story was made public. We were finally able to report the details of the kidnapping after Mrs. Dealey was freed and two brothers named Woodrow and Franklin Ransonette were arrested and charged with the crime.

Another story concerned a visit to Dallas by Anne Armstrong, an aide to President Nixon. I called in this story from the Dallas Hilton:

> "Presidential counsel Anne Armstrong . . . on the Dallas guest list today. In a news conference this morning, she answered a variety of questions about the administration. Mrs. Armstrong said, 'We have ended the war, now we must turn our interests to home.' A prime problem, she says, is inflation and meat prices. She urged consumers to write congressmen and let them know if they want lower taxes. Mrs. Armstrong also says that much of the Watergate controversy is hearsay. And she says John Connally will probably switch to the Republican party."

On June 14, 1973, I was sent to Fort Worth to cover Dr. Billy Graham's speech to a convention of the Presbyterian Church. The hot topic of the day, Watergate, was in evidence in the story I phoned in that day as well:

> "Dr. Billy Graham has spoken to the 113th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church today, saying that the nation and the world are in a spiritual crisis. He told the Presbyterians that the nation is in a great emotional period, with the deaths of two former Presidents, the end of the war, and the Watergate scandal. Dr. Graham didn't have a lot to say about Watergate except that he hasn't spoken to the President face to face in eighteen months. He said in any conflict between faith in God and patriotism, faith in God comes first. But Graham said he isn't sure that conflict was involved in the Watergate affair. Graham says

he still has confidence in President Nixon. At the Fort Worth Sheraton Hotel, Lynn Woolley WFAA News."

The day came when Ted Agnew was removed from his shift and sent packing to KONO in San Antonio to be replaced by a corpulent and talented newsman from Corpus Christi named Dan Cutrer. Cutrer had Gentry's writing talent, Norman's dry wit, and a distinctive delivery like Agnew. At KEYS in Corpus, Dan had won every award in the book, and he was coming to Dallas to enter law school. I had been doing some outside reporting, but soon I was moved to a midday shift between Cutrer and Gentry, and that gave me a unique opportunity to learn radio news from two masters.

During my stint as an outside reporter, management asked the news department to prepare a series of reports on pornography in Dallas. I was assigned to do several interviews for this series—some of which I will never forget. One interview took me to the home of the chairman of the Dallas Movie Classification Board. But then I went undercover and visited a downtown Dallas porn theater. I entered the theater with a policeman who warned me that my tape recorder wouldn't be welcomed by the management. So I left it behind and simply—well—observed. At the tender age of 23, I had never seen anything like these flickering 8 millimeter sex films.

As the series of reports continued, I decided to find a minister and interview him about smut. I had been attending Dallas' First Methodist Church off and on, and so I dropped by to interview a couple of the preachers there. As I recall, they were quite cooperative in answering my questions about how the church and the Bible viewed pornography. One of the assistant pastors at First Methodist in those days was a young preacher named Walker Railey. Often, he would substitute for the senior pastor, Dr. Ben Oliphint, and I recall hearing Railey preach on many occasions. No one in the congregation, including me, could have suspected that thirteen years later, Railey would become the chief suspect in the attempted murder of his wife. It was April 21, 1987 that Peggy Railey was choked and left for dead at the Raileys' Dallas home. The Rev. Railey claimed to be studying at a library

at Southern Methodist University. But Dallas authorities never believed the alibi, and finally, on August 25, 1992, Railey was arrested at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, where he worked as an administrator, and was charged with attempted murder. His trial was moved to San Antonio on a change of venue, and on April 16, 1993, he was found not guilty. Peggy Railey remains in a vegetative state in a Tyler nursing home.

Almost a year after my arrival, WFAA underwent a management change. John Dew was brought in from WWWW-FM in Detroit to be station manager, and he brought with him Ira Lipson as program director and one G. Guy Gibson as news director. I thought both Lipson and Gibson were a bit strange. Suddenly, there were potted plants all over the station, hippies were being hired to do air shifts, and we were into "alternative" news. I couldn't stand it.

Once, Gibson saw an ad in the classified section of the paper placed by a woman purporting to be some kind of witch. He had me call this "Black Magic Woman" and interview her, and that interview became an item for a newscast. I had been raised on breaking news events, Vietnam, Watergate, and politics. I thought the Black Magic Woman was a waste of time. After sparring with Gibson for a few weeks, I resigned.

Work was hard to find, and I didn't find any. I called stations around Dallas and Houston, but nothing was available. So Jodie and I headed back to Temple. It took only a few days for me to nail down a job at KTEM. At first, I handled some disk jockey duty at night (forcing me to miss the Bobby Riggs vs. Billie Jean King tennis match in the Astrodome), but soon I was back on the day shift as news director.

Since I had been in the KTEM news department, it had doubled in size—from one to two people. The former news director, Ray Eller, had jumped to sales, and I found myself doing an anchor shift, reporting, and supervising my department which consisted of Joe Graham. Joe was a young newsman with a good voice and lots of contacts in the community, but he was not from

the Frank Gentry school of radio news. I had some good times working with Joe, but deep down I was miserable.

Unlike Dallas, Temple didn't have daily visits from nationally known celebrities and politicians. So when United States Senator Lloyd Bentsen announced a visit to nearby Killeen, I took the opportunity to cover the speech. [Speaking of major news events, Killeen would later become the site of the worst mass shooting in U.S. history as a deranged George Hennard killed twenty-four people including himself at a Luby's Cafeteria on October 16, 1991.] At the time, Bentsen was testing the waters for a Presidential run. Just before the speech, I called in a report to Joe Graham:

> "The speech is sponsored by the military affairs committee of the Killeen Chamber of Commerce and local civic clubs. Bentsen is mentioned as a possible Presidential candidate, but it's unlikely he'll have much to say about that here today. Yesterday, in Austin, Bentsen refused to commit himself in regard to the nomination, saying he'd take a look at the situation later. In Killeen, Lynn Woolley, KTEM news."

At the news conference following the speech, there was talk of the nomination. And a new magazine called *Texas Monthly* even featured Bentsen on the cover, but his support never materialized. That was the end of Senator Bentsen's national ticket aspirations until Michael Dukakis tabbed him as his running mate in 1988.

In early 1974, Joe and I decided to enter some of KTEM's news coverage in the UPIBAT awards competition. UPIBAT stood for "United Press International Broadcast Association of Texas." There was a big convention at La Mansion Hotel on the San Antonio Riverwalk. Jodie and I attended the convention, but it only depressed me. Alex Burton of KRLD was the keynote speaker. Dick Wheeler, KRLD's morning man and news director, told me that he was thinking of hiring Frank Gentry away from WFAA. Being around all the big city types really made me miss

Dallas radio. However, I felt somewhat better at the awards banquet when KTEM won six awards:

Best Coverage for 1973
Best Editorial
Best Documentary
Best Story of the Month for September
Honorable Mention for Best Newscast
Honorable Mention for Best On the Scene Report

It was nice to head back to Temple with a sack full of plaques. Even the major market guys seemed to be impressed, and George Franz, who was now managing KTEM, had a newspaper ad put together showing Joe and me holding all the awards.

It was now 1974, and G. Guy Gibson had been ushered out at WFAA. The new regime there was headed up by news director Bob Scott and his assistant news director, Marty Lowy. Lowy did a series of reports from Huntsville during the prison siege headed up by gangster Fred Carrasco. I listened to WFAA constantly and heard many of their reports. I was jealous of Lowy for getting the Huntsville assignment and for being in Dallas radio. My jealousy was to be short lived.

A few days later, I received a phone call at KTEM. It was Frank Gentry who informed me that WFAA was looking for an anchorman to handle late afternoon and evening newscasts. Frank wanted to know if he could mention my name to Marty Lowy. I answered with a single word, "yes." And by the time Lowy called, I had my suitcase open and ready to pack.

In August of 1974, I was back at WFAA.

CHAPTER 6

The King of Memos

The Paperwork Reduction Act should have applied to WFAA news director Bob Scott. In about a year and a half of working for Bob, I counted more than 145 pages of memos. There were memos about station policies, memos about schedules, memos about Supreme Court decisions, memos about prior memos. There were good memos. And there were bad memos. But always, when one arrived at work, there would be memos.

Heading of a Bob Scott memo from 1976. Note the airplane graphic that's part of the design.

As a matter of fact, Bob Scott was an excellent memo writer. His missives were always neat, grammatical, and made a direct point. The news staff was usually referred to as "News Pipple" and Scott had a number of ways he referred to himself: "Bob Wonderful," "His Newsship," "Mr. Modesty," "Captain News," and his favorite, "Mr. Wonderful." If he signed a memo as "Bob Scott," someone was usually in trouble. He always ended each memo with a quote that he felt would class up the memo and practically make it into a piece of literature.

My first Bob Scott memo read as follows:

To: News Pipple
From: Bob Scott

I am pleased to announce that Lynn Woolley has been hired to replace Tim Jernigan, who leaves at the end of this week for WRR type pastures. Lynn formerly was employed by WFAA, but left under Mr. Gibson's rule. Lynn will begin regular duties next Monday, August 5th.

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There was more about staff changes followed by the usual quote:

"When people charge lack of 'objectivity,' what they really mean is that the (media) has disagreed with their point of view."

—Henry A. Grunwald, Managing Editor *Time*, 4/29/74

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Scott was a 35-year-old former disk jockey from Colorado. According to his biography in *Intercom* (the monthly magazine for A. H. Belo Corporation employees), he entered a speech contest while in high school, won first place in the newscasting category, and the rest became history. He later jocked at KIMN, the Top 40 station in Denver. After he covered a story involving some escaped jail inmates, he asked for permanent assignment to the news department. At the age of 22, Scott became news director at KRIZ in Phoenix. Biographer Pat Couch writes:

One Saturday morning, Bob walked unsuspectingly into a liquor store while it was being robbed by a convicted killer. He and a police officer, both unarmed, subdued the robber, who had not one, but two, guns. Bob held a gun on the suspect for more than an hour while the policeman chased the robber's two accomplices.

When the ordeal was over, Bob calmly went back to is office and, for the first time in his life, fainted."

It was a typical Bob Scott story. Except that most of Bob's adventures involved aviation. The *Intercom* bio continued:

As news director for KHOW in Denver, Bob was often required to ride in the station's private plane on news assignments, but it definitely wasn't his favorite part of the job. "I was yellow through and through," he declares.

On New Year's Day of 1968, Bob and a pilot were flying the KHOW Cessna-210 at 16,000 feet over the Colorado mountains when the pilot passed out, a victim of double pneumonia. Bob remembered a news story about a passenger who had landed a place via instructions from an airport control tower. He immediately got on the plane radio and called "Mayday! Mayday!" in his bravest voice.

As the story progressed, Bob was instructed to land the plane in the small town of Fairplay, but he found the runway covered with eight feet of snow. By this time, he was out of radio contact with the Denver tower, but a Western Airlines jet happened to be flying overhead at 30,000 feet. The pilot of the big jet got on the radio and began to give Bob instructions. He eventually landed on a long stretch of newly paved road near Fairplay. He swore never to fly again, but he eventually conquered his fear, took flying lessons, and became a pilot. Later, when WFAA began airborne traffic reports, Bob became the afternoon "Sky Spy," giving "guidance from above" as he put it.

On August 5, 1974, at 3:30 in the afternoon, I came to work for Bob Scott. My first duty would be to anchor the 5:30 newscast.

It was an abrupt assignment. I had just arrived in the newsroom after having my ID badge photo taken next door at the *Dallas Morning News*. I only had a few minutes to put a newscast together, but I managed to be somewhat prepared when the time came: "This is the WFAA five-thirty report," I read, "brought to you by the Adolph Coors Brewing Company of Golden, Colorado. Coors—brewed with pure Rocky Mountain spring water."

I exited the anchor booth thinking I'd done pretty well on short notice, and I looked to Scott for his approval. But he simply glanced at me and said, "I never listen to a newscaster on his first day."

Only a few days later, on August 9, 1974, I came to work early to help cover the resignation of President Nixon. I worked the phones doing interviews and taping stories called in by our field reporters. As President Nixon began his resignation speech, we all stopped and gathered around a TV monitor. We watched in silence as the President spoke and then scurried to get follow-up stories on the air. ABC Radio had set up a series of live reports from affiliates around the nation, and they had chosen Bob Scott to report from Dallas. Bob went to his office to deliver the report; I was to patch the ABC network signal into his telephone so he could hear the network anchorman. There was only one problem: I had been away from the station for almost a year, and I couldn't remember how to work the patch. The ABC anchorman was about to introduce Bob's report, and Bob stared at me through the glass with some trepidation. I got the patch to work with only seconds to spare, and the nation got an earful of how Dallas was reacting to the resignation—from the standpoint of a Coloradan.

While Bob was reporting on national radio, Channel 8 had been feeding a live report to ABC-TV. John North had set up a camera outside the WFAA studios at Young and Houston streets and was doing a "man-on-the-street" interview for Harry Reasoner and Howard K. Smith. At the end of his report, he wrapped it up with a standard out: "This is John North in Dallas. Now back to NBC News."

"Well, not quite NBC," said Reasoner and Smith. North took a lot of heat for the blooper. Someone at Channel 8 pulled the audio

and produced a tape—complete with music and effects—of North repeating "NBC" over and over. North eventually left the station, later working for a Los Angeles station.

It was just the kind of practical joke that Bob Scott loved. Once, during a hot summer, he prepared a fake weather forecast and substituted it for the forecast I was using in the anchor booth. Then, he went to a staff meeting of WFAA department heads and turned on the radio so they could all hear me read the wrong forecast. But, suspecting something was amiss, I double checked all my copy and discovered the bogus forecast. I used the real one and never let on that anything had happened. Scott was crushed that his joke had failed.

One Memorial Day, Bob decided to let most of the staff off. He anchored the afternoon newscasts himself, and I volunteered to do some field reporting. I drove a WFAA car over to a large north Dallas cemetery, Restland, where the military was going to do a missing man flyover and a twenty-one gun salute. I got tape of the jets flying over, and I recorded a speech made by some politician. Then it was time for the twenty-one gun salute. That's when I first learned what a howitzer was. I got real close to make sure I would get the sound of the guns going off. When the first one was fired, it knocked me on my rear. The moral of that story is that you don't have to be real close to a howitzer to hear it.

As time passed, Scott became less involved in the day-to-day activities of the newsroom. He stopped anchoring, attended department head meetings, did Sky Spy traffic reports, and wrote reams of memos. Here's a random sampling (abridged) of some of Bob's better memos:

October 16, 1974:

> TO: ALL LOYAL SUBJECTS IN NYUS
> FR: HIS MOST WONDERFUL NEWSSHIP
>
> Starting now, please make ALL long distance calls on one of the 2 unlisted news hotlines. Do NOT fill out a call slip. At the end of the month, I'll go over the calls and check any unusual ones. (Seven calls to Mrs. Maude Blanchard in Honolulu will call for further explanation.) . . .

. . . Please meet LOIS GOLDTHWAITE, who joined our news department today. She'll handle taping and editing of ABC and our reporters, plus she'll handle telephone interviews and phone checks. Should be a tremendous help to all of us. Besides, she's a nice person who needs our help to be saved from the evilness of KBUY, which had her entrapped for the last 1 1/2 years.

—•—

February 6, 1976:

TO: NEWS, SALES, AND PROGRAMMING PIPPLE
FR: Your fearless, untainted, blue-eyed, dimple cheeked leader.

COMING SOON: to help bridge the communications gap between news and programming, we are taking a couple of important steps:

1. Disc Persons will be taught English.
2. News Persons will be taught Manners.
3. Ralph Gould, he of engineering fame, will—in his usual rapid-fire and trustworthy manner, install a button on the newscaster's desk, attached to a light bulb in front of the famous on-air disc person. When one of our high time, steely nerved, blue-eyed, Sky Spy reporters kindly inquires as to the possibility of getting a teeny bit of air time to pass along vital information, the newsperson need only depress the button *FOR ONE SECOND*. The Disc Person, seeing the light, will say to himself, "Hark! What light by yonder wonder shines?" Whereupon, the disc person will cut out of whatever hilariously funny bit he is doing and will transfer immediately to the air for the report.

—•—

April 3, 1975:

TO: All in News
FR: Capt. News Biz

WFAA FEMALE REPORTERS PUTTING OUT MORE THAN ANY OTHER REPORTERS IN TOWN . . .

. . . The purpose of this memo is to congratulate PAT COUCH and SHIRLEY PROCTOR and LOIS GOLDTHWAITE for putting out more local tape, and allowing us to really sound keen.

—•—

June 24, 1975:

To: All in News
FR: Bob Wonderful

Due to recent developments, we no longer need to refer to news cars by number in order to differentiate; The one Crash Couch stacked up will be the "red and white," and the one Crash Proctor stacked up will be the "brown and white."

—•—

October 3, 1975:

TO: All Nude Room Pipple
FR: King Bob I
RE: Stuff & Things

Norm Hitchkiss will be helping WFAA with all feetball pre-game shows from now on. [This memo referred to a former part-time sportscaster from Channel 4 in Dallas, Norm Hitchkis, who later became a successful sports talk show host on KLIF. Norm is also seen on ESPN and does color for an occasional TV football game. I worked with him one weekend at WFAA doing high school scores.]

—•—

March 3, 1976:

TO: ALL THE WINNERS OF AM & FM
NEWS DEPARTMENTS
also to Lynn Woolley
FR: Mr. P. T. Wonderful

Good morning, boys and girls

You may have noticed a couple of strange faces in the news department. They belong to Blanchard and Woolley . . .

. . . please note that we have established a new all-time news department record of which we can be very, very proud. BLANCHARD has reported for work for 9 straight working days without once reporting in that he is

a. ill with a cold and must stay home
b. cleaning up a broken aquarium, and must stay home
c. home with his ill children
d. home with his ill wife
e. home with his neighbor's wife

—•—

I haven't mentioned too many of the ever present quotations or one-liners that ended each memo, but this was a personal favorite: "No, Skip, a rebuttal is NOT a fanny transplant." ("Skip" was Shirley Proctor, whom Scott loved to tease in his memos—just as he did with me.)

And now, some Bob Scott classics:

As a fan of the University of Colorado and the Big 8 Football Conference, Scott was always teasing me about Texas football. He wrote this memo specifically to me:

Lynn,

I pulled some interesting statistics today from NFL rosters, mailed to the newsroom on a slow Friday morning. Thought these figures would interest you: Colorado University has nearly twice as many active NFL players

as does Texas—and the Big 8 has nearly 4 times as many players as the Southwest Conference.

In the Big 8, only 2 schools—Oklahoma State and Iowa State—have fewer NFL players than does Texas . . . [followed by twenty-one additional lines of statistics on how many NFL players came from specific schools and conferences] . . . Sorry about that, Southwest Conference and Texas fan. NO WONDER you have become such a fan of tennis!

—•—

Always the practical joker, Scott issued his most infamous memo on April Fool's Day, 1975. It was distributed to all WFAA radio employees; it was signed with the name of Belo Broadcasting head Mike Shapiro; and it was printed on pink paper. Some excerpts:

As most of you are aware, sales in the first quarter of 1975 were off sharply from our expectations, while our expenditures continued at a very high rate. This situation has created an unfavorable financial balance and has forced the board of Belo Broadcasting Corporation to make some very painful decisions . . . The new program manager for radio is one of our alumni, who has demonstrated his ability to program creatively, Mr. Joe Salvadore . . . Our plans call for wholesale programming changes on both AM and FM . . . Daytimes, the FM station will be automated soft music . . . Local news will be handled by a three-man staff, headed by Mr. David Chester . . . Those of you who are currently news people or announcers are invited to check with Denson Walker in Employee Relations. Mr. Walker has been instructed to spare no effort in locating you new positions . . . If your copy of this memo is printed on pink paper, it is meant to serve also as your termination notice.

—•—

Naturally, it was all hooey—just an April Fool's Day joke. But my copy of the memo was on pink paper, and for a moment, I fell for it.

Finally, my favorite Bob Scott memo—and the only one that I will present uncut and unedited, exactly as Bob wrote it. It was his Christmas memo to the staff:

SEASON'S GREETINGS:

Now that the end of the year is fast approaching, I generally take time out to write a few words of good cheer to my favorite friends. It is the one time when we can slow down a little from the usual day-to day pressures.

It's a rather blustery evening, but I feel cozy and snug as I sit here typing this by the fire, sort of half listening to the stereo and sipping now and then on a double martini. I only wish that you were here to join me in one, but since you are not, the least I can do is toast your health and happiness—so time out, while I bend my elbow to you.

I also took time out to mix another martini, and while I was out in the kitchen, I thought I might as well drink it out there and mix another one to bring inhere to save getting up again to go mix another out there, and in so doing, I fell like 'm beggining to feel pretty hih. If's funny ho a col dringcan warm up your stomachc and inspire your thoughts innt', Imust have been sittign too close to thefirr for I startde to feel a littel dizzy si i mixed nother martini and now my head fels clear as a bell again/ O you can9t beat the combination of good gin vermouth and stiffed olives; beer and scrotch and bourban ar allrighr but you can9t beat giv ermouth with even pickled onoinonis.

Now I like alittel dring Now anthen and I have take a fourth or maybe a fifthsand I am more than convincde that any man sho doesn9t is stupif and not inthprit of L975/ O i could drink martinis alday and nefer quibber an etelash and you culd never tel i had a dring to dropp. tHis is good as it evew wax, we al kno taxes are hight, but still we are

welloff in the good old US ofA. There ujst inn9t a bettero-countryz

sAy, tese martubis is al righr, when we nede a stimlunat we surr do even if som people don9t liek to who are blunooses and its a preety kinf of kettelfish if i cantdrinj a toatst to old friends, O i coudl dronk martinis by the quaet to yourr haelht all nihgt and still pass anu sobritey testst and so here9s agin to uryo healtj. "N MEERY CHRUST-MISS!

Yur godo fjrind and boody,
[signed with scraggly penmanship]
Bob Scott

CHAPTER 7

Larry, Moe, Madalyn, and Me

He didn't lean to the left like Michael Kinsley, or to the right like Rush Limbaugh. But Ed Busch definitely leaned to the weird. The Ed Busch Talk Show was like no other radio talk show I'd ever heard—and, as it happened, two of my newscasts fell inside the program.

At first, I tried not to listen to the show. After all, I was still writing stories, making calls, and preparing tape cuts for the next morning's newscasts. I even had to record a ten-minute newscast to run at midnight (since my shift ended at 11:30). So I really had no time to pay any attention to the Ed Busch Talk Show. But after a while, I began to keep the program monitor on while I worked.

I couldn't resist. Ed was always doing shows that kept thousands of listeners glued to their radios, even at that late hour. Subject matter included political intrigue (rarely politics), conspiracies, UFO's, psychics, weird inventions, space aliens, cult movies and television, and mysteries of time and space. Busch had the same power to draw and hold listeners that Rush Limbaugh has—except Busch always had a guest, either live in the studio, or by phone.

The first Ed Busch talk show on WFAA was aired on August 13, 1973. Busch had arrived in Dallas from Cleveland where he had hosted a talk show on WERE. The first Dallas show was with Tom Valentine who was an expert on the pyramids of Egypt.

Busch said the first time he opened the show up to the listeners, phone calls started, and never stopped. Unlike his show in Cleveland, the Dallas talk show went without names in an attempt to discourage those who would try to become regular callers. The one exception was a right wing fanatic named Dixie Leber ("rebel" spelled backwards) who called all the Dallas talk shows.

Ed also instigated a full one-minute delay. Some stations, like KLIF on their "Sunday Nightline" talk show, would have a ten-second delay and a tape cartridge that said, "KLIF has edited this call," or something to that effect. But Busch thought that was disruptive to the show. So if a listener cursed or said something out of line, he'd just have a moment of silence while the offending comment passed. The delay machine was nothing more than a cartridge machine with a tape "cart" that was one minute in length. The show would be recorded by the record head and played back by the playback head sixty seconds later, giving the program engineer plenty of time to get ready for an offending comment. One night, when the delay machine wasn't working, Ed put two of WFAA's large reel-to-reel tape recorders at opposite sides of the control room. He put a full ten-inch reel of tape on the left machine and strung the tape all the way across the room to the second machine. He then fed the signal from the control board into the first machine which recorded it. The tape then was played back on the second machine on the other side of the room. Since it took the tape several seconds to make its way across to the second machine, a delay was achieved. Busch was just as innovative on the air.

By the time I arrived back at WFAA, Ed Busch so dominated late night radio in Dallas that the *Dallas Morning News* put him on the cover of its *Scene* Sunday magazine on January 12, 1975. Writer Si Dunn did his research and described the flavor of the Ed Busch Talk Show:

> "To Ed Busch, what matters most is . . . a solid and lively content for his three-hour-a-night show on WFAA-AM during which he interviews talkative experts on subjects raging from sex to the lost continent of Atlantis."

—•—

Ed Busch (left) interviews the late Texas Ranger manager Billy Martin in the control room at WFAA, February 1974. Photo: Courtesy Ed Busch.

In a long article, Dunn took his readers through an entire episode of the Talk Show, beginning with Ed's arrival at work.

> "Forty minutes before his 10:10 p.m. air time, Busch strolls into the WFAA studios carrying a briefcase. He is tall and heavyset and his brown hair brushes his collar . . . The table he speaks from is covered with carpet material to deaden the sound of drummed fingers or a dropped pen. Busch plops the briefcase down on the table beside his microphones and two amplified speaker-equipped telephones, and pulls out a book and a blank notepad—his only materials for the night's show."

—•—

On the evening that Dunn visited the program, Ed's guest was a writer named Brad Steiger, author of *Mysteries of Time and Space: The Riddle of Impossible Fossils, Unsettling Relics, Photographic Anomalies, and How To Explain Them.* The content of the show was every bit as complex as the book's title.

Steiger had some strange and different ideas about the concept of time. Is time "an eternal now?" he asked Ed's listeners. If not, what is it? Can it be changed or influenced by the human will? As usual, the telephones rang off the wall. Listeners were eager to discuss theories of time with Ed and Steiger—as well as other subjects covered in the book, some relating to archaeology. Steiger believed, for example, that an artifact thought to be more than a million years old, was an ancient spark plug.

It was an excellent night for the feature writer to be present, because the content of the show was very typical—for Ed, that is. Busch knew that unusual and offbeat subject matter was perfect for his late night time slot, and he took full advantage.

Si Dunn, meanwhile, realizing that the subject matter of "time" was crucial to all aspects of radio, even mentioned how it affected the rest of us who were working on the talk show that night.

> "Across the studio, at a control console, Busch's engineer Jack Wilkinson is preparing to play a one-minute commercial. And through a glass panel, in the adjoining radio news studio, Len Wooley is eyeing the clock and getting his copy ready for his hourly 10-minute newscast."

—•—

Even though my name was misspelled, the article was a boost for the show, and Ed's ratings got better as his guests got weirder.

There was Joey, the Mafia hit man, who called from a mobile telephone so the call couldn't be traced. There was Dr. Peter Beter who had written a book called *Conspiracy Against the Dollar* charging that Nelson Rockefeller planned to become President, and ultimately, dictator of the United States. (Imagine how this theory soared when Rockefeller actually did become Vice President.) There was Erich von Däniken whose book *Chariots of the Gods?* opined that ancient astronauts were responsible for mysteries such as Stonehenge and the statues on Easter Island. There was Dr. J. Allen Hyneck, the famous UFOlogist. I remember one night when Ed got wind of a rumor that the United States government had recovered the bodies of some aliens from a

crashed spaceship, and had them on ice at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio. The story was, that since Wright-Patterson is a major research center, the bodies of the spacemen had been taken there to (presumably) be dissected. Ed spent an entire show following the story and calling alleged sources.

And there was Elizabeth Carmichael. Liz was a big, burly woman with a deep voice who had done the manly thing of creating an automobile company. She had two cars in the post development stage: the Dale and the Revette. Liz would come on the show in person, sit across the table from Ed, and answer the most in-depth questions about the two cars. Describe the steering, one listener demanded. Rack and pinion, replied Liz, who would then go into a detailed description of the steering mechanism of the cars. At one time, she even placed a car on the daytime quiz program "The Price Is Right" as a prize, but as I recall, no one won it. The Dale, the Revette, and Liz herself, became quite famous because of the Ed Busch Talk Show.

To Bob Scott's chagrin, I became more and more involved with the Busch show as time passed. Ed did a series of programs with Richard Lamparski who wrote the "Whatever Became Of?" books. This led to a number of shows featuring subjects of the Lamparski books. I fondly remember the nights that Ed called Larry Fine and Moe Howard at the Motion Picture Country House in Los Angeles. The programs with the two surviving Stooges were replayed many times as "the Best of Busch." Ed also tracked down The Beaver (Jerry Mathers), and Eddie Haskell (Ken Osmond) long before any of the television reunions. And, of course, he had on most of the cast of "Star Trek." One night Ed was interviewing DeForest Kelley who played Dr. McCoy, and I heard them fumbling for the title to a particular episode. Knowing them all by heart, I entered the control room and gave them the information, causing Kelley to remark that I knew more about "Star Trek" than he did.

Ed did many shows about the Kennedy assassination. And with studios located in the shadow of the assassination site, there were always conspiracy theorists in town who were more than happy to appear on the program. I was still doing some folk music

at the time and I had written a song about a conspiracy to kill JFK, told from the vantage point of the gunman in the Texas Schoolbook Depository. Ed suggested I record the song. So I had Bob Malsbary come up from Temple, and he and I recorded the song, "They Said It Was Only One Man," in a recording studio at WFAA. Ed played the song on his show, and it proved so popular that Malsbary and I brought in some professional sidemen, including lead guitarist Donnie McDuff, and re-recorded the song at a major Dallas studio. We then pressed 1000 copies as a 45 R.P.M. record and mailed them out to radio stations across the state. I remember the record getting airplay on the Lou Staples show on KRLD—Ed's biggest competitor. Lou's talk show was earlier, not as weird, and not as popular. One night each week, Lou would play new records and would ask his listeners to vote for or against them. I was driving in my car the night he played the JFK song. I rushed home and got all my friends to call in support of the record. The vote was barely in favor, but Staples broke the record anyway. The *Dallas Morning News* did an article on the song, but the record was never picked up by a major label.

There were a few Ed Busch programs that weren't so much on the fringe. Jimmy Hoffa was on shortly before he disappeared. Dan Rather was in town one day and dropped by the station to make a brief appearance on the show. I amused Ed by walking in to shake hands with Rather and introducing myself as the "cub reporter around here." Busch repeated the line on the air. And a station profile promoted Dr. John McLaughlin, presidential advisor and speech writer, as a recent guest.

The most famous Ed Busch show of all had to be the great debate between the famous atheist from Austin, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, and Dallas' most famous evangelist, the Reverend W.A. Criswell of the 28,000 member First Baptist Church. Busch was a great admirer of TV talk show host Phil Donahue, who had paired O'Hair with the Chaplain of Bourbon Street on a number of occasions. (O'Hair, in fact, was Donahue's very first guest when he began his talk show in Dayton, Ohio, on November 6, 1967.) Busch had interviewed both O'Hair and Criswell on his show, and taking a page from Donahue's book, he realized what a coup it

would be to have them on together. But he didn't realize just how big the confrontation would become. After the show had been promoted for a few days, WFAA-TV, Channel 8, suggested that the program be staged in one of their TV studios so it could be taped for television. Then, the Texas State Network (TSN) asked permission to feed the show to its 200+ stations around the state. Before long, publications like the *Baptist Standard* were asking for passes to the show.

The night of the debate finally arrived. I remember O'Hair arriving alone, and I showed her to the studio. Some time later, Dr. Criswell arrived with a large contingent from the First Baptist Church. They all went downstairs to the TV studio, but I stayed upstairs to do the news, realizing that the listening audience was many times its usual size. I don't recall much of what was said during the debate, but Dr. Criswell left the studio still believing there is a God, and Mrs. O'Hair left still believing there isn't.

On nights like this one, I would tape the Busch show and leave tape cuts for use the next morning. But Bob Scott felt that the Ed Busch show was entertainment—not news. There were sparks, and eventually, I was told to leave no tape cuts and to virtually ignore the talk show.

The talk show continued for some time after I moved back to a daytime shift. But eventually, a network change precipitated a host of problems for the station, and on August 19, 1975, station manager John Dew announced that Ed Busch's contract had not been renewed. In what I suspect was a cost cutting move, Dan Cutrer was brought over from the news department to take over the talk show.

CHAPTER 8

Politics as Usual

I was still working the evening anchor shift at WFAA when the big news came: WFAA was going to drop its long-time affiliation with the ABC radio network and switch to CBS. The implications were deep and far reaching. To begin with, ABC did not require that we carry their newscasts live; in fact, we did not. We only ran ABC's commercials and used their reporters and their tape cuts in our local newscasts. But CBS would require us to carry their newscast at the top of every hour, plus a great deal of their features and commentaries. ABC was a good network for a music station with a strong news department; CBS was a network designed for all-news stations. So why did WFAA want CBS in the first place?

The short answer is that the loss of CBS would embarrass and hurt our major competitor—KRLD. CBS and KRLD had been inseparable for years, but the scuttlebutt around town was that KRLD had "covered" some CBS commercials with local ones, and CBS was not happy with that practice. And so CBS officials approached WFAA about a switch. In what would turn out to be a very bad decision, WFAA signed the contract with CBS.

The first effect of the announcement was a barrage of memos from Bob Scott. He issued several lengthy program schedules, described the CBS bulletin alert box, told us how to tape the CBS Mystery Theater, and on and on.

Meanwhile, KRLD was making a valiant attempt to save face. Station manager John C. Butler was quoted in the newspapers as

saying KRLD was giving up the CBS affiliation because "of a greater emphasis on our personality news operation and the flexibility that we feel it demands." As a loyal WFAA employee, I felt that claim should not go unchallenged. I wrote a letter to *D Magazine*, Dallas' city magazine, essentially outlining WFAA's position on the matter. I signed the letter "Alan Scott." (The name came from the secret identity of a 1940's superhero, Green Lantern, who was a radio announcer by trade.) The letter was printed, and Bob Scott posted it on the WFAA bulletin board, never knowing that I had written it. Soon after, John Butler reinforced his "personality news" strategy by hiring a well-known ex-anchorman from WFAA-TV named Murphy Martin. Martin had been through a well-publicized parting with Channel 8, and even though the station hadn't been happy with his ratings, he had a strong following. But Bob Scott posted the newspaper clipping about Martin with a handwritten note: "If anything will kill KRLD—this is it!" As it turned out, Martin sounded good on afternoons, and KRLD substituted the ABC Information network for CBS at the top of each hour. KRLD's audience saw no reason to change, and KRLD's ratings remained strong. CBS, however, was to have quite an effect on WFAA.

The network affiliation switch had not yet come to pass on the evening of February 17, 1975, but CBS was not speaking to KRLD. And so, when a big story broke in Dallas, both CBS and ABC called me for tape. ABC called first. It seemed that former Special Watergate Prosecutor Leon Jaworski had made a speech and had said something new about Watergate. The only problem was, no one at WFAA radio knew that Jaworski was in town, and so we didn't have a reporter at the event. I told ABC I would do some checking and call them back in time for their newscast at the bottom of the hour. I called Channel 8 and one of the newspapers and managed to find out where the speech had taken place, but when I called, Jaworski had already left. The telephone rang, and this time it was CBS. I told them I would call them if I could locate Jaworski. Now, it was only minutes before ABC's newscast. I picked up the phone and called Dallas-Fort Worth Airport and asked to have Leon Jaworski paged. They asked who was calling,

and I told them, "CBS News." I waited. After a few moments, Jaworski was on the phone telling me that he was about to board an airplane when he got the page. I asked him to quickly describe the new revelations he had made in his speech. He spoke briefly and to the point and then hurried to make his flight. Without editing the tape, I called ABC. They were just a few minutes away from their newscasts, and they took the tape "raw" and quickly processed it for the broadcast. Seconds later, I heard my interview on ABC Entertainment News, credited on the air to "Lynn Woolley of ABC affiliate WFAA in Dallas." I almost felt like a traitor when I picked up the phone and fed the same tape to CBS. A few days later, I received the following letter from Peter Flannery, Manager of News for the American Entertainment Radio Network:

> Lynn:
>
> Thanks for the tremendous help on the Jaworski story last night. Our evening charge editor used these words in his desk report: " . . . fantastic . . . splendid, quick . . . ." Our hats are off. Thanks for thinking of us.

—•—

Though not as dramatic for their news value, two earlier telephone interviews were kind of interesting. I was working a weekend shift and saw a wire story about William P. Clements being named to the Board of Governors of Southern Methodist University. Now this seemed like a fairly innocent story to me, but I needed tape for my newscast, and so I called Clements at his Dallas home.

In the tradition of Ross Perot, Clements thought I was up to something. He had recently been named a Deputy Secretary of Defense, and he suspected that I would try to weasel something out of him about national security. I assured him that I only wanted a comment about the SMU Board of Governors to which he informed me that if I wanted to ask about the Defense Department, we would need to meet "eyeball to eyeball."

In retrospect, my questions about SMU could have been just as controversial. A few years later, Clements would be governor

of Texas, and taking heat for his alleged role in the SMU football program—the most scandal-ridden in NCAA history. The SMU football program eventually got the death penalty; Clements was defeated in his try for a second term in office, then ran again and won.

The other interview concerned the Heavyweight Champion of the World. Muhammad Ali had held a news conference in Dallas one afternoon, and we had missed it. I heard tape on another station and was eager to play catch up. I asked myself where I would stay if I was the Champ. Then, I picked up the phone, dialed the Fairmont Hotel, and asked for Muhammad Ali. The desk operator didn't hesitate, and soon I had Ali on the line. "What do you want; my news conference is over," he said. I explained that we had inadvertently missed it, and I would really appreciate it if he would just answer a couple of quick questions. He did, and we had our tape.

Prior to the arrival of CBS, WFAA had established itself as a personality driven radio station, both in programming and news. Program Director Ken Summers had built a following with his morning antics that included a random female caller graphically describing herself undressing while Summers played "The Stripper." In the afternoons, Ray Dunaway was just as zany in his own way. He was fond of doing parodies of movie commercials (once making a fake spot about a disaster movie filmed in "nonsense-around"). Once, I suggested that one of our announcers should emulate daredevil Evel Knievel and his attempt to jump the Snake River Canyon. Dunaway picked up on the idea and attempted to jump the Trinity River on a minibike. Billed as Evil K'Dunaway, Ray drove his bike up a ramp, and into the river—about two feet offshore. The crowd loved it and the Lena Pope Home For Children got a check for $800. Terry Bell worked evenings and enjoyed "phasing" records by playing the same song on two turntables at the same time. Bell and deejay Steve Goddard had a private joke going with Goddard calling Bell's show and doing a Wolfman Jack impression. They never actually said he was the Wolfman . . . but they had me fooled for a while.

Though the personalities would be around a while longer, the advent of CBS radio meant a big change for me. At first, I was moved to days, working a Wednesday through Sunday shift with Monday and Tuesday off. I anchored on weekends and was a street reporter Wednesday-Friday. One of my first outside assignments was to cover America's best known comedian.

Bob Hope was appearing at the Adolphus Hotel in downtown Dallas to be honored by the advertising community. I called in this report:

> Lead: "Comedian Bob Hope has received more than a thousand awards for humanitarian and professional efforts. Today, he's received another one." Story: "Hope is in Dallas to play in the pro-am tournament of the Byron Nelson golf tourney—but took time to drop by the Adolphus to be installed as President of Kudos College. The mythical presidency is awarded by the Dallas Advertising League as a way of recognizing people who bring good publicity to Dallas. In introducing Hope, SMU Chancellor Willis Tate called him the man with more degrees than a thermometer in Hell. The award was presented while a band played 'Thanks For the Memories.' At the Adolphus, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

One afternoon, I was helping edit tape in the newsroom when John Allen called in a report that he preceded with a limerick. I rolled a tape:

"There was a young woman named Liz
Whose auto promotion did fizz.
She fled with the loot,
Her sex in dispute,
Amidst rumors that hers was a his."

John proceeded to file a standard report. It seemed that the District Attorney was after Liz Carmichael, the woman car manufacturing genius and frequent guest on the Ed Busch Talk Show. Further, it seemed that Liz was not really a she, but rather was a transvestite named Jerry Dean Michael. Furthermore,

Liz-Jerry had hightailed it with investors' money. Bob Scott delighted in the story and celebrated the break with a memo:

> 3/21/75
> To: rank and file
> From: CAPTAIN NEWS BIZ
>
> There is an interesting story in the news about Ohio Police arresting a big ex-male who may or may not be Liz Carmichael. Those of you around are aware we beat the hell out of everybody, not only with the story and local interviews, but also with the interviews with Ohio defenders of truth, justice, and law . . .
>
> . . . For your information, KNUS led their 6 o'clock report with the story, claimed it was copyrighted, and that they had just sold the rights to one television station in the Metroplex . . .
>
> . . . As I write this memo, KZEW's [WFAA's sister FM station] Marty Lowy may be about to break another angle on the story re: the true identification of the Ohio suspect, complete with tape from the doctor who claims to have surgically removed the 'iter' from 'Mister'."

—•—

Everyone in the newsroom was excited about getting the break on the story. Ed Busch, however, had a red face for a few days.

On May 9, 1975, I was taken off the weird shift and given a Monday-Friday beat at the Dallas Federal Building. I approached this assignment with some trepidation; after all, no other station had a full-time federal reporter. I wondered if anything of interest ever happened there.

On my first day, I ran into my first stupid government regulation. No tape recorders were allowed above the 14th floor; the press room was on the 16th floor. The reason for the rule was that all the courtrooms were located on the upper floors, and the judges wanted to be certain that no reporter could sneak a recorder into court. But a radio reporter is lost without his

cassette deck. So at first, I sneaked it into the press room each day. Later, I talked one of the judges into letting me take it to the press room so long as it never showed up in court.

The first friend I made on the new beat was Rena Pederson of the *Dallas Morning News*. The *News* was the only other medium in town that saw fit to assign a full-time reporter to the Federal Building. I liked Rena, and she helped me learn my way around. But before long, she informed me that she was leaving the beat—to become the radio-TV critic for the *News*. What a change. I wondered if the paper would even bother to replace her on the federal beat. It most certainly did.

Holly Cappleman was a beautiful girl and a talented reporter. Over the months that followed, we became close friends, and though we competed for stories, we even collaborated on one—an investigative piece about the size of the federal bureaucracy in Dallas. I finally found someone who was able to give me tons of statistics almost instantly. His source turned out to be the *Texas Almanac*, published by the A.H. Belo Corporation, parent company of both WFAA and the *Morning News*.

Even though the federal beat had to be the most boring assignment possible, there was a surprising number of interesting stories I was able to cover. Most took place in the Earle Cabell Federal Building, and others involved national politics and sent me to other locations around town.

On May 27, 1975, I was sent to Brookhaven Country Club to cover a news conference by Dallas Congressman Jim Collins. Collins, who has since passed away, was an extreme conservative and had some firm ideas about what the role of some prominent Texans should be. My report centered around those ideas, as well as what Collins thought was a national priority: jobs.

> Lead: "Congressman Jim Collins has met with reporters to discuss issues now before Congress." Story: "Collins says what this country needs is positive plans for permanent jobs, and he says the priority now is jobs rather than environmental concerns. As far as energy goes, the Congressman says more tax incentives are needed, and he says *they* could solve the energy shortage. Collins says Henry

Kissinger has about worn out his welcome as Secretary of State, and his choice for Kissinger's replacement is Texan George Bush. Collins would rather see Ronald Reagan or John Connally on the GOP ticket in '76 rather than Nelson Rockefeller, and he says the Mayagüez incident was the best thing that ever happened to President Ford as far as his standing with the people and Congress. From Brookhaven Country Club, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

One June 18, I was sent to cover a seminar on land use legislation. One of the speakers was an obscure economics professor from Texas A&M University, Dr. Phil Gramm. Gramm was against the legislation that was being co-sponsored by Congressman Alan Steelman of Dallas, a Republican. On this day in 1975, I had never heard of Phil Gramm—I even spelled his name "Graham" in my report, though that didn't matter for radio. But Gramm was to become a master of public relations and media manipulation. He ran for every office in sight, finally being elected to Congress as a Democrat. Then, in a highly publicized party affiliation switch, he resigned his seat, became a Republican, and was re-elected. Gramm is now a United States Senator with Presidential aspirations.

Occasionally, I was able to take a break from politics and courts to cover a fun story. On July 7, 1975, I was sent to a news conference to announce a signing by the city's favorite sports franchise:

"The Dallas Cowboys have announced the signing of two top draft choices. Randy White of Maryland was the Pokes' number one pick. He'll enter training camp as a linebacker. The team's number five choice, center Kyle Davis of Oklahoma, will join training camp a bit late since he'll be playing in the College All-Star Game. Cowboy officials aren't mentioning how much money the two are getting—they just say they have multiyear contracts. From the Ramada Inn on Central, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

Off the court beat, but still politically oriented, was a news conference with Annabel Battistella, otherwise known as "Fanne

Fox." You'll remember Fox as the beautiful stripper known as the "tidal basin bombshell," a woman who certainly had her "ways and means." She had come to prominence because of an affair with Arkansas Congressman Wilbur Mills, including a midnight splash in the Tidal Basin. She handed out copies of her new book, a press kit, and answered reporters' questions.

Next, it was back to court with Judge William Taylor and the Dallas school desegregation case. The hearings lasted for months and drew dozens of reporters to the Federal Building.

I made daily visits to the Clerk's office, and it seemed like someone famous was always getting sued. On July 16, 1975, I reported on a lawsuit against TV evangelist Garner Ted Armstrong of the World Wide Church of God. Some man was alleging that his wife became interested in the Church, and because of that, divorced him. Judge Robert Porter dismissed the case.

A short time later, indictments were issued against Dallas millionaires Nelson Bunker Hunt and W. Herbert Hunt, famed Houston Lawyer Percy Foreman, and several others in a wiretap case. The case read like a spy thriller (or Watergate) with allegations of hush money and obstruction of justice.

In early August, I was covering one of the stupider stories of my career. Someone had come up with the idea of widening the Trinity River from the Gulf all the way to Dallas and Fort Worth, to make it navigable. I called in a report from the Adolphus Hotel:

> Lead: "Mayor Wes Wise says a vote coming Monday could be the most important in the history of Dallas." Story: "Where is Dallas' pride? That's the question asked by Mayor Wes Wise at a news conference in regard to the continuing question of the Trinity River barge canal. The mayor is trying to drum up new support for the canal prior to action on a resolution on the matter to come before the council Monday. The mayor says he'll personally take a TV camera to Oklahoma to show Dallasites what the Arkansas River Canal has done for that region. Wise admits he's going against the will of the people in the last election—but he says apathy in the election had something to do

with the canal's defeat. From the Adolphus Hotel, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

Another politician later made the comment that a Trinity River barge canal would make Dallas "just another smelly port city." The proposition was soundly beaten back.

On August 6, 1975, Jerry Dean Michael, a.k.a. Liz Carmichael, was having his or her day in court. According to my notes, he/she sat in the jury box wearing a pink turtleneck sweater and a blue pant suit while lawyers talked about a possible change of venue to Dallas. Liz had no money, and the A.C.L.U. was considering getting involved on her behalf. There was even a "Committee To Free Liz Carmichael"—a group of supporters from California who wanted to provide funds for her defense.

The federal beat seemed to be getting stranger. In September, I covered an "unfair competition" case. Those intrepid movie moguls, the Mitchell Brothers, were asking Judge Robert Hill to put a stop to copyright infringement on their movie, *Behind the Green Door*. The defendants claimed that the movie shouldn't have a copyright because it was obscene. Lawyer for the brothers, Clyde Woody, argued that the Copyright Office should not determine whether a film is obscene, and he argued that *Green Door* was not porn. When Artie Mitchell took the stand, he maintained that the movie was "sort of a documentary" and provided good sex education. "It has good, healthy fornication," as he put it. The plaintiffs then brought a witness who distributes such films who said, ". . . it's way above average quality [for adult films]." It broke all attendance records at his theaters, except for *Deep Throat*. Like any good judge, Hill did his duty by viewing the movie in the privacy of chambers. We news types were not allowed at the screening.

Next up was pro golfer Bruce Crampton suing *Golf Digest* and alleging that the magazine published his article "How To Putt Confidently" in their August, 1973 issue without paying for it under a prior agreement. Crampton was asking for $100,000 in damages and another $100,000 in punitive damages.

At this time, there were three Republican former governors of major states who wanted to be President. On November 19, 1975, I was sent to cover two of them. The occasion was a convention of the National Soft Drink Association, and a speech delivered by Ronald Reagan. I reported:

> "Former California Governor Ronald Reagan has given a Dallas crowd an instant replay of a speech he read in Houston last week. Reagan, again saying that the free enterprise system is in trouble . . . that there are too many government employees, and more are on the way. And Reagan has attacked bureaucracy in government—mentioning the tons of paperwork, forms, and regulations that are printed by all the agencies. Reagan was speaking to some 8,000 members of the National Soft Drink Association who were hoping he'd go ahead and make that announcement he's planning—he didn't. From the Convention Center, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

I barely had time to call in my report and drive a few blocks across town to the Fairmont Hotel where John Connally was busy denying his Presidential aspirations:

> Lead: "Former Texas Governor John Connally has spoken to the Dallas Citizens Council—sounding a lot like Governor Reagan when he spoke in Dallas a couple of hours earlier." Story: "Connally told the capacity crowd that we must preserve the ideals of the Revolution of 1776. Some things he'd like to see done—mandatory retirement of federal judges at age 70, a Constitutional amendment prohibiting deficit budgets except in time of war—and another amendment prohibiting forced bussing as a means of achieving school desegregation. After the speech, Connally told me that he sees no new evidence in the JFK assassination that would dispute the Warren Commission's report, and he says that he's really not interested in holding any public office. From the Fairmont, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

By this time, 1975 was drawing to a close, and so were my days on the federal beat. The network affiliation change was taking a ratings toll on WFAA, and news department cutbacks were looming. But hold that thought for just a moment. Because while I was still covering the courts and the politicians, I was taking Tuesdays off—to have lunch with Coach Tom Landry.

CHAPTER 9

That Super Bowl Year

While WFAA was hoping to enhance a winning radio station with the addition of CBS, the Dallas Cowboys of the National Football League were in a total rebuilding situation. The season was shaping up to be a long one. And since WFAA had no full-time sportscaster, I volunteered to cover the Tuesday noon media luncheons hosted by Cowboys Head Coach Tom Landry.

The luncheons were held each Tuesday following the Sunday afternoon or Monday night game. We'd gather at the Cowboys offices on North Central Expressway, go through a buffet line, and talk football while we ate. Then, the radio and TV reporters would adjourn to an adjoining room to set up cameras and recorders while the newspaper guys remained at the table getting their Tom Landry quotes. When Landry had finished with the print folks, he'd report to the broadcast room and go through all the answers again.

The turnout at these luncheons never ceased to amaze me. You could go to a Ronald Reagan news conference and the dailies would be there. All three TV stations and a couple of radio stations would be there. But *everybody* showed up at the Cowboys luncheons—every newspaper, TV station, every AM and every FM radio station in Dallas, and Fort Worth. Sometimes, TV stations from Waco-Temple or Oklahoma City would send crews; it didn't seem to matter that the Cowboys were not expected to win.

But the young Dallas Cowboys of 1975 didn't read their press clippings. They won a few games and seemed to improve each week. Soon it was apparent that these Cowboys were going to win a lot of games in what Tom Landry would call his most fun season.

At first, it was just another outside reporting assignment. I would attend the luncheon and take the Landry tape back to the station for editing. But once the Cowboys began to look like playoff material, CBS called.

The network wanted tape cuts from the Landry luncheon. And the following week, they wanted fresh tape. Soon, I was calling each Tuesday, not just to feed tape, but to deliver complete stories on the Cowboys, complete with a network signoff:

"Lynn Woolley for CBS Sports, Dallas."

I continued to cover the team for CBS through the end of the season, even getting some additional exposure on one occasion. Arthur Ashe, who'd just defeated Jimmy Connors at Wimbledon, was making a charity appearance at the Bent Tree Country Club along with several other tennis professionals. I interviewed Ashe while fellow pro Dick Stockton looked on. Ashe seemed a bit hesitant to answer my questions with Stockton listening, and he got a little miffed when I kept mentioning Connors. But Jimbo was the big news in tennis in 1975, and when I got Bud Collins aside, I asked him if Connors would be back. "I suspect Jimmy Connors will be back," said Collins.

CBS took my story with Ashe and ran it on national radio. They passed on the Bud Collins tape, saying he's just a "print guy."

As the designated "Cowboy reporter," I was asked by a Nashville radio station to record a Public Service Announcement for Tennessee State University with alumnus Ed "Too Tall" Jones. I took my cassette recorder to the Cowboys training camp on Forest Lane to get "Too Tall" to read the PSA. We went out back to cut the tape. It took a while, and the Nashville station probably had to do some editing, but the PSA was soon on its way to Music City. The training facility was a maze of large men, working with weights and other equipment. I didn't go back often,

but I did take the opportunity to interview such players as Mel Renfro, Preston Pearson, and Roger Staubach.

In December, the Cowboys were in the playoffs and about to travel to frozen Minnesota to take part in a game that would become paramount in Cowboys lore. It was Dallas versus the Vikings, a team that had dominated the NFC and had appeared in the previous two Super Bowls. The Cowboys were underdogs, and as the game drew to a close, Minnesota fans were celebrating. The Vikings had the lead, but the Cowboys had Roger Staubach, and as the clock ran out, he threw one of pro football's most famous passes, known as the "Hail Mary."

Jodie and I drove to Dallas-Fort Worth Airport to meet the team as it arrived home. As we arrived at the airport, I dictated a story to Jodie, and she jotted it down in my notebook:

> "An overflow crowd on hand here at DFW Airport to greet a planeload of local heroes. Only a few hours ago, the Dallas Cowboys looked as if they would make the long trip home as losers. But the Minnesota Vikings' plans for a third straight Super Bowl trip faded in the final seconds of the playoff game in Metropolitan Stadium. That's when Roger Staubach pulled a pair of miracles out of his pocket and tossed them to wide receiver Drew Pearson. One of those tosses, a 50 yard scoring catch. The final score of 17 to 14 puts Dallas in the L.A. Coliseum next week against the Rams. The Cowboys flight is now scheduled to arrive around seven."

When the team arrived, I had already called in that story and was waiting by the phone. I asked the crowd to yell "beat the Rams" as the Pokes came off the plane. I'll never forget the looks on the players' faces. Or the hats they wore—with Viking horns.

A week later, the Rams fell to the Cowboys, and preparations began for Super Bowl X and the Pittsburgh Steelers. And I had one more politician to cover:

> Lead: "Senator John Tower's noon speech to GOP men was a short one—but he did make one amazing revelation." Story: "Tower, apologizing for having not boned up on

major issues, says one upcoming event has been on his mind. And the crowd loved it when he revealed that to be the Super Bowl. Tower has a bet with Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania. If the Steelers win, Tower must wear a Pittsburgh jersey when the Senate reconvenes Monday. And if the Pokes win, Senator Scott will be wearing a Cowboys jersey. From the Ramada Inn Downtown, Lynn Woolley, WFAA News."

It was one of the better Super Bowls. But Dallas lost 21-17, Tower had to wear a Steelers jersey, and my days of covering America's Team were over.

CHAPTER 10

Dial Hoppin'

Sometimes, Frank Gentry would get the urge to travel, and he would ask Jodie and me to come along. Most of the time, our destination was a big city with lots of radio stations to critique. And most of the time, we'd leave before "pattern change." Pattern change, for the uninitiated, is that time of morning and evening when AM radio stations change their power and signal direction in order to avoid nighttime interference with other stations.

Frank Gentry in main new announce studio, KRLD, May 1974. Photo: Courtesy Frank Gentry.

So driving to Houston early one morning, we were able to pull in several Chicago stations—WMAQ, WBBM, and WLS—as well as nearer stations like KTRH in Houston. Frank and I "dial hopped" constantly, always discussing the deejay or the newscaster, while Jodie sat in the back of Frank's Toyota with Frank's young son, Franklin, and took it all quite well. We visited Houston more than once, and I had a chance to visit KPRC, KXYZ, KULF, and KTRH. The latter station was a 50,000 news and talk facility with a format similar to Dallas' KRLD. The station had just printed a slick promotional brochure about its history and its people showcasing news director Hal Kemp, sportscaster Dave Lubeski, and Becky Bailey who later went to the Mutual network. KXYZ, at that time, was owned by ABC, and ironically, was where Frank would soon be working.

On one of those trips, I suggested to Frank that he write a book about radio news. I had something of magnificent scope in mind, and Frank scoffed at the idea. But later, he began to work on a "handbook" about how to use tape in a radio newscast. The result was a sixty-eight page soft cover book that sold for $1.75—postpaid. But before long, Frank had a publisher interested—if he could expand the book.

The original version of the book had only a few photos, but Frank wanted the expanded version to be fully illustrated. He contacted equipment manufacturers for photos and diagrams, engineers for schematics, and radio stations for early photos of "mobile news units." When it came time to take some custom photos, he called me. We borrowed a telephone in the front lobby of WFAA one weekend to demonstrate "feeding" audio down a phone line with "alligator clips," a practice made obsolete by today's modern telephones. We shot a sequence of photos showing me unscrewing the mouthpiece of the phone and attaching the clips. Jodie appeared in a photo demonstrating how to use General System telephones which were different from the Bell System. There were two more shots of Jodie using a pair of Sears 16-inch Arc-Joint Pliers to remove the mouthpiece from a pay telephone. The pliers were necessary because most pay phone mouthpieces were sealed to prevent vandalism. The book even

gave the Sears catalog number in case your newsroom needed a quick supply.

I also served as a model for a shot showing how to use a special telephone mouthpiece, and another demonstrating how to set up the back of my 1973 Vega as a mobile newsroom. Frank even shot me standing in a field, surrounded by cows as I read a story to my cassette deck. This was to demonstrate how to prepare a story with lots of natural sound in the background. When Frank needed a picture of a staged news conference, I suggested he attend a Tom Landry luncheon. He did, and shot a photo of Coach Landry sitting in front of radio station microphones.

Finally, work on the book was completed, and *TAPE A Radio News Handbook* by F. Gifford was published in 1977 by Hastings House. Even though modern technology such as cellular telephones have dated parts of the book, it remains the best text on tape use ever written.

While Frank was working on his book, I was working on a project of my own that was almost as complicated. Bob Scott had issued a memo informing the staff that WFAA would broadcast a documentary each month, and that each of us should submit an idea. I had recently reported on a new organization called "Texas Fathers For Equal Rights," and I decided to put together a thirty-minute program dealing with the subject.

The first time I had ever tasted society's prejudice toward the male sex was at the tender age of 15 when I applied for my first insurance policy. I remember my indignation when the coverage cost me more because I was male. But the Texas Fathers had an even bigger beef: in divorce cases, judges were awarding custody of the children to the mother—almost without exception. I interviewed members of the organization, state judges (women included), psychologists, lawyers, and parents. The bottom line: all things being equal, women almost always won custody cases—but men were making some headway. I edited my interviews, wrote the final script, and booked one of the WFAA production rooms to put the project together. I was quite proud when I handed the tape to Bob Scott.

I was not as happy when the program was aired. Due to some scheduling problem, it ran at a terrible hour—I believe it was late one Sunday night—and few people heard it. I was determined to get a return for all my efforts. So I took my script and rewrote it into a magazine article, and offered it to *Texas Monthly*. They accepted it, paid me, and set the article in type. But they never ran it. By this time, I was resigned to the fact that no one would ever hear (or read) my documentary. So I put the tape in my desk and forgot about it.

It was a busy time for me. Not only was I covering the federal beat and the Dallas Cowboys, I was also working an anchor shift on weekends, and that meant taping several CBS programs for delayed broadcast. I'll never forget a certain broadcast from CBS Radio Sports.

Win Elliot was a sportscaster who liked to use lots and lots of very short cuts of tape. Many of his cuts were no more than three or four seconds in length, and sometimes, they were only one word. His broadcasts were literally woven around the tape. One afternoon, in November of 1975, everything went wrong. Win began his broadcast of "Weekend Worldwide Sports" by calling for a tape cut of Miami Dolphins Coach Don Shula. He got Joe Thomas of Baltimore. Elliot ad-libbed his way out of trouble. But the next cut of tape was wrong, too. Instead of Oklahoma's Barry Switzer, the technician on duty played a cut of Ohio Sate's Woody Hayes.

Elliot knew his sportscast was crumbling. He ad-libbed a response to Hayes, "who was so happy about beating Michigan. I wish I could be. My mother told me there'd be days like this."

Again, Elliot called for a tape of Barry Switzer. But this time, he got Dave Young. He ad-libbed, "Dave Young of Miami of Ohio picked up the gauntlet thrown down by Woody Hayes and he told Woody and me and confused you that the little college of Miami of Ohio, as you just heard him say, and maybe you understood it, because I'm having problems."

By this time, Elliot really was mixed up. With all of his tape cuts out of order, he was finding it almost impossible to continue with the sportscast. Prior to a commercial break, he said, "Now if

I knew where I was, I might carry on, but you know, I'm a little confused . . . ."

After the spot break, Win called for Notre Dame Coach Dan Devine and got a cut of Dave Young. "I think I should announce who is the technician on this show," he said in frustration. After another spot break, the broadcast continued to deteriorate.

Win called for a tape cut of running back Chuck Muncie and got it. But the tape stopped in midsentence. "Is that all you're gonna say?" Elliot stammered. "Now I know the meaning of the phrase 'what hath God wrought.'"

Mercifully, the sportscast finally ended. Win was almost in tears as he summed it up for his listeners:

"I've never had a program that started and finished like this and bent so badly in the middle. But I've kind of enjoyed it."

A few days later, someone from WFAA discussed the sportscast with CBS. "The technician blamed it on the cart machine," we were told. "But we still have the cart machine."

Working weekends, I occasionally had a chance to drop by "57 Nostalgia Place." This was a Sunday evening program hosted by WFAA TV producer Bud Buschardt, who owned every record ever made—or so it seemed. Back in '73, Channel 8's station manager had received a phone call from Roone Arledge, president of ABC Sports. Arledge's assistant, Dick Ebersol, was asking about the possibility of locating a record made by Don Meredith when he was the Dallas Cowboys quarterback. So Bud Buschardt was asked to dig through his collection of roughly 14,000 disks.

"Give me a night or two, and I'll tape the thing for net," replied Buschardt. On Monday, October 22, the tape was shipped to ABC. That Thursday, Buschardt got a letter from Ebersol saying the song would be sprung on Meredith the next Monday night. So on the evening of October 29, during the halftime of "ABC's Monday Night Football," the tape was played for a national audience. Meredith sang along. After the game, WFAA-TV sports anchor Verne Lundquist told his viewers that the record had come from Buschardt.

Requests began to come in, and the idea surfaced to reissue the record. Dot Records heard the call, and on November 16, the

reissue was hitting the airwaves all over Dallas. The tracks were "Travelin' Man," b/w "Them That Ain't Got It Can't Lose."

So it was a natural idea for Buschardt to take his massive disk collection to the air. "57 Nostalgia Place" was an instant hit. Bud played songs that today's oldies stations would never touch. He built programs around themes such as songs with the color "blue" in their titles. And he had guests on the show who were involved in rock and roll during the fifties.

Buschardt and a WFAA engineer even unearthed a rare treasure—an interview with Elvis from an early appearance in Wichita Falls. Bud played the tape on "Nostalgia Place," before sending it to RCA Victor. It appeared on one of the "Legendary Performers" albums, credited to WFAA.

As WFAA's "staff musicologist," Buschardt took on a seemingly impossible task: a full and complete explanation of Don McLean's classic "American Pie." It took eight typewritten pages to decipher the hidden meaning of McLean's lyrics, i.e. "the day the music died" being the death of Buddy Holly and the symbolic end of fifties rock and roll. The station received dozens of requests for the paper.

Of course, Buschardt's "day" job was just down a flight of stairs at WFAA-TV, a station that had been struggling with its news image. A lot of new faces were being brought in to replace the departed Don Harris and Murphy Martin. A reporter from Oklahoma City named Tracy Rowlett was paired with a lovely black woman named Iola Johnson to anchor the six and ten o'clock newscasts, along with a bow-tie clad weatherman named Troy Dungan.

Another anchorman, Bob Brown, was brought in from KHOU-TV in Houston to anchor the weekend news. He had been a reporter and anchorman for several years, and had even authored two books, *China and the World*, and *20th Century U.S. History*. Bob was one of the few TV people who ever visited the radio station, and I was quite impressed that he took the time. He later went to ABC, where he became a reporter for the magazine program "20/20."

Channel 8's sports director was not a new face, but he had a new assignment. In addition to his duties at six and ten, Verne Lundquist was hosting a prime access game show called "Bowling For Dollars." Each week, a Channel 8 crew would tape a week's worth of shows from a bowling alley in the Dallas suburb of Grand Prairie. Contestants would try for strikes to win money, while "pin pals" at home would hope their entry would be drawn so they could win, too. Later, Lundquist would join Bob Brown at ABC, doing NCAA college football. Later still, Lundquist would pair with former San Diego Chargers quarterback Dan Fouts on NFL telecasts on CBS. And when Pat Summerall is busy elsewhere, Lundquist often gets the opportunity to work with celebrated color announcer John Madden. In fact, Verne has become so popular that he's been parodied on NBC's "Saturday Night Live."

With Lundquist, and the new anchor team, Channel 8's ratings began to climb. Soon, the station dominated TV news in Dallas.

But as WFAA-TV was improving in the ratings, WFAA radio was heading in the opposite direction. Top 40 music and high personality just didn't mesh with CBS and its plethora of newscasts and commentaries. There were cutbacks, and the news department was hit hard. I was taken off my job as a reporter and made afternoon drive anchorman. Don Norman took my place at the Federal Building.

Actually, it was a promotion for me. I found myself holding down a key position at a still-respected radio station in a top ten market. I stayed on the shift until it was apparent that more cutbacks were coming.

Bob Scott called me to his office and talked to me about what was going to happen. He said that he was happy with my work on the afternoon shift and that I would not be cut. But others would be. I left his office not feeling very good.

I decided to look around, and when I called Jess Smith at KRLD, he made an offer. I went back to Scott and told him I had decided to leave the station. He could now avoid one of those cutbacks. On March 17, 1976, Bob issued a memo:

"As most of you know, we have undergone some personnel changes in the past few days that change the makeup of our staff. Lois Goldthwaite will be leaving us the end of next week, and Patti Smith has already gone. Lynn Woolley has resigned to accept a position at KRLD, and will be leaving us after Friday."

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Eventually, the CBS Radio Network left too—and went back to KRLD.

CHAPTER 11

The Big Signal

I had trouble adjusting. After all, KRLD and WFAA had been bitter enemies for most of my days in the Dallas market, and it was hard for me to exorcise the anti-KRLD sentiment. But deep down, I knew that I had made an excellent career move. KRLD was a full-time "superpower" station, broadcasting with 50,000 watts at 1080 on the dial. Perhaps more important, the station had a long tradition of high Arbitron ratings, especially in the all-important morning and afternoon drive times.

Before long, I was part of the team, working with a staff of announcers who were household names in Dallas. The morning crew consisted of anchorman Dick Wheeler, a Channel 8 alumnus with a big delivery; commentator Alex Burton, a Canadian citizen who was so entrenched that a billboard ad asked "Did you Alex Burton this morning?"; and sportscaster Frank Glieber who did Dallas Cowboys games on radio when he wasn't busy doing the NFL on CBS-TV.

I had just missed former news director Joe Holstead and afternoon anchor Murphy Martin. Both had departed the station just prior to my arrival, leaving the news department in the hands of a KTEM alumnus, Jess Smith. The new afternoon team included anchorman Dick Cox and a young sportscaster named Al Wisk who worked on the Cowboys radio network along with Glieber and Verne Lundquist.

Smith needed an experienced and dependable newsman to edit the afternoon news block. He and morning editor Tom Tully trained me one afternoon, and then I was on my own.

Working a news shift at KRLD was a world apart from working the same shift at WFAA; instead of a five to ten minute newscast at the top of the hour, there was only one newscast to do. Problem was, it began at 4 o'clock and didn't end until six. My job was to write, edit, decide what stories to run and in what order, pull wire copy, monitor network feeds, and coordinate reports coming in from KRLD's field reporters. It sounds busy and it was.

News had been important at WFAA, but at KRLD, it was all important. Billing itself as "NewsRadio 1080," the station carried a four-hour block from 5 a.m. until 9 a.m., half an hour at noon, and the two-hour afternoon block. Then, Al Wisk did an hour-long talk show called "Sports Central Dallas," followed by Alex Burton's talk show. The rest of the time, KRLD played "The Gentle Sound" of easy listening music.

The outside reporting corps was impressive as well. The station had someone stationed on almost every beat (the notable exception was the Federal Building), led by police reporter Ray LePere who had come over from KLIF. And while the longer morning block was generally a rehash of the day before, things were always hoppin' during afternoon drive.

Once, an important story was phoned in by a reporter, and I taped it on a reel-to-reel machine. It's customary for field reporters to recite a terse backwards countdown followed by the word "punch" (a cue to start the cartridge machine) before delivering a story. And more often than not, the reporter will bobble a word and have to start over. On this occasion, the reporter had one misfire, but got it right on the second try. We were coming up to the network, and I wanted to get this story on the air quickly, so I took the reel tape into the anchor booth and "cued" it up using headphones. Dick Cox then introduced the story as a special report and started the tape machine. Unfortunately, I had cued the story up to the first take. The reporter bobbled, and began again with "three, two, one, punch . . . ."

Soon after my arrival, Jess Smith asked the staff for entries for the annual "Katie Awards" put on by the Press Club of Dallas. I'd always wanted to enter something in the Katie awards (partially underwritten by the Katie Petroleum Company), because to win one of those statues was a big deal in Dallas. I thought of my "Child Custody" documentary.

I explained to Smith that I had produced the program while at WFAA, and I wondered if I could legitimately enter it for KRLD. After some discussion, I edited out all mentions of WFAA and scheduled the program to run on KRLD in a good time slot. I entered the tape under the category of "Best Documentary—Radio."

On the night of November 18, 1976, the Dallas media gathered in the Crystal Ballroom of the Baker Hotel for a black tie affair called "Nite of the Katie." The printed program told me that my entry was competing with two others: one from Jeannie Stokes, also of KRLD, and another from Bob Ray Sanders, a highly regarded reporter for public station KERA-FM. I was nervous. After all, I knew Stokes to be a good writer and organizer. And I figured Bob Ray was using all those government grants and pledge money to do a first-class documentary.

Following the keynote address by William Safire, Washington columnist of the *New York Times*, Alex Burton emceed the presentation of awards. I was squirming as Alex got to the "Best Documentary" category. And there was a certain amount of pride showing in Alex's face as he called my name and handed me the coveted "Katie."

"I want to thank all my compatriots at KRLD," I said, even though none of them had any involvement in the winning piece. Later, a paper was handed out that featured judges' comments on the entries. For the "Best Documentary" category, it read:

> "Lynn Woolley, KRLD. "Child Custody." Excellent and well-researched documentary, clearly the best of a good field of entries. Judges were impressed with Mr. Woolley's enthusiastic presentation and with the content of the broadcast."

I was so proud of the award that I took it to Temple that weekend to show it off to my parents.

Back on the edit desk, I was getting a bit weary. It was a tough job, packed with stress, and after a few months, I was ready for a new assignment. Soon, I was outside the newsroom, working as a reporter once more.

My first outside assignment was about a month prior to the Katie banquet. The nation was in the midst of a bitter election campaign between President Gerald Ford and challenger Jimmy Carter. I was sent to DFW Airport to cover the arrival of Carter's son, Chip. The story I called in doesn't sound very different from campaign coverage of later elections:

> Lead: "President Ford will be in Dallas over the weekend, but a member of the Carter camp is already here looking for votes for his father." Story: "The first question we fired at Chip Carter when he stepped off the plane was 'will this election be decided by campaign blunders?' No, he says, people will forget those after a while. But he does think Ford's comments on the Eastern European nations were a serious mistake. He says Ford should admit the error. But the number one issue in the election, according to Chip Carter, is the economy. He says the outcome will hinge on who can provide the most jobs. On the debates, he says, 'I'm totally unbiased, and I think my father won both of them.' From DFW Airport, Lynn Woolley KRLD News"

It had been a short but stormy Presidency for Gerald Ford, and Carter was pressing him in the campaign. Ford had pardoned Richard Nixon for all federal Watergate crimes that he might have committed, and that action had not endeared Ford to the American people. His fight against inflation had come down to a WIN (whip inflation now) lapel button that most people refused to wear. And he had made the famous debate blooper about Communist domination of Eastern Europe. Even though Ford had a major success in recapturing the Mayagüez, a U.S. merchant ship that had been taken in May 1975 by Kampuchean Communist troops, he still had to mount a major battle with

Ronald Reagan for the GOP nomination, winning by a narrow margin on the first ballot at the Republican Convention at Kansas City. When Ford came to Dallas a few days after the Chip Carter news conference, he was facing an uphill battle to retain the White House.

It was Sunday, and the President was scheduled to attend the morning service at Dallas' First Baptist Church. The Secret Service had set up a cordon around the front of the church to keep video cameras, tape recorders, and reporters out of the sanctuary. I decided to wait until after the service and try to get an interview with the pastor, the Rev. W.A. Criswell. Meanwhile, I noticed that KTVT-TV, Channel 11, was broadcasting the event. Their engineer let me go inside the truck and record the sermon from their feed.

When the service was over, President Ford was whisked to Dallas Love Field—with no interviews. So I went inside, found Dr. Criswell, and asked for an interview. He said he would meet me on the front steps of the church and give me the interview. When he emerged, I punched the record button on my cassette deck and asked him what it was like to have a President in the congregation.

As he was answering the question, ABC's White House correspondent Ann Compton and her camera crew came over to join the interview. When Compton asked a question, one of her crew took hold of my wrist to move my microphone out of the picture. Since I had cornered Criswell first, I considered it my interview. I refused to move, and that evening, my hand was on national television.

Presidential politics continued. On October 13, Ronald Reagan was again talking to reporters at the Fairmont Hotel. Having lost to Ford in Kansas City, Reagan was now fully behind the Ford-Dole ticket, but insisted that he wasn't interested in a cabinet post. Regarding Fords's debate blunder, Reagan admitted it was a poor choice of words, but said Ford should have told Carter that the Eastern European nations were sold down the river by the Democrats.

A few days later, I was assigned to cover a news conference at the Dallas Hilton by a Reverend Jesse Jackson. I had never heard of Jackson, and I didn't phone in a story. My notes say only that Jackson was director of Operation PUSH, formed after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

As election day drew near, Texas' Senior Senator was stumping the state in a desperate effort to keep his party in power. I filed this report from the Baker Hotel:

> Lead: "John Tower has kicked off a campaign swing into thirteen Texas cities on behalf of President Ford." Story: Tower wasn't specific . . . but he indicated that a new survey, taken all over Texas, shows the President moving on Jimmy Carter. [Tower sound bite] Tower and John Connally are both touring for Ford in the final days of the campaign. But the Senator says that doesn't preclude another Ford visit here. Tower says, 'We don't rule out a return to Texas by Ford; we hope that he will.' From the Press Club, Lynn Woolley, KRLD News."

Ford lost the election. Jimmy Carter was President-elect and the subject of a news conference put on by a national Jewish conference in early December. My report foreshadowed Carter's biggest achievement as President—the Camp David Accords:

> Lead: "American Jewish leaders are beginning a national conference in Dallas. Lynn Woolley says they held a news conference at the Fairmont." Story: "The subject of that news conference was Jimmy Carter. Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum saying any emergence of a 'vote Christian' movement following the election of Carter would be a violation of the Constitution. Meanwhile, Carter has sent a letter to the conference saying he'll put a high priority on Middle East peace. Rabbi Tannenbaum calls that letter helpful. [Tannenbaum sound bite] Tannenbaum says the U.S. is on the threshold of a new understanding between Jews and evangelical Christians. From the Fairmont Hotel, Lynn Woolley, KRLD News."

With Presidential politics finally settling down, I was back to covering the Dallas County Courthouse and an occasional federal case. In November, newsman Tony Garrett of KERA-TV had sued W.J. Estelle of the Texas Department of Corrections and "John Doe, unknown executioner." Texas was back in the business of executing criminals, and Garrett wanted to videotape the executions for television.

It was a sticky Constitutional question. Garret told Judge William Taylor that it was a freedom of the press issue. But the T.D.C. countered that the media have only the rights accorded the general public—and the public is excluded from executions.

The judge asked Garrett, "What if the prisoner didn't want to be filmed?"

Garrett countered, "I would regard it as any story where someone didn't want to be a subject."

The judge noted that filming could be controlled and pointed out that print reporters are free to describe anything they desire. The judge, however, was in no hurry to rule, and as of this writing, no Texas executions have been shown on TV.

After the Garrett case, I settled in to covering the Dallas County Commissioners Court. This was different from covering the Federal Building for two reasons: (1) there are no rules, and (2) county commissioners are fun to watch. Especially this bunch. By this time, the venerable Lou Sterrett had retired as county judge, replaced by John Whittington. He, along with the four commissioners, Jim Jackson, David Pickett, Roy Orr, and Jim Tyson, presented me with a virtual circus of events to cover.

If you understand county government, that makes one of us. commissioner's courts were originally established to oversee road and bridge construction in rural areas and to act as a "board of equalization" in property value disputes. (Why county government still exists in a highly urbanized area such as Dallas is a mystery to me.) The county judge, while not really a judge, occasionally may perform a judicial duty, but his main job is to keep the four commissioners from killing each other. Since the commissioners are elected in each of four single member precincts, the office is extremely political, and each commissioner

can operate independently of the others. When I took over the beat for KRLD in 1977, each of the Dallas County Commissioners became embroiled in controversy.

David Pickett was first. The *Dallas Times Herald* had written stories critical of Pickett for using county equipment to destroy dilapidated buildings located on private property. Pickett held a news conference saying the *Times Herald* was out to get him. He may have been right.

The *Times Herald* continued to write about Pickett and the activities of the other commissioners. Among its findings: one commissioner had spent $199 for postage stamps one year while another had spent $3258. One commissioner's road office had been renovated—complete with trophy cases—for $44,000 of taxpayers' money. Pickett held a second news conference to air his complaints about the newspaper. I asked him if he'd consider filing a libel suit against the paper, but he said that would not be good for the county.

The *Times Herald* refused to let up, and at the same time, was running editorials calling for a "unit" road system. Under that system, the four road and bridge districts' budgets would be consolidated, drastically reducing the political power of the individual commissioners. Naturally, they were dead set against it. KRLD's Alex Burton began to call for the unit system in his commentaries.

Next up, a controversy arose about questionable trips made by commissioners in cars provided by the county. Roy Orr had made a 275 mile jaunt to San Antonio, taking his entire family along. And Commissioner Jim Tyson had his picture snapped at a racetrack in Louisiana, while other commissioners were holding a weekend budget session. I was on hand with my cassette deck when both commissioners turned in their county cars and credit cards.

It wasn't just the *Herald* and KRLD digging up dirt. One of the commissioners was complaining that the others were spending money needlessly on mobile telephones. (This was long before the days of cellular phones.) So I managed to get the mobile number

of one of the commissioners and called him on his mobile phone for an interview.

One of the people who was supposed to be a check-and-balance for the Commissioners' Court was Dallas County Treasurer Warren Harding, namesake of our 29th President. But Harding was a political animal as well and had no intention of rocking the boat. I wanted to grill him about whether he had been aware of any misappropriations of funds, and so I asked him for an interview. He grudgingly agreed but had his secretary take notes to make sure I didn't misquote or take him out of context. Somehow, Harding emerged from all the scandals unscathed and later became the Texas State Treasurer.

The controversy eventually got me into print. Frank Gentry had begun publishing a trade paper called *Radio News Hotline* out of Detroit, where he was now working for WDEE. So I did an article describing the *Herald's* investigative series and how KRLD managed to break its own angles. The article was published in the July 15, 1977 issue.

Later, the *Dallas Morning News* began to get into the act. That paper ran articles quoting unnamed sources that had told the paper of a deal made between Commissioner Orr and a city council in his district. The paper's source said the deal called for the DeSoto City Council to officially oppose the "unit" road system in exchange for Orr using county equipment to level a street in DeSoto. When I questioned Orr, he accused me of trying to "trap" him and said he'd probably never let me interview him again. But, of course, he did.

On February 16, 1977, the whole mess went before a grand jury to determine if the commissioners had actually committed any crimes. Commissioner Orr entered the grand jury room not realizing that a crowd of reporters was gathering outside. When he emerged some time later, he found microphones in his face and a multitude of reporters anxious to get a comment about what was said before the jury panel. Orr resented the reporters' questions and refused to answer. When pressed, he said, "You're all a bunch of smart farts."

I wrote my story saying, "Commissioner Roy Orr was the first to testify. He answered questions for some seventy minutes and had an unairable obscene comment for reporters as he left the grand jury room." Orr heard the story, and called KRLD to deny that he had made an obscene remark. I took the call and recorded him while he fumbled around trying to find a convincing way to deny it:

"I said today that the press was a bunch of lousy so and so's." he told me.

I responded, "You're saying that you did not say the particular obscene words . . . ."

"I sure am saying it. That I did not say it."

I put that tape on the air. But Rita Flynn of WFAA-TV (who later became a reporter for CBS) had the classic comment on Channel 8 that night: "Commissioner Orr admitted that the reporters were intelligent, but indicated they had gas . . . ."

There was another instance where Flynn caused a commissioner to wish he'd kept his mouth shut. Several reporters—and some of the commissioners—were sitting in a state district courtroom waiting for a jury verdict when I asked one of the commissioners what I thought was an innocent question. The subject of a "commission on the status of women" had come up at Commissioners' Court, and I simply asked what his stand was on the issue. He replied that the status of women should be "horizontal." As a typical male, I just ignored the comment. Flynn didn't. She ran the quote on Channel 8, and the commissioner spent days trying to extricate himself from the ensuing controversy.

When the county commissioner circus was in recess, I spent my time covering a variety of other stories. On February 10, 1977, I was sent to Judge Tom Cave's courtroom in Fort Worth to cover preliminaries for the city's biggest murder trial.

Cullen Davis, one of the Fort Worth super rich, was the defendant in a double murder case in which one of the victims was Davis' daughter. The boyfriend of Davis' ex-wife Priscilla was the other victim. A witness had seen a "man in black" leaving the mansion on the night of the murder, and the State was accusing

Davis of being that man. Davis had brought in famed attorney Richard "Racehorse" Haynes to defend him.

Judge Cave had called the media to his courtroom to lay down the law. He told us the jury would be sequestered and we were not to publicize where they would be staying. He agreed to set up an interview room for the media, but said no witness could be interviewed until after he had released them. This case will be "no circus" he said. "The more calm and cool, the better." He asked how many seats the media would need and announced that press badges would be issued. KRLD sent another reporter to cover the actual trial. Racehorse Haynes succeeded against all odds in gaining acquittal for Davis. Sometime later, prosecutors got on Davis' tail again. He was set up in a blackmail and murder for hire scheme, including a bogus offer to have a judge rubbed out. But even a photograph of Davis making the payoff wasn't enough, and Racehorse Haynes gained yet another verdict of not guilty.

The next murder trial I covered didn't attract nearly as much attention as Davis'—until years after the fact. Randall Dale Adams came to trial on April 4, 1977 for the murder of Dallas police officer Robert Wood. Wood's partner, officer Teresa Turko took the stand. She told about the night in November 1976 when Wood was driving a squad car along Hampton Road in Dallas. They ticketed a driver for speeding, then saw a small, blue compact car with no lights. They stopped the car, and Wood got out with his flashlight. Turko testified that she heard Wood say, "Oh, my God." Then, three shot were fired in rapid succession. She was at the rear of the car and did not see the gunman full-face, only the back of his head.

She testified that she drew her revolver and fired five shots at the vehicle as it left the scene. She then radioed that her partner has been shot. Turko told the jury that she tried to lift Wood into the squad car, but he was too heavy.

She looked at Randall Dale Adams sitting in the courtroom and told the jury that Adams' hair was the same color as that of the murderer.

Then, David Harris took the stand. Harris told the jury how he had left his home in Vidor because of problems with his

parents. He had taken some money and the keys to a Mercury Comet, a blue compact car. He bought a couple of guns, including a .22 caliber pistol which he stored under the front seat. He then began a tour of Texas. First Galveston, then Houston, and finally Dallas. Following signs to the Cotton Bowl, he came across a hitchhiker—Randall Dale Adams.

Harris and Adams then proceeded to have a good time. According to Harris' testimony, "Dale" discovered the pistol when a fast stop caused it to slide out from under the seat. Later, he said they drank two quarts of beer, smoked some marijuana, and saw a movie called *The Swinging Cheerleaders*. Soon after leaving the movie, Harris told the jury that they were stopped by police. Harris huddled down so as not to be seen. He said he saw Dale get the gun and heard him say, "I'll handle this." Harris said the officer asked for his license, and Dale started shooting. He saw the officer fall. "Then, we took off."

Prosecutor Doug Mulder had an airtight case against Adams. During final arguments, he pointed at Adams saying, "This defendant's credibility is zero. He's a liar."

But defense attorney Dennis White contended that Mulder had stacked the deck against his client. "There are two murderers in this courtroom," he said in final arguments. "Harris and Mulder. If we don't get [Harris] this time, he'll kill again. I know who killed officer Wood, and so do you. It was David Harris."

The case went to the jury, and I went to the basement of the Dallas County Courthouse to file my story from the Press Room. It was unusual for non-courthouse people to find the Press Room. But several members of Randall Dale Adams' family did. As I and several other reporters prepared to file stories, they walked inside and told us, "Dale's not guilty. You'll see." I had heard it before. I ignored them and filed my story.

Adams was convicted and sent to prison. But the story doesn't end just yet. Adams and his family continued to protest the conviction. Finally, they got the ear of filmmaker Errol Morris, who produced a moving version of Adams' side of the story. The 1988 film, *The Thin Blue Line*, raised questions about misuse of

the justice system, and resulted in Adams' conviction being overturned.

Other stories, outside the courtroom, sometimes occurred as breaking news, and one weekend, my cousin Robert Strange had a chance to join the action. Robert and I often ran around in my KRLD mobile unit. Once, at a Whataburger, a waitress saw the car and asked me if I was a radio announcer. Then, turning to Robert, she asked with wide eyes, "Are you special, too?"

On the weekend in question, we were tossing a Frisbee when we heard what sounded like a sonic boom. We jumped into the KRLD car and headed toward the sound—just north of the LBJ Freeway. It turned out to be an explosion of railway tank cars filled with liquid propane gas. Since Robert and I were so close to the explosion site, we were the first news unit on the scene and got some early reports on the air. A few days later, KRLD ran a large newspaper ad promoting our coverage with the headline "For news while it's hot, KRLD."

The old guard was beginning to change at KRLD. By the time of the big explosion, Jess Smith had been ushered out and had taken morning man Dick Wheeler with him to WFAA, which had gone to a news format. Bruce Hughes was the new news director at KRLD, and he had his own ideas of what constituted the news.

Hughes was cut from the old mold. He believed that "happening" things like the explosion were of the most interest to a listening audience. He brought in a reporter named Rick Stone from KLIF who liked to cruise the streets all night listening to the police radio. And he brought in other reporters like Bob Burns, Terri Cline, Art Sinclair, and Bob Dahlgren. Dick Wheeler was replaced as morning anchor with Chuck Wheeler, also from KLIF, and not related to Dick. Bruce took me off the street and made me the morning drive editor—a position of extreme importance.

Leigh Robertson, a secretary, was given a shot at a news career as my morning assistant. I had to be at work at 4 a.m., and Leigh (the dear lady) would arrive even earlier to rip the wires and have me a hot cup of coffee waiting.

Bob Burns worked the early police beat for a while, and the three of us got into the habit of listening to "The Midnight

Cowboy," Bill Mack, on WBAP. As we prepared the news block, we'd discuss the implications of Mack's show with great fervor, though we never ordered his WBAP mudflaps. Driving to work on the Stemmons Freeway in the middle of the night, I occasionally listened to Herb Jepko on Mutual, carried by KRLD. And I was listening when Jepko was replaced by a new host named Larry King.

The news block began at 5 o'clock. I would prepare the news for Chuck to read, and I would do the sports at 5:15 and 5:45. One morning, with the Cowboys set to play the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl VII, I made a disparaging remark about the Broncos. By the time I finished the sportscast, the phone was ringing. It was another announcer taking umbrage with my comments. Turns out it was a sports reporter for KOA radio who was listening on his way to work in Denver. He sent me a box of Denver Bronco buttons. (Dallas went on to win the game 27-10.)

The rest of the morning, sports anchoring was handled by Frank Glieber, who never left his home. The station had set him up with a sports wire, a studio, and a direct line to KRLD so he could read the sports from his house. However, I was always standing by with a sportscast just in case Frank overslept.

In November of 1977, Bruce Hughes announced an experiment that would have KRLD trading top stories of the morning with KPRC in Houston—live. I was to call KPRC and set up the simulcast each morning at 6:42. Then, Chuck Wheeler and his KPRC counterpart, Don Watson, would discuss the news in their respective cities before trading weather forecasts. There wasn't much news value in the broadcast, but it was great radio.

One morning, as a courthouse story was heating up, I asked Leigh to call County Judge John Whittington to get an interview—at 5 a.m. Being a true newswoman, she agreed to make the call. But when the judge answered the phone, I heard her say: "Judge, this is Leigh Robertson at KRLD, and I didn't want to wake you up this early but Lynn Woolley made me do it." Whittington, who knew me from my days on the county beat, was too amused to be angry, and Leigh got the interview.

Late in the morning, KRLD carried a report from the *Wall Street Journal* wire. I would rip the wire, enter the anchor booth, and prepare to read the report while Chuck Wheeler wrapped up a news segment. During the commercials he would tell unbelievably funny jokes, using all kinds of dialects and accents. He would have me laughing so hard that sometimes I had difficulty going on the air. One morning, the *WSJ* ended the report by saying that auditions were underway for the lead in the movie *Annie*. I ad-libbed that it was going to be hard to find a young girl with big white circles where her eyes should be. Chuck, who got tickled easily, broke up and we had to go to commercial.

One of the more interesting mornings on the KRLD morning block was when Paul Harvey came to visit. Harvey, in Dallas on business, had arranged to deliver his national news and commentary on ABC from our studios. Chief engineer Rick Neace set up a studio we used for traffic reports especially for Harvey. Special wire machines were installed, and a phone line was ordered to send Harvey's program to ABC where it could be fed to the rest of the nation. Those of us who worked the morning shift were anxious to see him at work.

He arrived well before dawn, pulled his wires, and retired to one of the executive offices were he drank Kava and worked with a manual typewriter. When it was time for his five minute 7:30 a.m. newscast, he settled into the glass studio with a number of KRLD folk eagerly watching. "From the purely professional studios of KRLD in Dallas," he began, and took his glasses off for effect . . .

At noon, the show was even better. Dozens of us gathered around the little studio to watch Harvey deliver his fifteen minute newscast. Again, he played to the live audience, as if the entire nation could actually see him in their radios. And later, he took the time to chat with a group of students who were touring KRLD and just happened to be scheduled on a very fortuitous day.

While big news rarely broke during the morning shift, other things were always going on. Tom Tully had been doing a program called "The Buyer's Guide," in which he ran down the best prices in Dallas supermarkets. Tully went on to other assign-

ments, and Bruce Hughes put me in charge of the feature. I changed it to a consumer report and solicited problems from listeners. I was soon overflowing with problems to solve. An elderly couple had been shafted out of their money in a land deal. A hospital had been slow to react to an emergency room call and the patient had died. A Dallasite felt he had been wronged by the city's water department. I checked into each and every complaint, and, with the power of a 50,000 watt radio station behind me, was able to solve most of them. I stayed with the feature for several months, finally handing the duties over to Leigh Robertson.

Bruce Hughes had whipped the news department into shape by this time, and with many of the old guard gone to WFAA, he felt in total control. He had put a memo on the anchor booth door that said: "Keep out unless you have business. B.H." Someone (we never learned who) embellished the "B.H." by turning it into "Big Honcho." When he saw the sign, Hughes tried to be mad, but he ended up laughing about it.

In May, I was doing street reporting once again and had another chance to cover Gerald Ford, but this time, much less was at stake. I filed this report:

> "A thirty percent chance of some showers didn't stop several hundred people from attending the Byron Nelson pro-am this afternoon. Most of them came out to follow former President Gerald Ford and his playing partner, Bob Hope. Some members of the gallery told me that the President hasn't been shooting too well, but that Hope has been doing all right. When I arrived on the 7th hole, Mr. Ford had just shot into a clump of trees in the deep rough. He spoke to the crowd rather cheerily, then made a shot onto the fringe area. From the Preston Trail Golf Club, Lynn Woolley, KRLD News."

(The next time I would see Gerald Ford in person would be at a 1990 political rally in Bell County during which I introduced him to the crowd.)

In early 1978, KRLD program director Gary Brandt gathered the staff together to announce that the Mutual Radio Network

was establishing a Texas presence and had outbid the Texas State Network for the rights to Dallas Cowboys games, originated by KRLD.

Later, Mutual President C. Edward Little made it official in a joint announcement with Cowboys President Tex Schramm. Mutual would broadcast Cowboys games under a four-year deal with the team and would also set up news studios in Dallas forming a regional network called Mutual Southwest. (KRLD had tried to establish its own network called "Radio Southwest," but the experiment had failed due to mediocre programming and lack of affiliates.)

I wrote a brief article for *Texas Monthly*, speculating that the broadcast team of Frank Glieber, Verne Lundquist, and Brad Sham would be retained, and that the loss of the Pokes might force the Texas State Network to work a deal with the Houston Oilers. The magazine paid my expenses for the article but declined to use it, fearing that my predictions would not come true. They did. But a few years later, the Cowboys were back on TSN, and the Mutual Southwest network vanished.

About this time, the state of Texas was in the middle of a fierce gubernatorial race. Attorney General John Hill was battling the incumbent governor, Dolph Briscoe, while two Republicans, Ray Hutchison and former Deputy Defense Secretary William P. Clements, were fighting for the GOP nomination. Hill held a news conference predicting he would defeat the incumbent without a runoff. In a general election battle against either Hutchison or Clements, he predicted an easy win with more than 70% of the vote.

On May 5, 1978, those same two GOP hopefuls appeared before reporters at the Dallas Press Club. Hutchison talked about his support among minorities. Clements got huffy and said:

"And furthermore, it is not only the A-F of L CIO that has said that production only will cure this problem. But the N-A-Double-C-P . . . [laughter]
. . . N-A . . . [Clements himself laughs]
. . . N-C-Double-A . . . [more laughter]
. . . N-Double-A-C-P!

—•—

When he finally got it right, the audience of reporters and Press Club members roared. But Clements had the last laugh. He easily defeated Hutchison for the nomination, then fought a hard battle against John Hill.

Clements, an oil millionaire, was able to buy lots of TV time, and he led in early returns. I was covering the election from the Press Club and heard Hill say on TV that Clements should enjoy his early lead, because he certainly spent enough money to get it. But Clements' lead never evaporated, and he became the state's first Republican governor since reconstruction.

Back at the KRLD studios, it was time for the changing of the guard—again. A big broadcasting outfit called Metromedia was buying the station, and word on the street was that a host of new people would be coming in. John Butler was the first to go as Carl Brazell was installed as manager. Brazell brought in Ken Fairchild as news director, and that spelled the end of Bruce Hughes. It was thought that Frank Glieber and Alex Burton were safe, but no one was placing bets on anyone else. Before he left, Butler had given me a $2000 bonus to stay; there's no telling what Glieber and some of the others got. Even before the bonus, I had turned down an offer to anchor mornings at the Texas State Network—I wanted to see what would happen at KRLD under Metromedia.

Brazell and Fairchild called a staff meeting to deny that any changes would be made. (Warning: this type of staff meeting always precedes massive changes.) A short time later, someone in upper management accidentally kicked on a two-way microphone in a station car, and a discussion of upcoming changes became public knowledge. KRLD was going all news.

Fairchild brought in a young woman named Lisa Lemaster from WBAP as morning editor and put me back on the street as a reporter. He then proceeded to bring in a host of people from TSN and its originating station, KFJZ in Fort Worth—people like Bob Barry and Peter Gardner. Fairchild got sweet on Lemaster and her power in the newsroom began to grow. They later married.

So now, KRLD was doing news all the time, and that took a great glut of material. I covered the county and anything else that

might happen during my shift. Once, a fire broke out at the luxurious Fairmont Hotel. I got there before the fire department and slipped into a phone booth in the smoke-filled lobby area. I delivered a quick live report to Bob Barry, then beat a hasty retreat. It turned out that the fire was only in the kitchen area, but the smoke had spread through the ventilation system.

I was able to break some good stories during the period. But it was obvious to me that Fairchild and Lemaster were gradually but surely turning over the entire staff. I had a feeling that my days at KRLD were numbered. Sure enough, one day Fairchild pointed out the door and suggested I walk through it and not return. But a week later, when I turned in a big story, he asked me to consider staying on.

In fact, I had been actively looking for other employment, and I didn't have to look far. Metromedia, as part of the purchase deal for KRLD, had been forced to sell off sister station KAFM, and Bonneville International Corporation, an arm of the Mormon Church, was in the process of buying it. Bonneville had set up an office in a back room of the KRLD building and was quietly taking over KAFM. Quietly, because the contract of sale specified that Bonneville could not approach any KRLD people about employment. I, however, was under no such restriction.

CHAPTER 12

Man On the Run

One of the things that excited me most about going to work at KRLD was the chance to work with Frank Glieber. But it was difficult to get to know Frank.

First of all, in spite of his reputation as a network sportscaster, he was very reserved—almost shy. And second, get a load of a typical Frank Glieber schedule: six morning sportscasts a day on KRLD; live sportscasts at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. on KXAS-TV, Channel 5, five days a week; and a weekend assignment for CBS which could be the NFL, the NBA, or professional golf. Throw in a regional telecast of a Southwest Conference basketball game on Saturday, and, if the Dallas Cowboys were on "ABC Monday Night Football," Frank would join KRLD's radio broadcast. For a while Glieber even worked regional telecasts of Texas Rangers baseball.

Glieber, a native of Milwaukee, worked his way into this extraordinary career with a radio-TV degree from Northwestern University where he graduated in 1956. He began his career at WNMP in Evanston and then joined WRR in Dallas. By 1960, he was working with KBOX radio as the very first color announcer for the new NFL franchise in Dallas—the Cowboys. Only a year later, he was awarded the play-by-play position, and that attracted the attention of CBS.

In 1962, Frank took a job at CBS that allowed him to work major sports events for the network, while still living in Dallas and working local radio. It was the best of both worlds. He could be a big time sportscaster, while still living in a city he loved and

being a vital part of a local market. Though he worked Browns games in Cleveland for two years, he soon was back in Dallas.

His star grew brighter at CBS. He was asked by CBS' vice president of sports, Bill McPhail, to cover the Masters, one of the major golf tournaments. Glieber had never covered a golf tournament, but he was hesitant to tell that to the network. He boned up on the sport, was assigned the 17th hole, and worked the tournament for eighteen years.

There were stories that he learned two other sports the same way. He told reporter Gary Newsom in the February 4, 1978 edition of the *Dallas Times Herald* that CBS had once asked him to do the Federation Cup, a major women's tennis event. He called Ham Richardson, a tennis player who used to live in Dallas, just to find out how to score a match. Still another story had CBS springing a surprise bowling telecast on Frank. Cowboys PR man Doug Todd wrote down the basics for Frank during a team flight.

If you'd seen any of those telecasts, you'd have sworn that Frank Glieber had been golfing, playing tennis, and bowling for decades. He was always so well prepared, so smooth, and so professional, that by 1985, he had been elevated to CBS' number two broadcast team on football—just behind Pat Summerall and John Madden. And Glieber was the announcer who broke in Madden.

Even when Frank wasn't all that prepared, he could still do an incredible job on play-by-play. During the first quarter of a Cotton Bowl game in the early eighties, veteran Cotton Bowl announcer Lindsey Nelson lost his voice. Glieber, who was working a sideline microphone, was sent to the broadcast booth. Bob St. John of the *Dallas Morning News* called the broadcast "amazing." Frank sounded as if he had spent the entire week preparing to handle the play-by-play.

Glieber was a fixture at CBS for twenty-two years working with a variety of color men including Alex Hawkins (with whom he made the cover of *Southwest Airlines Magazine* in December 1977), Roger Staubach, and Dick Vermeil. But he never joined the network on a full-time basis. He told Gary Newsom that he liked being on "the fringe"—working for the net part-time, and

not having the risk of being laid off if CBS were to change management.

In Dallas, Glieber could name his own deal. The Cowboys moved to KLIF, and finally, in 1972, the contract went to KRLD where Frank was already working. It was a great combination for KRLD, and the station's ratings went up and stayed at or near the top for years.

Not long after I arrived at KRLD in 1976, afternoon sportscaster Al Wisk announced his departure. Al was heading for a play-by-play job in Kansas City, leaving the afternoon shift uncovered, and a vacancy on the Cowboys radio play-by-play team. Frank couldn't step in on Sundays because of his CBS commitments, and he couldn't do the evening Sports Central talk show because of his hectic local schedule.

The pressure was on Frank to find a quick replacement, but it wouldn't be easy. Wisk, though young, was almost as good as Glieber himself. In fact, Wisk and Verne Lundquist had developed a unique arrangement in football broadcasting: they would alternate quarters switching between play-by-play and color.

Texas' best known sportscaster—Frank Glieber of KRLD and CBS-TV. This photo is from a mid-seventies promotional piece for "Radio Southwest."

Finally, Glieber picked what seemed to be the best available talent—a sportscaster from Temple's KCEN-TV named Chris Needham who had been doing some Friday night broadcasts of the Temple High Wildcats on KTEM. Needham was assigned to do the afternoon sportscasts and Sports Central, but Glieber still hadn't decided what to do about the Cowboys games.

I went into Frank's office and volunteered my assistance on the games. (It's a tough job, but someone has to do it, I reasoned.) But realizing that Needham had more experience in the broadcast booth, Frank handed him the assignment, and he began working Cowboys games.

Needham had worked as a TV sportscaster for years, and he did a credible job both as a Cowboys announcer and as host of Sports Central. But one night the talk show got a little out of hand.

This particular program took place just before the season began, while the Cowboys were in training camp in Thousand Oaks, California. A story hit the wires that quarterback Roger Staubach had been slugged by his backup, young quarterback Clint Longley. (You'll recall that Longley's other claim to fame was a last minute touchdown bomb to beat the Redskins, while subbing for Staubach.)

Sports Central producer Rick Ericson immediately got to work to find out what had happened in Thousand Oaks. Finally, he managed to get Cowboys PR man Andy Anderson on the line. Anderson, as you might expect, was being inundated with calls from radio and television stations all across the country, as well as the networks. And he was doing his best to accommodate them all with the story. Ericson put him on hold and slipped a note to Needham, who was about to go to a commercial set.

Coming out of commercial, Needham keyed the telephone line on the air and punched the button, welcoming Anderson to Sports Central. Not realizing he was on the air, Anderson replied, "I don't need to be on hold. I'm up to my ass in alligators."

Needham finally convinced Anderson that he was, indeed, on the air, and Anderson went ahead and discussed the quarterback

controversy in Thousand Oaks. But most of Dallas had heard Anderson's remarks.

One group of people who had *not* heard the show was the contingent of Dallas sportscasters and writers who were in California to cover the Cowboys. So Ericson and Glieber pulled the sound bite from the tape of the program and had it produced with some music behind it and some added narration. They took it to the Cowboys luncheon where it was played over and over to the delight of the assembled writers and broadcasters. Anderson had to live with that comment for years.

Needham, on the other hand, was soon replaced with a sportscaster from Chicago named Brad Sham. Sham had worked for the Chicago Sting soccer club and had done a sports talk show in Dallas on WRR. He began to handle color on the Cowboys games as well as the afternoon sportscasts on KRLD and Sports Central. Later, when Verne Lundquist began doing NFL telecasts on CBS, Sham was elevated to play-by-play status, working with Channel 8's Dale Hansen.

Because of its great sports staff, KRLD was able to cover local sports events that other radio stations preferred to leave to TV. Those included two golf tournaments, the Byron Nelson Classic in Dallas and the Colonial in Fort Worth, and the finals of World Championship Tennis (WCT) from Moody Coliseum at Southern Methodist University. For golf, Glieber, Sham, and Lundquist would work various holes (barring network conflicts) and would usually be joined by one or two other announcers such as Waco's Frank Fallon.

In 1977, it so happened that the Colonial and the WCT finals fell on the same weekend, and KRLD had a contract to broadcast both. Sham would be in Fort Worth to cover golf, and Glieber would be covering a hole for CBS. Most of the freelance announcers that KRLD worked with were slated to be in Fort Worth. So Frank asked me if I thought I could handle the tennis match. Being a big tennis fan, I jumped at the chance.

I had covered quite a bit of tennis for both WFAA and KRLD. With Lamar Hunt's WCT headquarters located in Dallas, there was always tennis news being made. I had reported on matches

featuring Arthur Ashe, Bjorn Borg, Rod Laver, Billie Jean King, and most of the other big names. Once, during a Bjorn Borg post match news conference, I realized the man standing next to me was John Newcombe, the three time Wimbledon champion from Australia who had been my earliest tennis hero. I took my cassette deck away from Borg and began to interview Newk.

The assignment that Frank had handed me was different from those earlier jobs. This time, I was to go to all the pre-tournament events, meet the players, and do actual play-by-play of the final match.

The tournament media luncheon was held at the Fairmont. Those qualifying for the event included Ilie Nastase, Adriano Panatta, Vitas Gerulaitis, Dallas' own Dick Stockton, and Jimmy Connors. At the banquet, there was talk of a young junior player who had won a few sets off some of the name players. This youngster, John McEnroe, was to play in the Fidelity Union Future Stars, a preliminary to the final match.

After lunch, we all went to a room for interviews. Frank had asked me to have each of the eight players do a KRLD station ID, saying: Hello, this is_____. Listen to the World Championship of Tennis finals this Sunday on KRLD, Dallas. I had it typed on an index card. Nastase was late arriving, and so I began to ask the other seven to tape the ID. They all agreed. Except Connors.

Jimmy indicated I should ask his agent. Look, I said, we're a radio station that's covering tennis. Connors should appreciate that, I told him. He put me off. I hung around the hotel for a while longer, thinking I'd try one more time.

A short time later, here comes Jimmy with his arms around two attractive women. Should I do a station ID for this guy, he asked them. Go ahead, Jimmy, one of them cooed. Connors took my index card, rewrote the ID to his liking, and did the ID. It took some editing, but I made it work.

I called my old college roommate, Bob Malsbary, and asked him to come to Dallas to help keep stats for me during the final. We settled in and watched the last part of the McEnroe match with Ricardo Ycaza, which McEnroe lost.

Connors took on Stockton in the final. I did the play-by-play with Malsbary feeding me statistics and information. Between games, we'd cut to Fort Worth for updates from the Colonial. When the golf tournament got hot, Sham would keep the broadcast going from that location, and when the tennis was at a critical point, we'd keep broadcasting from Moody. Stockton had beaten Connors for the title at the U.S. Pro Indoors at Philadelphia that year, and he was playing good tennis. But in Dallas, Connors was on another level. He rolled over Stockton with ease.

Frank seemed happy with my performance on the tennis, although I never really knew if he heard any of it. Meanwhile, though, the station manager was having a problem with how Frank was handling the morning sportscasts. I got pulled right into the middle of it.

John C. Butler had brought in Bruce Hughes as news director, but when he wanted Frank's writing and editing tightened up, he wrote the following memo to me:

September 20, 1977
To: Lynn Woolley
Re: Frank Glieber

> Do we ever check or give Frank Glieber guidelines for his shows? Two weeks ago, he did one with Golden Richards and Golden totally contradicted Frank and he didn't do a thing . . . just kept on going. It seems he puts on what he wants. No one judges if it's good material or poor.

—•—

The memo went on to instruct me to come up with ways for Frank to sound better. And Butler had a point. As an announcer and play-by-play man, Glieber had no peer in Dallas. But writing and editing were not his strong suits. I wrote a long memo back to John. In it, I made six suggestions as to how Frank could have a better sounding sportscast—most of them centered around technical aspects of preparing his tape cuts (sound bites).

To my amazement, a few days later, my memo to John was reissued. This time, it was *from* John to everyone in news and

sports, including Frank. John was implementing each of my suggestions. Once John had the memo off his chest, things got back to normal.

Frank Glieber continued to work the morning drive block on KRLD literally for the rest of his life. On May 1, 1985, he collapsed while jogging at a North Dallas athletic club. Another jogger began administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation until an ambulance arrived and transported Frank to Medical City Dallas. There, doctors worked feverishly to revive him, even implanting a pacemaker. But despite all the efforts to revive him, he was pronounced dead of a massive coronary.

That night, Frank's death was the lead story on local television, and the next morning, the Dallas papers carried front page stories. Among those quoted were Cowboys General Manager Tex Schramm, CBS Sports President Peter Lund, Frank Chirkinian (CBS's executive producer of the Masters telecast), and Ed Wodka, then-manager of KRLD.

His fellow sportscasters heaped praise on their fallen compatriot. NBC's Charlie Jones called him "the most consummate professional I have ever worked with." Dick Vermeil, Frank's CBS color analyst, remembered how Frank would leave the stadium after a broadcast and hurry home to his wife, Kathy, and five children. Channel 8's Dale Hansen said he once asked Frank when he was going to slow down and enjoy life, and Frank replied that there would be plenty of time for that later. Brad Sham called Frank a role model both behind and away from the microphone.

Way back in 1977, I had intended to write an article about Frank for a local paper. I was going to call it "Man On the Run." Frank agreed to be interviewed for the article, but I never managed to get him to sit still long enough, and the article was never written.

That's always bothered me, but I feel better about it now.

CHAPTER 13

Just One Kiss, Baby

Alexander Martin Grant Burton is, quite simply, the best radio commentator I have ever heard in a local market. In the seventies, Dallas would not have been Dallas without him; and KRLD would not have been KRLD.

There were two kinds of people who woke up each morning, eager to hear what Alex had to say. The first kind was elected officials and bureaucrats at every level who listened intently to see if Alex was going to talk about them. And, there was everyone else in Dallas who enjoyed "Reporter's Notebook" regardless of its contents.

Like a great football player, Alex could work any position. He anchored afternoon drive with Dick Cox; he delivered two commentaries each day; and he served as a beat reporter, primarily at Dallas City Hall.

As editor, I knew instantly when Alex had come in to the newsroom to type leads to his own stories. The writing was great, but the typing was terrible. Once, when Alex had recorded a story about a ride he had taken in an old biplane, he wrote this simple lead:

"Alex Burton has bugs on his teeth."

Alex's news reporting was well respected, but his daily commentaries were what made him famous. He would discuss the daily doings of the Dallas county commissioners or the city council. But more often than not, "Reporter's Notebook" was a bit

tongue-in-cheek, often featuring conversations between Alex and his friend the Pigeon. For a bird, the Pigeon had a great deal of insight into human politics and other affairs. Take, for example, this short conversation on equal rights:

> . . . "I notice," I said to the Pigeon, as I stepped along briskly, "that you are out looking for grub while she is home looking after the squabs. Is that what you call division of labor?" I thought it was a pretty good shot and that he would leave me alone.
>
> "We always divide the labor at our house, er, nest" said the Pigeon. "We don't have to go about like humans passing legislation that give the little woman the equal chance. We both build the nest. She lays the eggs, we both keep them warm, and we both feed the little boogers when they hatch. We both help in teaching 'em to fly, and when we go anywhere, we go together. I don't bother with the other pigeons. None of them full-breasted pushovers attract me, and she don't pay no attention to all them feather-flexers that come by."
>
> I had stopped dead in my tracks and the Pigeon was sitting on my shoulder.
>
> "We pigeons don't need an ERA," he said. "We know we're equal; wouldn't have it any other way. She's got the same rights as I do with the flock."
>
> As he flew away he came to look me in the eye. "How are things in your nest?" he asked.

—•—

Even though the Pigeon made dozens of visits, Alex's most famous commentary of all concerned another critter, a firefly. He called it "Just one kiss, Baby," and that became the title of a Burton compilation published by Eakin Press in 1983. I once heard Alex perform this piece at a UPIBAT convention in San Antonio to an appreciative audience of his peers. The story began on a stormy night as Alex was awakened from his sleep by flashes of light. Not the lightning outside, but a lightning bug

fluttering around the bedroom. Then, the Alex Burton imagination took over:

> . . . Now according to my encyclopedia, the fireflies attract each other in a sexual way by flashing their back ends at one another . . .
>
> . . . The firefly in our bedroom was in a frenzy of desire, as near as I could figure, from the way he kept the room alight with his flasher. There was lightning outside which was lighting up the world at about the same rate as the lightning bug was lighting up the room. He flew over to the window to watch the lightning.
>
> "Just one kiss, Baby," I heard him holler into the night.
>
> I chose to ignore it as an intemperate remark. So the firefly flashed around for about fifteen minutes and then went to visit a night light we have in another room. He was back pretty quickly.
>
> "All of them city girls are alike," I heard him mutter. "all good looks and flashy clothes, nothing for character or conversation."
>
> Finally he took up residence in the ceiling light fixture where he flashed fitfully for a minute or so, and at last went to sleep.
>
> "What was that all about?" said the Child Bride sleepily, and I explained about the firefly and why he lights up like that. "You mean," she said, "the way your eyes light up?"
>
> "You got that straight, baby!" I told her as she put on her sunglasses.

—•—

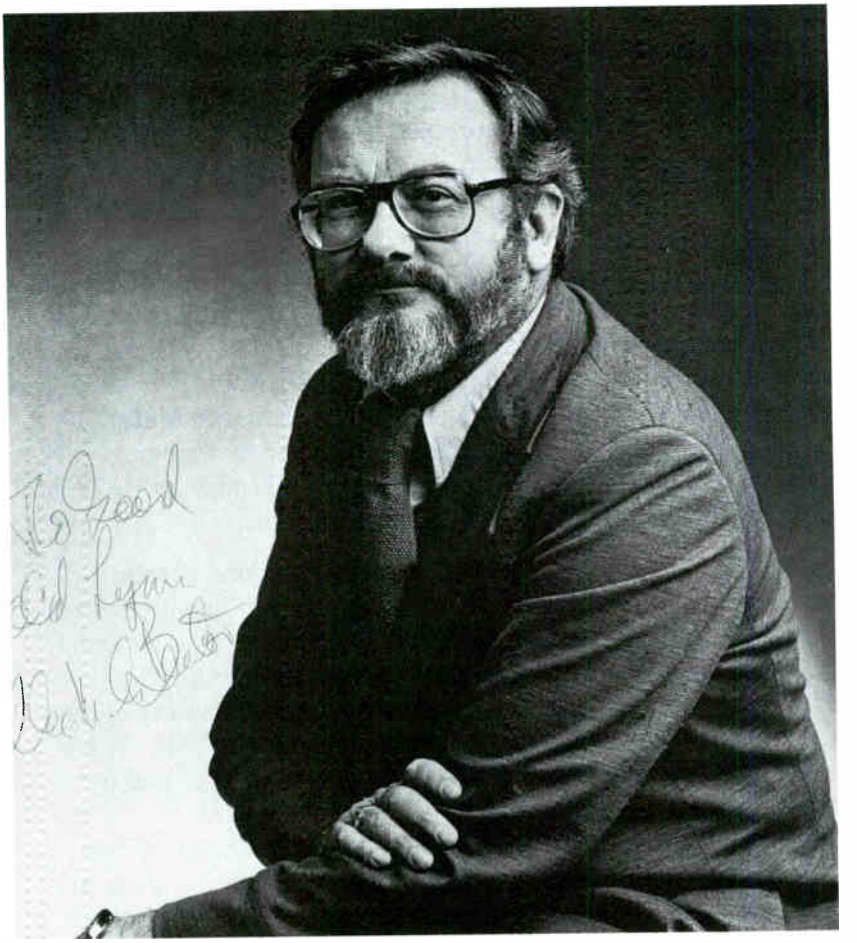
It was usually a great honor to be the subject of an Alex Burton commentary—usually, because the county commissioners didn't often take it as an honor. But I was quite pleased when it happened to me on February 8, 1977. I had brought in my musician pals and made a record in one of the KRLD production rooms. Lance Klenk, a KRLD engineer, had produced the recordings, and guitarist Donnie McDuff had sent the tapes off to be

pressed into a record. I had casually given one to Alex. He took the opportunity to give the record some publicity:

> You know, it's a funny thing. You work away with a person for some time, and they have another side of their personality about which you know nothing whatever. Now sometime back we had a little party with only newsroom personnel present, and there was Lynn Woolley, our county courthouse reporter. Lynn spends his days dogging the steps of the county commissioners, some of which are now getting skittish about being quoted on tape. But Lynn had brought along his guitar to the party and he spent a good part of the evening playing some of the good old songs like "Peggy Sue." Lynn chorded and picked his guitar strings with such skill that someone, and I can't remember who, said something like, "Gee, that's good, Lynn. You ought to make a record."
>
> Lynn made a kind of Giaconda smile and looked out the window. Now as I come into work Monday, what do I find on my desk but a record and a brochure from a record company touting a couple of guitar players called "Two-Folk," and who is the guy in the white does and the wrinkled shirt but our own courthouse reporter, Lynn Woolley. The other "Folk" is Robert Malsbary who has a white shirt and wrinkled shoes. Lynn says he and Robert began playing and singing in low dives when they were supposed to be studying at the University of Texas in Austin. In the past year or so, "TwoFolk" Lynn and Bob, remember, did a record that came out on the market and immediately sank like a concrete canoe to the very bottom of the charts . . .
>
> . . . I don't know where you can buy this record as Lynn has not told me. You will recognize him as being a man with a tape recorder about half a step behind one of the county commissioners.

—•—

Was I really wearing white shoes?



Alex Burton autographed this publicity still when we worked together at KRLD.

About a year later, Alex walked up to me, as I sat at the KRLD edit desk, and asked me if I'd like to help him work on a project for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. With *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* taking the nation by storm, the Symphony figured they could use science fiction to inject some culture into the masses. They had asked Alex to write some narration for a concert to be called "A Star Wars Encounter."

Count me in, I said. I was not about to turn down a chance to do some writing with Alex.

We had several meetings with the people from the Symphony and a company called SHOWCO, which was going to liven up the concert with a laser show. Alex and I were treated to some laser graphics at the SHOWCO office so we could get a flavor of what was to come.

We were told that the program, to take place at Moody Coliseum at SMU, would include music from both movies as well as "The Planets" from the noted composer Holst, and the theme music from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Music would be under the direction of the Symphony's own Maestro Eduardo Mata.

The Symphony's Chuck Strother issued a four-page press release announcing two performances on February 26, 1978, and detailing what SHOWCO was planning to do:

> . . . "The dazzling laser-light production effects will envelope the audience and visually electrify the orchestra in undulating patterns of eye-staggering colors and forms of electronic light. Special effects and staging include a mammoth rear-screen, nearly two-and-a-half stories high and sixty feet wide, upon which continuous 'outer space effects' will flash through the genius of computer and from the imagination of the SHOWCO personnel.
>
> The full orchestra will be strategically staged on semi-circular risers with Maestro Mata conducting from an under-lit, plexiglass podium. A synthesizer stage left and a narrator stage right will be showcased on comparable and dramatically lit risers, while the entire performance area will be constantly bombarded by a battery of illumination.
>
> From time to time during the performance, special effects will create the illusion the orchestra is floating in outer space—appropriately for these 'Cosmic Concerts.'
>
> Both performances will be highlighted by dramatic readings from an original script commissioned by the DSO as written for them by Alex Burton, KRLD radio personality, and KRLD news editor (and science fiction writer)

Lynn Woolley. A professional actor/narrator will soon be announced . . . ."

—•—

Alex brought a six-pack of beer over to my apartment and we began to bang away on a couple of manual typewriters. Alex was working on "The Planets" while I was trying to come up with lead narration for "Star Wars." Finally, I typed:

"Is there anyone there?"

Then, I stared at the typewriter a while longer. Alex's fingers were a blur. I was intimidated. I've got to get something written, I thought. So I pounded out a couple of pages about an earth-bound human staring skyward, wondering what would happen if contact were made with aliens. When I had finished, Alex looked it over and made a few suggestions (I had never heard of a Pythagoras) and soon, we had this:

Is there anyone there? (Is there anyone there?) Is man alone in this evolutionary journey? Could this blue marble be the only visited planet among the millions—no billions —of possible solar systems that might exist in a myriad galaxies? No! It seems unlikely that whatever gods attend to the matters of the universe would concentrate all their energies in this single speck. So—from the first cosmic cough that split the primal atom and formed our universe —man has wondered at the heavens . . . wished on stars . . . and hoped for others.

Even now, we refine our technology . . . hoping someday to seek out strange, new worlds—to boldly go where no man has gone before. But what if we are not the first to conquer the barriers of time and space? If the first close encounter should occur on earth . . . we must be prepared. But how?

The scholars say we must greet them with a Pythagorean Theorem scratched out in the dust—a geometric map to understanding. The teachers would come with books, saying, "There is much we can learn . . . "

A linguist would offer communication through words; a composer through music.

The merchants would meet them with goods to trade, and inquiries on marketing procedures. What is fashionable in Andromeda?

Engineers would bubble with curiosity! How is it done? Disseminators of the news would scratch their impressions onto skinny notepads, while brandishing all manner of electronic paraphernalia.

Politicians would arrive with a smile . . . a handshake . . . and a treaty of division of the space between.

Soldiers would greet the invaders with military strategy: stockpile the guns . . . the ammunition . . . the bombs! We must prepare for war!

—•—

The Symphony changed the last line, leaving out the words "for war." Heck, the movie was called *Star Wars* so I thought the word was appropriate. Anyway, the narration still needed a big close. Alex read it over, put the paper back into the typewriter, and without hesitation wrote these words:

At the edge of infinity, a country parsec from this space, a many tentacled figure stands beside a magenta stream, and gazes into his amber sky.

He wonders.

Is there anyone there?

Is there anyone there?

—•—

From that point, Alex wrote most of the remainder of the narration, and all that remained was to find out who was going to read it. On February 10, the Symphony issued a memo to all involved in the production:

"Please find attached the retyped text for the Star Wars Encounters as written by Alex Burton and Lynn Woolley . . .

. . . Tentatively Leonard Nimoy will be the narrator. This is not for public release."

—•—

The big day came, and Moody Coliseum was jam-packed. Channel 8 taped one of the performances for television, as Leonard Nimoy narrated and SHOWCO dazzled the crowd with laser effects.

Nimoy did all right with his interpretation of what we had written. But somehow, I always thought Alex could have done better.

CHAPTER 14

Star Studded Encounters

I never saw Larry Herndon walk. And yet Larry, who rarely mentioned the handicap, lived a full and satisfying life, and even earned a living—due to comic books, science fiction, and "Star Trek." Larry was also one of my best friends.

I had talked to "Star Trek's" Dr. McCoy on the Ed Busch Show, and I had written narration for Leonard Nimoy. But because of Larry Herndon, I would have many more "close encounters" with the crew of the Starship Enterprise, as well as several other well-known film stars.

In the late sixties, Larry and some of his friends had put on comic book conventions that drew hundreds of fans to a Dallas hotel for a weekend. By the time I moved to Dallas, Larry was putting on semiannual Star Trek conventions and bringing in fans by the thousands. There would be a dealers' room, a film room (in these days before home video), and, there would be guests. That's where I came in. Because I was a science fiction fan who also happened to be on the radio locally, Larry usually asked me to emcee the conventions and introduce the guests.

I had been attending conventions like these since I was 17. My first one took place at a Ramada Inn in Houston in 1967, but there were no guests of note. A year later, I was present at the 1968 Southwesterncon at the Hotel Southland in Dallas—my first convention with Larry Herndon. I was only 18, but I had already done some radio work that inspired me to write to the editor of Marvel Comics, Stan Lee, and ask for a tape recorded greeting to

conventioneers. To my surprise, Lee provided the tape. It was played during the opening session, and then I sold it at an auction. One of the guests at that convention was the late science-fiction writer Fritz Lieber.

I was working at WFAA in 1973 when Larry and some of his friends put on D Con. (That's not a roach poison. It means "Dallas Convention.") This was the first convention I had been to that featured Star Trek connected guests. Harlan Ellison was there —he wrote "City On the Edge of Forever," considered by some to be Star Trek's best episode. And David Gerrold, who penned "The Trouble With Tribbles" was a guest. Also on hand were William M. Gaines (of E.C. Comics and *MAD Magazine*) and writer Andrew J. Offutt, whose articles on grammar I still refer to. (Andrew says it's all right to end a sentence with a preposition, and I believe him.)

A few years later, Larry began his series of Star Trek "cons," and I began my duties as emcee. In 1975, the American Star Trek Convention featured Walter Koenig—Ensign Chekov. I remember him as a nice guy who answered each question from the crowd and who knew his Star Trek trivia pretty well.

Larry Herndon at one of his many conventions. The man standing behind him is Walter Koenig, Ensign Chekov of Star Trek. Photo: Courtesy Sharon Herndon.

In 1976, Larry put on two Trek conventions as well as a nostalgia convention. The first one featured George Takei, Lt. Sulu on the series. I remember him telling me that it's easy to spell his last name: it looks like "Take 1." The second convention boasted two Enterprise crew members, James Doohan (Scotty) and Grace Lee Whitney (Yeoman Janice Rand). Herndon set up a news conference at the hotel, and I covered it for KRLD.

The American Nostalgia Convention was held at the Adolphus Hotel. Among the guests were Jackson Bostwick (TV's Captain Marvel), Kirk Alyn (Superman of the 1940's Columbia serials), Noel Neill (Lois Lane on TV), Grace Lee Whitney (again), and Clayton Moore (The Lone Ranger). I had a field day with my tape recorder. I interviewed most of the guests, but I concentrated on Kirk Alyn, Noel Neill, and Clayton Moore.

Since movie serials faded in the early fifties, I was a bit too young to have ever seen one in a theater. But due to Larry's conventions, I had seen a number of them on 16 millimeter film. But not either of the two Superman serials. For some strange reason, those films had been locked away, and even Kirk Alyn hadn't seen them since the forties. He didn't remember much about the plots, but he had many funny anecdotes about what it was like to play a super hero in a low budget cliffhanger. Kirk was a fun interview, and he signed a copy of his book (*A Job For Superman*) for me.

Noel Neill played Lois Lane opposite two leading men. She costarred with Kirk Alyn in the two serials, and again on TV, this time with the late George Reeves. My interview with Noel concerned mostly the TV show for a good reason: she couldn't remember much about the serials. She was on a college lecture circuit, and she was well versed on Superman TV trivia. She told me her favorite episode was "The Tomb of Zaharan" in which Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen are kidnapped by cult members and imprisoned in a tomb before being rescued by Superman. The conversation turned serious when I asked Noel if she believed that Reeves really killed himself. At first, she declined to comment. Then, she said there was some controversy relating to the death, but "to all extent and purposes, it was suicide." Just before

the Christopher Reeve movie came out, I wrote a long article from those interviews and it was published in the *Dallas Morning News* on August 13, 1978.

In my interview with Clayton Moore, I seemed to do more talking than he did. He was nice enough but seemed a bit disinterested in talking about the old days. When I asked him if he had the problem of being typecast, he said simply, "Nope. Lone Ranger wore a mask."

I took all the interviews and edited them into a thirty-minute program called "Nostalgia 1976." It ran on one of KRLD's weekend blocks and won UPI's best feature documentary award that year.

1977 was a banner year for Larry's convention business, with two cons, each being a classic in its own right. The first, called Star Con '77, brought back George Takei and David Gerrold and also featured a man who may have been the biggest actor in Hollywood—literally.

I had always been fascinated with the work of seven-foot-tall Ted Cassidy, and I jumped at the chance to interview him. Cassidy had once been an announcer at WFAA, and some of the people there still remembered those days. John Allen had mentioned Cassidy on more than one occasion, explaining how Ted wanted to go to Hollywood and become a serious actor—but his size got in the way. At Channel 8, Ted was the voice of Mr. Echo on the children's show "Peppermint Place," giving him an early taste of show business. WFAA staffers helped Cassidy make a demo reel to take to California, and that led to the role of Lurch on the "Addams Family." The role was a mixed blessing. It combined with his size and his huge voice to trap him in a stereotype he could never escape.

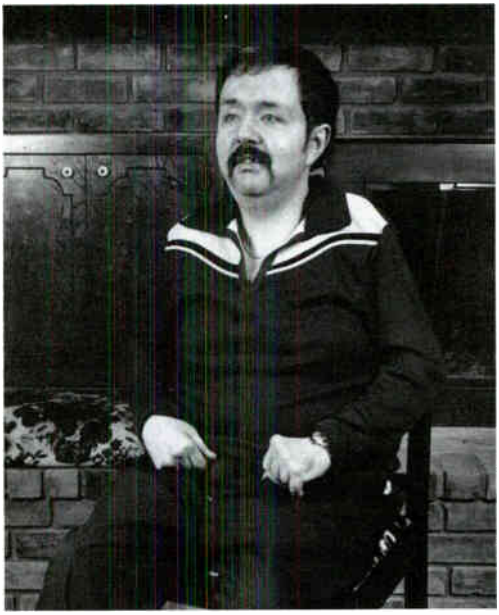
Larry set me up with Cassidy just outside the dealers' room at the NorthPark Inn. My cousin Robert stood by as I did a twenty-minute interview talking about Cassidy's roles as Lurch, Bigfoot on "The Six Million Dollar Man," and the android Ruk on "Star Trek." Ted had just finished filming a new movie, *The Last Remake of Beau Geste*, and he was very proud of the film. As we talked about typecasting, Cassidy told of being offered the part of

Lenny in *Of Mice and Men*, and how he had turned it down. His greatest desire was to be known not as a "big" actor, but as a "good" actor.

A bit later, at the question-and-answer session, a young fan asked, "Mr. Cassidy, just how big are you?" Cassidy smiled at the adults in the audience and answered, "Some of my measurements get a little kinky." When asked how the android Ruk got its name, he told the fans that a name was being discussed and someone said, "rots of ruk," and they picked up the word from that.

I went back to KRLD and filed some stories using tape cuts of Cassidy. I was so fascinated by his answers—and his unbelievably deep voice—that I saved the tape.

On January 16, 1979, Ted Cassidy underwent heart surgery for a nonmalignant tumor. A spokesman for St. Vincent's Hospital said complications arose, and Cassidy did not survive. After reading the wire reports about Cassidy's death, I remembered the taped interview. I transcribed it, and wrote two articles—one for the *Dallas Morning News*, and a longer piece for a science fiction fan magazine.



Larry Herndon in a photo taken not long before his death. Photo: Courtesy Sharon Herndon.

DallasCon '77 had one Star Trek guest and a couple of movie serial legends. The Trek guest was D.C. Fontana who was said (in her program bio) to have created the characters of Spock, Kirk, and McCoy. She also was a prolific writer on the series. The legends were Buster Crabbe and Jean Rogers who starred together as Flash Gordon and Dale Arden in the Universal serials. I was anxious to interview Crabbe. I had researched his career for a term paper at the University of Texas, and so I was quite familiar with his work as Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Captain Gallant, and Tarzan. I asked him about his rivalry with another Tarzan and ex-Olympic swimmer, Johnny Weismuller. It was a good interview, and when Crabbed passed away on April 23, 1983, I pulled out the tape and used it as a special program.

Next came StarCon '79 and an interesting evening with Grace Lee Whitney. But this time, I didn't ask her much about her role as Yeoman Rand of Star Trek. I had been working on a book about Warner Bros. television shows of the fifties and sixties, and I had discovered that Grace Lee had been a contract player for Warners. I mentioned the project to her, and she and her husband invited me to bring my tape recorder to their hotel room. So I spent about an hour discussing the old days on the Warners lot with Grace Lee. I gave her my address, and she was nice enough to send me a package of stills from some of the Warners episodes she was in. Portions of that interview and several of Grace Lee's stills can be found in the book, *Warner Bros. Television.*

Walter Koenig was back for the next two events beginning with Tex-Con which celebrated the return of Star Trek as a motion picture. And although I didn't know it at the time, the next convention, StarCon '82, would be the final one for Larry. I emceed the costume ball and introduced Koenig and ElfQuest creators Richard and Wendy Pini. I also presided over an awards luncheon where I took some good natured jabs at Larry (he's been working on a novel for years—he's a slow reader). The audience loved it because they loved Larry.

I was never to see Larry Herndon again. I was visiting my parents on the evening of August 28, 1982 when Jodie walked in

and told me I'd better sit down. "Larry Herndon died today," she said.

I had never lost so close a friend. I dried my eyes and telephoned Larry's wife, Sharon, to offer my condolences. It was probably one of many such calls. As the years have gone by, Larry's legend has grown in Dallas, and a Larry Herndon memorial event is held each year. It's no wonder. He was a small man confined to a wheelchair, but no one ever stood any taller.

CHAPTER 15

The Country Boy Breakfast

In early 1977, Dallas radio was in a state of musical chairs. On March 17, an article in the *Dallas Times Herald* headlined "KRLD Sale Expected In 'Couple of Weeks.'" This referred to KRLD's sale from the Jonnson family to the broadcast conglomerate Metromedia. Four KRLD reporters (including Jess Smith, Tom Tully, Ray LePere, and Lois Goldthwaite) had bailed out of KRLD to go to city-owned WRR.

Metromedia was a big outfit; it owned, in addition to its broadcast properties, the Ice Capades, the Harlem Globetrotters, and the Foster & Kleiser Outdoor Advertising Co. It also owned as many FM stations as the FCC would allow. So it was being forced to sell off KRLD's sister station, KAFM, just as soon as the purchase went through. The article also noted that the city of Dallas, weary of commercial broadcasting, had put WRR up for sale, obviously making the above named reporters feel pretty insecure.

Same paper; same day. Bob Brock's column on broadcasting, headlined "As KRLD fire-eth, WRR hire-eth," embellished the other article with additional information. Bruce Hughes, who was hanging on as KRLD's news director, denied speculation that KRLD was about to de-emphasize news.

Same paper; same column, but move ahead to January 13, 1978. "KRLD, KAFM Radio Transfers At Hand," blared the

headline. The sale of KRLD and KAFM to Metromedia was expected to be consummated by the end of the month. And a buyer had been found for the orphaned FM station. KAFM's new owner would be Bonneville International Corporation, the broadcast arm of the Mormon Church. The airlanes between DFW Airport and Salt Lake International must have been crowded that month because the Mormons were arriving in Dallas for still more negotiations. Before long they had a deal to purchase WRR from the city, giving them an AM-FM combination. The column went on to note that Bonneville was busy constructing a modern studio facility in an office complex on the LBJ Freeway.

With Metromedia coming in, I made it my business to find out a few things about the Mormons and how they ran their broadcast operations. Right off the bat, I discovered that they were comparable in size to Metromedia. Properties included WRFM in New York (perhaps the nation's leading beautiful music FM), KBIG/KBRT in Los Angeles, WCLR in Chicago, KOIT in San Francisco, KIRO-AM-TV and KSEA-FM in Seattle, KMBZ-KMBR in Kansas City, and the flagship stations, KSL radio and television in Salt Lake City. In addition, the company owned a plethora of consulting firms, production houses, and radio rep firms. Bonneville had lots of places to look when choosing its new team for Dallas.

It was announced that KAFM would be headed up by Raymond W. Fritsch, who would be coming from KSL. Joe Meier (who had been a program director at KSL) would be assistant to Fritsch and manager of WRR. Randy Kimball, who shared a last name with Spencer W. Kimball, president of the church, came on as business manager. Brian Moran, who had been a correspondent in Bonneville's two-person Washington News Bureau, would head the news department. Moran's was the name that interested me the most.

Once Bruce Hughes had been ushered out at KRLD, and the Metromedia misery index began to rise, I sneaked into the back offices of the KRLD building where Bonneville had set up temporary quarters. I asked for Brian Moran and got an audience.

"We're not allowed to approach anyone from KRLD," he told me. "It's part of our agreement."

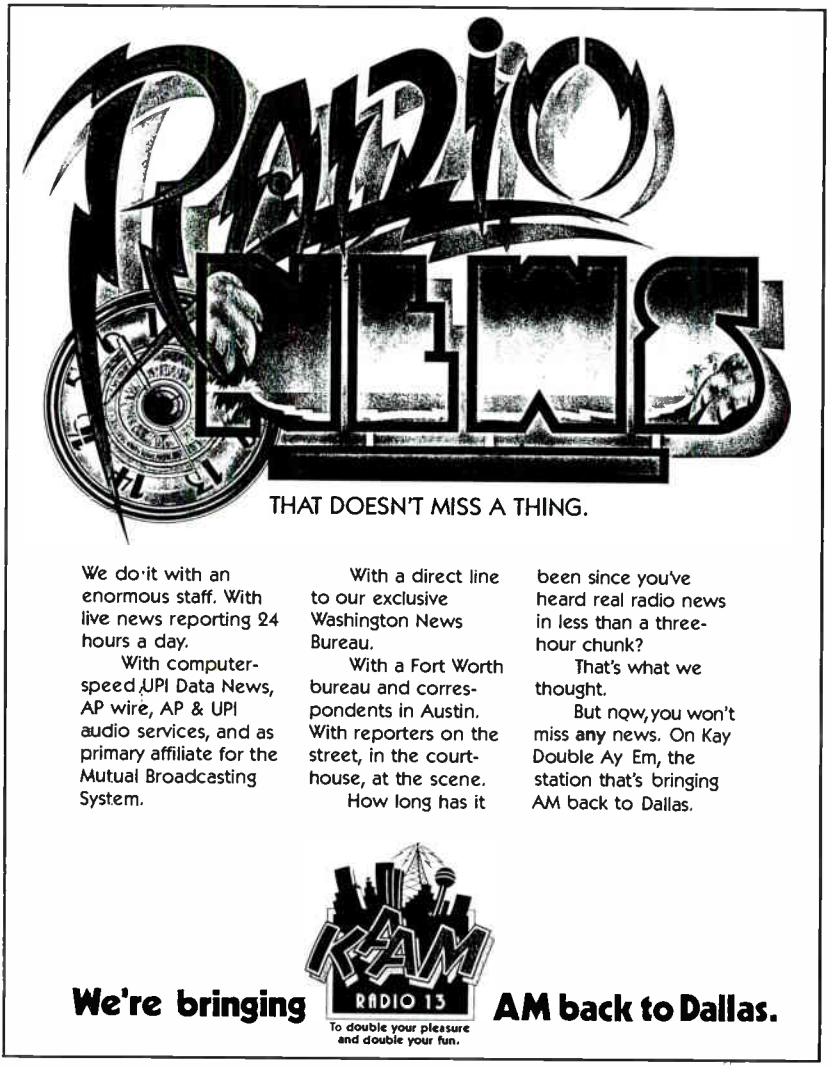
I made it clear to Brian that I was the one doing the approaching and would take full blame for it. I asked for a job in the new news department that Brian was about to assemble. We talked off and on for a few days, and I was advised that I would have a job once Bonneville took control of both of its new radio stations. But I had to keep quiet about it. So I went about my business at KRLD until the day I turned in my time.

Meanwhile, the Dallas dailies continued to play up all the changes. Again, Bob Brock's column: "WFAA radio is introducing its renovated news/talk format . . . News Director Jess Smith, late of KRLD and WRR is heading up the operation which will be joined on Monday, Aug. 22, by Joe Holstead, former news director of KRLD, the Texas State Network, and, most recently, news director of KATV-TV in Lafayette, La." Brock informed his readers that Dick Wheeler was also joining WFAA to anchor the morning block, and Ray LePere would still be reporting from the police department, but this time, for WFAA. Ed Busch would be doing a daytime talk show on the station, and local game shows would be aired starring Bill Blanchard and Charlye Wright. For a while, WFAA even carried a sports talk show hosted by Ed Bieler whose air name was "Superfan."

Soon after, Brock was reporting on the changes of ownership, which were now becoming official. And WRR had its new call letters—KAAM, pronounced Kay-double-A-M. A station in Berryville, Arkansas had that set of calls, but Bonneville wanted them so badly (to go with KAFM) that it was willing to pay for them. Brock also revealed that KRLD had sold for $10 million and KAFM for a paltry $3 million.

Brock's counterpart at the *Dallas Morning News*, Rena Pederson, was also writing about radio. Her May 17, 1978 column detailed a few of the KRLD defections to the new KAAM, including mine: "New staffers Lynn Woolley and Bob Burns of KRLD have been hired by Bonneville International Corp., which recently purchased KAFM and KAAM (formerly WRR-AM). Woolley will be used for both on-the-air and reporting work on KAFM and Burns is joining the FM programming department."

Soon, it was time for me to make an appearance at the new office, which at this time, was still the old office. For years, WRR had broadcast from the Texas State Fairgrounds, which was a happening site during the Fair. The rest of the year, the corny



Management at KAAM believed in promoting the station. This is a late seventies house ad.

dogs were in remission, and the fairgrounds could be a scary place. Especially since I had to show up at 5 a.m.

On my first morning, I met Ed Spencer. Brian had just hired Ed from KLIF where he had been working with news director Brad Messer and program director Charlie Van Dyke. Ed and I both cringed at what we saw. The facility wasn't so bad, but the newsroom was populated with a host of young anchors and reporters, most of whom wouldn't have had a prayer of working anywhere else in Dallas. Most of them didn't have a prayer of staying on with Bonneville, either, but they continued their chores as if nothing was about to happen.

WRR, or KAAM as it had just become, was carrying an NBC all news network known as the News and Information Service, or NIS. The best way to describe NIS is to say that it was an early radio version of CNN. It wasn't bad, but with KRLD and WFAA both putting forth a very professional and locally produced news effort, KAAM was barely able to compete. The staff at NBC/NIS was on the air for most of each hour, with the local crew doing updates on the hour and half hour.

Spencer and I began to sit in on some of the local segments. That's when I found out what building we were in. We were sharing space with the Fair Park Health and Science Museum, and the city staff who designed the building couldn't resist making the radio station into an exhibit. So during museum hours, people would be able to stare at us through a double-paned glass window while we read the news. There were little headphones hanging on the wall so people could put them to their ears and hear what we were broadcasting. Adults would stare, and kids would press their noses against the glass until we felt like closing the drapes.

The worst part about it was that the Health and Science Museum decided to put their cutaway diagram of the male sex organs right across from our window. So if we weren't being stared at by a museum patron, we had a clear shot of a giant testicle. I kept praying for those new studios to be completed.

June 2, 1978: Bob Brock's column. "KAFM Radio is moving into new quarters over the weekend . . . sister station KAAM will

move from its Fair Park studios to the new Park Central complex on Monday, June 12." I was so excited that I dropped by the new place during the weekend to mingle with the carpenters. It was a beautiful studio—the nicest I'd ever seen. Taking up the fifth floor of a suburban high-rise, AM would occupy one side of the floor, FM the other, and management offices would be in between.

Back at Fair Park, I met KAAM's new program director, Stu Bowers, and we had lunch at a nearby El Chico. Bowers, who had one of the deepest voices I'd ever heard, was excited about his morning man. His name was Phil Markert and he was coming from Syracuse. What made Markert different was that he played a baby grand piano and actually sang much of his show. The station was even building a special control room for Markert with a piano (Studio "P") and special arrangements for the controls so that he could start a tape from his piano bench. Markert had been number one in Syracuse for five years and Stu Bowers was banking on the "piano man" to do the same thing in Dallas. I had only one question: "Stu, how come *you* aren't doing an air shift?" That got me only a dirty look.

Markert was to be joined on the air by Lee Gray, Tom Hopkins (whose resume included a stint as play-by-play man for the Kansas City Chiefs), Terry Bell on the night shift, and Bob Patterson overnights. Terry Bell and I seemed to be following each other around; this made the third station we'd worked at together.

Things went quite well for me at Bonneville. They made me the morning drive anchor, paid me a lot more money than KRLD, and eventually handed me the keys to a mobile unit, a brand new Chevy Nova. I even had a company credit card.

One morning, I arrived at work at 5 a.m. and the newsroom was hoppin'. Byron Bruce, who was my morning tape editor, informed me that a tornado had just plowed through Wichita Falls, north of Dallas, and had cut a swath of destruction. "Why didn't someone call me?" I asked. Brian Moran told me that he wanted me to sleep and be fresh to anchor the news. Brian had sent a crew, including Ed Spencer, to Wichita Falls. Spencer walked through the rubble with his tape recorder and delivered

some vivid descriptions which he fed down a phone line to the station. Byron helped me process the tape, and we may well have had some of the best coverage in Dallas—even though most people were probably listening to KRLD.

It was also during this period that Pope Paul VI passed away. The new pope took the names of the two prior popes and became John Paul I. The selection of the new pontiff had been conducted with all the fanfare and media hype that always accompanied the process. And with John Paul in office only a couple of weeks, Phil Markert had no reason to suspect that the very serious subject of the papacy would be my lead story once again.

Actually, I knew that John Paul I was dead before I arrived at the station at 5 a.m. because I had been listening to a network newscast driving in. I should have informed Phil, but I didn't. Byron and I went to work trying to get local reaction to the death, and we managed to assemble a comprehensive newscast for the 6 a.m. report. Markert, not suspecting a thing, happened to pick this particular newscast to sing an introduction. It was witty and clever and it rhymed. It was also happy and upbeat. What could I do? I opened my mic and said, "Phil, the Pope is dead."

In retrospect, perhaps I should have segued with a brief weather forecast. Bonneville, being owned by a religious organization, was not happy, and Phil Markert took most of the heat. I was told to inform him what my lead story would be, and we managed to stay out of trouble after that.

With the pope incident behind me, I soon had what many people would consider to be the chance of a lifetime—and I passed it up. Dallas based Braniff Airways was beginning Concorde service to London's Gatwick Airport, and each news department in the city was invited to send a reporter along on a special press flight. Brian Moran offered me the assignment. It was a hard offer to pass up, but if I accepted, I had to go through some red tape. For example, I would have to travel to Houston just to get a passport. And strangely enough, at that time in my life, I had never flown anywhere. (I had taken a spin around Dallas on a Southwest Airlines 737 while on assignment for WFAA, but that flight lasted only a few minutes.) I never managed to convince

myself that I was ready to fly across the Atlantic at warp 2. So Vicki Robbins got the assignment. Vicki was a young, talented reporter who jumped at the chance to go to London. While there, she called in daily reports on the big stories in Britain—including the birth of the world's first test tube baby.

Meanwhile, in the KAAM front office, Joe Meier had made a decision. KAAM would be a major sports voice in Dallas. Joe looked at the Dallas Cowboys and decided that KRLD had that team locked up. He knew the Texas Rangers were solid on WBAP, and at that time there was no pro basketball in Dallas. I suggested that we look at the WCT, Lamar Hunt's pro tennis tour. Joe and I made a trip downtown to the WCT offices, but nothing came of it. The station eventually picked up the games of the Dallas Diamonds of the women's pro basketball league. We also got a sports director.

I had known Bret Lewis for years. But in the days when he was a deejay on KNOW or doing the weather on KHFI-TV in Austin, I never knew that his real love was sports. I still didn't realize that when I used to run into Bret when he was a reporter for KTVT-TV, Channel 11. [Bret once told me that he listened to live reports on KRLD to find out where news was taking place. Channel 11 was an independent, and Bret often lamented the fact that news was not taken seriously by station management. Over at KDFW-TV, Channel 4, there was a feature called "Eyewitness Newsreel," that ran a montage of news stories of lesser importance. Bret told me that he knew it was a bad day when KTVT's lead story showed up on Channel 4's "Newsreel."]

Putting aside weathercasts and hard news reporting was a good decision for Bret. He worked hard at sportscasting and soon began to Excel. I felt that Bret was the best writer I had worked with since Frank Gentry. Soon after Bret's arrival, we developed a format where Bret would join me in the anchor booth and read his sportscasts live. It was a great idea, but Bret's writing was so crisp—and funny—that I often had to work to keep from laughing. One great line in these days before Nolan Ryan began to fill the stands at Arlington Stadium: "The Texas Rangers played today before family and a few close friends . . . ."

Bret was funny off the air, too. He hated credit cards and didn't carry any. When the station assigned him to go to Pompano Beach to cover the Rangers training camp, he couldn't reserve a rent car in Florida because he offered cash instead of credit.

One day Bret noticed the "Park Central Gold and Diamond Exchange" in the lobby of our building and decided to speculate in gold coins. The price of gold was rapidly rising, so Bret would check with our stock market reporter, David Johnson, and if all was well, he'd buy a few more Krugerrands. One day, he decided that gold might not keep going up, and that he'd made enough money. So he took all the Krugerrands and cashed them in. I thought of Donald Duck's miserly Uncle Scrooge who probably would have done the exact same thing. I mentioned something about "Duckville." "That's 'Duckburg,'" Bret corrected. "You read Duck Comics too?" I asked rather astonished. "The Uncle Scrooge mysteries? Of course!"

Any fan of Uncle Scrooge must have something going for him, and Bret certainly did. I lost track of him for years, and then I caught him reading the sports on KNBC-TV in Los Angeles. I have no doubt that someday everyone in America will know Bret Lewis.

One day Brian Moran called me into his office and informed me that the station had a chance to hire a longtime Dallas radio voice— Tony Garrett. Garrett, the reporter who had sued to video tape executions, was ready to get back into commercial radio. KAAM's management had decided that Tony would be an asset to the station on the morning drive newscasts. After some deliberations, it was decided that Tony and I would co-anchor. And so, for the next few months, Tony and I worked together in the news booth with Byron Bruce continuing to be our backup writer and editor. From this arrangement developed the absolute strangest routine of my entire radio career.

You see, there was a little restaurant on the first floor that served a sausage-and-eggs plate they called a "Country Boy Breakfast." After the 9 a.m. newscast, one of us would go down and bring back breakfast for all. It became a rivalry to see who would have to make the daily trek to the restaurant. At first we

flipped coins with the odd man out having to go. Then, Brian Moran wanted in, but he claimed that as news director, he should be exempt from having to go. Finally, Brian issued an executive order that we would have an "official coin flip" each morning to decide who would bring home the bacon . . . er . . . breakfast.

Tony Garrett had a silver dollar. So Byron and I went to the bank and got silver dollars. Brian, who had lost in his bid to be exempt, got a dollar of his own but put it in a fancy box to make it the official coin. At 9:05 the ceremony would begin. As Tony and I came out of the anchor booth, Byron would play a tape with breakfast march music as Brian Moran marched from his office into the newsroom. Tony, Byron, and I would stand at attention until Brian was before us with the official coin. Then, placing a microphone gooseneck (which he called the "truth noose") around one of us, he would command that the official coin be removed from its box. Then came the drum roll and the flip. Odd man out went for breakfast. The whole procedure took about five minutes. But it was so stupid that other station employees would come to watch and shake their heads in disbelief.

Even with all the frivolity and talent at KAAM, the station failed to produce high ratings numbers, and it was soon apparent that change was in the wind. Joe Meier invited me to play tennis at a country club one afternoon, and I suspected that something was on his mind. I proceeded to beat him in a quick match and then listened to a proposition: I was being offered the job of news director. It was my third and final goal in radio. First, I wanted to work in Dallas. Second was to be good enough to work drive times. And finally, I wanted to be a department head. I accepted without hesitation.

Brian would move into sales. Tony Garrett was going to be teamed up with Dick Hitt, a well-known newspaper columnist, to replace Phil Markert on the morning show. Stu Bowers was going on the air in the afternoons. Leon McWhorter, who was production director, would be on the air as Jay Roberts. And I decided to put Vicki Robbins on the morning anchor desk and move myself to afternoon to work with Stu Bowers.

As news director, I was automatically a member of the KAAM/KAFM editorial board. The board consisted of key station personnel and a few others from the community who would decide on topics for the station to editorialize about. The topics were always serious, but after every person on the board had his or her input, there was never any bite in the final copy. Sometimes, the managers would voice editorials, but often local writer A.C. Greene would handle that chore.

During one meeting, Don Bybee, who was president of the Dallas and Kansas City properties, suggested I go to Kansas City and spend a few days observing how the news department operated at KMBZ/KMBR. And so I finally took my first interstate airplane trip—to Kansas City International Airport on a Braniff 727.

At Kansas City, I was met by KMBZ's news director Noel Heckerson and his wife Mary. On the way to Noel's house, he asked if I liked baseball. I knew this was going to be a fun trip.

I stayed in Kansas City a few days, getting up early to go to work with Noel and watch him put his morning newscasts together. Then, I went out on assignment with reporter Rod Allen who also anchored the afternoon newscasts. Of course, we spent one evening at the ballpark watching the Royals play the Minnesota Twins.

Soon after the Kansas City trip, I was informed that all Bonneville news directors would be meeting for a seminar in Salt Lake City. By this time, I was beginning to realize that Bonneville department heads were expected to know their counterparts in other markets, and network with them. I called the travel agency and was soon on a plane heading for Salt Lake City International.

It was a more interesting flight than the other one had been. Most of the people on the plane were young men. And they were all large. I soon discovered that I was flying with the University of Utah football squad returning from a weekend game.

Jean Bishop, an assistant vice president of Bonneville, picked me up at the airport and took me to my hotel room. The next few days consisted of meetings and tours of KSL, Bonneville Productions, and Temple Square—where the Mormon Temple is

located. (Although only Mormons can enter the Temple.) I kept hoping I'd meet Donnie or Marie Osmond, but that never happened. (If I had only known. The Salt Lake Connection would play a major role in my life for years to come.)

Back in Dallas, two significant things were happening in my life outside of radio. Robert Malsbary, Robert Strange, and I were working on a book about Warner Bros. television; and Jodie was going to have a baby. I wanted to finish the book before the baby came, so my co-authors and I planned a trip to Hollywood to finish our research.

The day before the trip, Robert Strange lost his wallet. With his travel money gone, he decided to skip the journey. And so, he took Malsbary and me to DFW Airport where we hopped a Delta L-1011 nonstop for Los Angeles International Airport. Malsbary had never flown. But I was now a veteran (my third flight, you know) and so I explained the ropes of flying. He was all right until we hit a bit of turbulence and he almost spilled his coffee.

We stayed seven days in Los Angeles. We did research at the L.A. Public Library and interviewed some people at Warner Bros. and Columbia Pictures. But we were having trouble getting a time set for a promised interview with William T. Orr, the man who had produced all the Warner Brothers series we were writing about. Without an Orr interview, the trip would be a failure. We took some pictures and played tourist for a few days. We found a spot on Sunset Boulevard that looked like "77 Sunset Strip," and we took each other's picture opening car doors like "Kookie" used to do.

We visited KBIG, the Bonneville station in L.A., and took in a "Tonight Show" taping (with Rich Little as guest host) and some quiz programs. Malsbary was even selected to be a contestant on "High Rollers" with Alex Trebek. "Rob," he called him. Rob, that is, Bob won a few items, but didn't finish with big money. So we moved on and visited the Will Rogers State Beach, and finally Disneyland. After a long day at the park, I went into one final gift shop and found a cute little Pluto stuffed toy. I bought it for my new son or daughter.

Sunday came, and we made plans to head back for Dallas sans our interview with William T. Orr. But the phone rang, and it was good news. Orr would see us at his home in Hollywood. We packed, checked out, and headed for the Orr residence. He had a beautiful home and was a gracious host. We taped a long interview which became a huge part of the book and took several photos before heading back to the airport.

Back in Dallas, Robert Strange was doing his best to be on hand to pick us up, but he was having some trouble. Dallas was hit hard by the energy crisis, and Robert was having a heck of a time finding a service station that would pump any gas. He finally did get enough gasoline to make it to the Marriott Hotel on Stemmons Freeway, where Malsbary and I were arriving from the airport by shuttle bus. But he was a bit late.

We waited impatiently. After all, we had a late night flight to save money and lost two more hours because of the time difference. And in California, we had not had any trouble getting gasoline. When Robert showed up, we were not happy campers. We yelled at him for making us wait. Robert, who had spent much of the evening trying to find a way to reach us, was perturbed at our attitude. So he left. We took a taxi to my house. It was months later before the incident seemed funny. (And it was a full five years later before *Warner Bros. Television* was finally published.)

It wasn't long before Robert and I were talking again, and during one of our marathon Monopoly games, one of us mentioned that we could come up with a successful game. So one evening at Robert's house, we conspired with Byron Bruce and Leon McWhorter to invent "The Ratings Game." We formulated a board with a spinner, game cards, and squares with deejays, program directors, and the like. We all signed an agreement of ownership of the game, and we had the agreement notarized. Only problem was, the game would go on for hours—even longer than Monopoly—and never showed any signs of ending. We never did work out the bugs, but I still have the sample game pieces we devised.

During the next few months, Jodie and I made two very quick trips back to Temple. On one occasion, my father had been found

unconscious. It turned out to be his heart, and doctors at Scott & White Hospital implanted a pacemaker to regulate his heartbeat. A short time later, it was Jodie's father who was taken to the emergency room. It was a severe stroke, and it left him almost completely paralyzed. We began to think about the possibility of moving closer to our folks.

But before we left Dallas, there was one big event that was still set to take place. As December 1979 rolled around, we were expecting the birth at any time, however, the baby seemed to be in no hurry. So we went to a high school football playoff game at Texas Stadium. Our alma mater, Temple High, beat a very good team from the Fort Worth suburb of Euless. Temple was set to play another team from the area one week later—the Lewisville Farmers. We didn't attend that game and it's a good thing.

A couple of hours before the kickoff, Jodie informed me that we should head for Medical City Dallas. Just about the time the game got underway, our daughter was born. It was a great night. Kristy Lynn Woolley was a beautiful, healthy child, and Temple beat Lewisville 3-0. One week later, we took her to Temple to see her grandparents for the first time. It was a cold, misty day. We stayed inside with the baby and listened to the state championship game on KTEM. Temple met Houston Memorial at Baylor Stadium and brought home the trophy with a 28-6 win. The next week, I was doing a newscast during Leon's show. After the newscast, he opened his mic and said, "I hear there's a new person on the planet." And he played a special song for Kristy.

Just three months later, Jodie and I were packing. KAAM was still having trouble with ratings, and sales were slow. I expected the station to make changes again. My idea was to go back to Temple, get a job at KTEM, and look for a way to own my own radio station. I recommended Frank Gentry to station management, and they brought him in as news director. Sadly, Robert helped me load the U-Haul truck. Jodie took the baby and our pet greyhound, Goldie, in her car. Pandy, our collie-shepherd mix sat with me in the truck. I was looking forward to doing radio in my home town, but it was still hard to leave the major market.

"Good-bye, Dallas," I whispered as we drove out of the city.

CHAPTER 16

Back Home Again

In early 1980, George Franz was a man with a problem. The station he was managing, KTEM, was doing quite well in the market and had eliminated competition from its cross-town rival KYLE-FM by purchasing the station. But KYLE, now known as KPLE, was a hard sale.

KPLE was a "beautiful music" station. It played the type of music you'd hear while waiting to have a root canal—only slightly more progressive than the old KYLE had been. In order to save money, ownership had decided to automate the station. And so it functioned twenty-four hours a day as a background station with no live announcers, and sounding very canned. The listening audience was small, and the commercial load was too low to suit Franz. It was about that time that I made the call to Temple.

What I didn't know was that George Franz, owner Clint Formby, and KTEM program director Chuck White had been plotting a change in KPLE. They didn't know just what the change would be, but it would be drastic. And, they would need someone to run it.

George asked me to come to Temple for a visit. I asked if he could fly me down and he agreed. I drove to DFW airport to catch a small Rio Airways jet. Rio was the only airline serving Temple; it made a profit due to government subsidies, and not hiring any stewardesses. Rio had no flight service of any kind. No drinks and no peanuts. On this particular day, they didn't even have a plane

that worked. They finally borrowed one from another airline, and we were finally off to Temple on what must have been the windiest day of the year. The flight teetered and tottered but finally touched down safely at Draughn-Miller Airport. George and Chuck were there to meet me.

On the way to the station, they filled me in on a few of the details. KPLE would need wholesale changes. KTEM had a hot morning show featuring Chuck and a local veterinarian. (*Sure*, I thought!) And Chuck was disappointed that his strongest jock, Steve Cannon, had resigned to accept a job in Beaumont. Cannon, in fact, would be gone by the time I was to start the new job, so I thought I would never have a chance to meet him.

At the station, I officially accepted the job as program director of KPLE and agreed to be at work in two weeks. George gave me a brightly colored T-shirt that had a circular bicycle horn on it proclaiming "Good Mourning from Goz 'n' Chucker." I noted the misspelling of the word "morning" but didn't mention it. I was too busy "looking forward" to a return flight to Dallas on Rio.

Two weeks passed, and Jodie and I spent the weekend moving into the house we had purchased in Temple. Then, on Monday, I reported for work, mentally prepared to make the transition from major market to small market. However, things were happening too fast to worry about that.

It seemed that "Goz" was having to do without his Chucker since Chuck White had resigned and left town. And Steve Cannon, who was supposed to be working in Beaumont, was back at KTEM with a U-Haul truck just like mine parked in the vacant lot next door.

Steve's deal in Beaumont was not what he thought it would be, so he never unloaded the truck. He knew Chuck was gone from KTEM, so he called George Franz and retraced his steps back to Temple. The next morning, the new "Goz 'n' Cannon Show" premiered, and I was up early enough to hear it. I was somewhat amazed.

"Goz" was Gary Gosney, a rotund animal doctor with a weird sense of humor and the ability to do a number of voices. Chuck White had heard him speak, and had invited him to work on the

KTEM morning show. Gosney's humor transferred well to radio, and the show was a sensation. Characters included "Officer Womble" who did traffic reports with a lisp from atop the Kyle Hotel using a pair of binoculars. (Traffic reports were totally unnecessary in Temple, and that's what made the reports so hilarious.) There was Thurlough D. Pigg with the farm report (often a service of Sawyer's Saw Sharpening Shop), and everyone's favorite character, Aunt Mabel.

After a while, it was easy to believe in Mabel. She was an old lady who was determined to have the last word. She would bellow down the hall for someone to bring her some coffee—"and don't put any of that powdered crap in it!" she would say.

It was my job to follow this act when it went off the air at 9 o'clock. One morning, Mabel was acting up and Cannon got so tickled he couldn't speak. That got Gosney to laughing, and there was a long silence while they tried to regain their composures. The whole incident was hilarious. I had never heard such an outrageously funny show in small market.

At nine, I would come in and restore the station to normalcy. Then, Terry Ryan would work from noon until three, followed by a tall, thin announcer who went by the name of Lou Saint. (So thin that Ryan once suggested we give away Q-Tips as Lou Saint dolls.)

Saint, whose real name was Malcolm Van Tuyl, had a high pitched voice that usually would relegate a deejay to the night shift. But not Saint. His show was so fast paced and full of creative bits that it was almost a textbook afternoon show.

Saint had come to KTEM with some major market experience. He had been known as "The Roadrunner" at night on WOAI in San Antonio, and that had prepared him for a day job. When Jack In The Box blew up their clown, Lou blew up the "KTEM clown"—his long-suffering newsman, Don Julian. And one day, when heavy rains were flooding the city, Lou began his show with a water sound effect. You could hear a boat motor, and Lou's voice, off-mic, calling to some people inside the radio station. Then, the sound of a rope splashing in the water and the mental image of Lou stepping out of a motor boat and into the station where his

voice then became on-mic. The casual listener would have sworn that Lou had arrived at work by boat. It was theater of the mind at its best, and I began to wonder if some of the talent I'd worked with in Dallas could live up to the current standards at KTEM.

Saint's creativity extended to his commercial production as well. Copywriter Jim Cecil asked him to write and produce a station promo for a chili cook-off. The entire sixty second script was hilarious as it encouraged KTEM's listeners to "eat, drink, and feel Mary—if she comes." Once, he even put a photo of George on the floor and surrounded it with dead crickets that looked as if they were worshiping the photo. We all looked at this strange tableau and didn't know whether to be amused or disgusted.

In the meantime, we were doing market research and trying to decide what we were going to do with the FM station. Terry Ryan, fearful that it would go country and western, informed me that in no way would he jock country music.

The truth was that one of our stations was going to be contemporary hit radio (CHR) and the other was going to be country. We were just trying to figure out which would be which.

After visiting with several consultants and talking to some of my old friends in Dallas, I decided that the FM should be CHR. Steve Cannon agreed. We reasoned that the younger audience that would listen to current hits was hip enough to want FM stereo. Older listeners would accept country on a mono AM station. That was all management needed to hear. We did just the opposite.

We informed the staff that KPLE would be going country using a format of taped music from a production company called Drake-Chenault out of Los Angeles. The automation system would stay in place, but we would have live announcers doing morning and afternoon drive. Terry Ryan had a change of heart and asked me for the afternoon job. Pretty soon, we were up and running.

George had come up with a slogan that he liked—"People Country"—because he thought it sounded like the call letters. I thought it was hokey, but it might work. So Ryan and I did the drive times, and we began to build an audience. We did a lot of

promotions, gave away money and prizes, and started working with local clubs to bring in talent.

There was a nightclub out on Lake Belton that had a large dance floor, and we did a promotion with them to bring in Sylvia. She had just had three top ten records at the time, and she created a lot of interest. I did a remote broadcast from a local western wear store with Sylvia, and that night, Terry asked if he could introduce her. He was getting into county music by this time.

Later, we brought in John Wesley Ryles, III, and then a couple of country music legends. First was Ernest Tubb who drew a packed house to Frank's Lakeview Inn & Anchor Club. Ernest charmed the crowd with old country hits like "Walkin' the Floor Over You," and "Waltz Across Texas."

At a dive called the Peppermint Lounge, I did an evening with the great Merle Travis—the same man that Steve Goddard had once tabbed as one of the greatest guitarists of all time. It was a thrill to hear him perform in person. Dolly Parton had just recorded his song "Dark As A Dungeon" on her "Nine To Five" album, and he commented how much he had enjoyed that. I didn't actually perform with Merle, but I did introduce him to the crowd.

One act that did invite me on stage was Tony Douglas and the Shrimpers. Tony was never a major national act, but he was a good friend of Bill Mack's and so his records were played quite a bit on 50,000 watt WBAP. Tony put on a great show and returned to Frank's on several occasions.

KPLE was also involved in a Louise Mandrell concert at the Waco Convention Center. I did a live telephone interview with Louise's (and Barbara's) father prior to taking a group of listeners to the concert. We did go backstage to meet Louise and her opening act, Steve Wariner.

After a while, Terry Ryan moved on and I was in the market for a new announcer. I had decided that the pressures of being program director and getting up at 5 o'clock in the morning were too much. So when I advertised in *Radio and Records* for an announcer, I decided he would do mornings.

The best tape came from a jock in Ruston, Louisiana. He had a great voice, but his name looked as if it could pose a problem. It was Lynn Adcock and he went by Lynn James on the air. I called him and offered him the job if he would change his first name. And so "Paul James" became our new morning man, quickly establishing himself as a local favorite. An accomplished vocalist, Paul would also go on stage to sing when we did concert or dance promotions.

One day Paul came into the station with a red face. He had been out with his cassette deck, pulling motorists over if they had a KPLE sticker, and awarding them cash prizes. He would tape their reactions for use as station promos. On this particular occasion, he had referred to a listener several times as "sir" before asking her name. It would have been a very funny promo, but there was no way we could run it. To think! We could have had the ideas for "It's Pat" long before "Saturday Night Live" had it.

KPLE's ratings and profits were climbing, and George Franz gave me permission to go live with the midday show. So I began to go through tapes again. The best one came from the all night jock at WACO. Again, he had a good voice, but there was a problem with his name. It was Lynn Ramsey.

I called him, told him he was hired, and that his new name was Scott Ramsey. I can't imagine what the odds must be against one small market radio station having three male announcers named Lynn. Fortunately for me, I outranked the other two and kept my real name.

I executed one other name change. Marsha Haney, who was married to the Director of Development at a big local hospital, came to the station one day and said she'd like to try her hand at being a disc jockey. Marsha was an attractive lady with a good voice and theater experience. I decided to give her a try. But George had a rule against women jocks using their real names. (This was due to a history of women announcers getting harassing phone calls at home from male listeners.) I decided on Marsha Stevens.

The station was popular enough that I was asked by the local PBS television station, KNCT-TV, to host their annual fund

raising auction. It was a full day event, and I wasn't sure I was up to eight or nine hours of live TV. Besides, I was a radio guy. But I agreed to do it. They put an IFB in my ear and positioned me at a podium between two Playboy bunnies they had brought in for the event. I did what the director told me in my ear, and the show went fine.

By this time, Steve Cannon (who was still running the AM station) and I had become close friends. Steve had bought a place in the country, and we had decided to become chicken magnates. We could buy a bunch of hens, we reasoned, and sell eggs on the side. So in the afternoons, we would often skip out early and check the want ads for farms that had chickens for sale. One day, George called a meeting for midafternoon to discuss our upcoming promotions. Steve and I were late, having just purchased some laying hens from a local farmer. We had the chickens in a sack in the back of Steve's pickup, parked next to the station—next to George's office. We had forgotten what a nice day it was or we would have parked somewhere else. George had the window open as we began to plan our promotions.

"I thought I heard a chicken," George said.

"Chicken? I didn't hear a chicken," Cannon and I said in unison. Steve began looking for an excuse to shut the window.

The egg business was short lived. We did get a lot of eggs. But buying chicken feed ate up our profits. And Steve's dog ate most of our chickens—including "Cogburn" our prized rooster.

We had one other business venture underway, and it was a bit more serious than chicken farming. Sales manager Ray Eller had walked in one morning with an issue of *Broadcasting* that carried a story about a new FM allocation for Temple. The FCC had decided that both Temple and Killeen needed new FMs, and the window was now open for anyone to apply for them. Eller, Cannon, and I began to put together a package to take to investors. We eventually put together a company called "Progressive Communications" to apply for the new station. Included in the group were Dan Cutrer and David Johnson from Dallas, and several Temple civic leaders. We hired a Washington lawyer and filed the application. Future issues of *Broadcasting* began to

carry the names of those who were applying for the frequency. One name stood out in my mind: Bill Watts, the ex-news director of KNOW who had given me my first break in news. This was going to be interesting. Cannon and I wondered what was going to happen when our names were published.

While all this was going on, "Goz" had decided to forego his career in radio, and Steve Cannon had to look for something new to do in the mornings. He tried two morning show ideas. One involved bringing in some new talent from Nashville. The other idea was to re-create the "Goz 'n' Cannon Show" with Lou Saint as the other voice.

"Steve & Lou" had no pizzazz. So Cannon changed the name of the show to "Cannon & Crackers" with Saint playing the part of Crackers. Cannon could do voices as well as Gosney, and so a new character was created, loosely based on Charles Schlieper, KTEM's chief engineer. Charlie Bob Bounceacheck was aptly named. The double first name left the door open for him to be a redneck. The surname was a takeoff on the large Czech population in Temple, where so many names ended with some form of the word "check."

Cannon & Crackers, along with Charlie Bob, made a valiant attempt at bringing back the old magic. They even did a television spot featuring Steve and Lou taking a shower together—complete with shower caps—while preparing for the morning show. But while Cannon did well in the two-man format, Saint was much better when he was by himself. But it didn't really matter all that much. A notice was published in *Broadcasting* about Progressive Communications.

George asked Steve and me to visit him in his office.

CHAPTER 17

Bogus Boris Or Love That Bob

Bob Raleigh had just about the best resumé I had seen in all my days in radio. Not only was he a veteran radio personality, it proclaimed, he was also a prolific cartoon voice. Raleigh was, according to Raleigh, the voice of Boris Badinov on "The Bullwinkle Show," as well as the voice of "Scooby Doo," and "Roger Ramjet." But wait. That's not all.

The resumé went on to detail Bob's college career at Boston University and later Harvard, culminating with a master's degree in psychology. Bob said he worked for a while as a psychologist, but turned to writing comedy and radio as a means of escaping that stressful occupation.

When Steve Cannon got through telling me about Raleigh's accomplishments, I was curious about two things: first, why was this guy still doing a radio show, and second, why would he want to come to Temple? Steve didn't know. But if he could persuade Raleigh to come to Central Texas, he would have his needed replacement for the Goz 'n' Cannon show.

After some telephone negotiations, Raleigh agreed to leave his job at a Nashville station and head for Texas.

As a big fan of "Rocky and His Friends," and "The Bullwinkle Show," I couldn't wait to meet him. What was it like to be a cartoon voice?—I had a lot of questions ready to ask. However, the day Bob was to arrive came and went, and still—no Bob.

A promo tape arrived in the mail, and Steve and I took it to the KTEM production room to listen. "This is Bob Raleigh. I'll be coming to KTEM in a week—two weeks tops."

All right. So he was independent. He'd get here when he'd get here. And finally, he did arrive.

Bob and his wife, Ellen, showed up in a large truck packed tighter than any I'd ever seen. They checked into a local hotel until their apartment was ready, and that's where I first met Bob—and one large member of his family that I thought was a tiger. Actually, it was a serval.

A serval, in case you've never seen one, is a large wildcat that is native to Africa near the Cape of Good Hope. The male is about four feet long and up to twenty-three inches tall. They eat other animals—anything from birds up to small antelopes. Bob assured Steve and me that this particular serval was not going to feast on us. Still, we both kept an eye on "Taleewa" as he paced the room.

Once I was comfortable with the serval, I began to ask questions, and Bob told me a number of things that continued to surprise. He was a science fiction writer of some note, having written a number of stories for *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. He has also penned a very famous episode of "The Twilight Zone." It was the one about the little men from space who terrorized a woman in a remote farmhouse.

So, Bob—do some Boris for us.

He did. He was good.

Soon, we were helping Bob get the truck unpacked. After some time, I spotted a headlight. Then a hood, and finally an entire car. Instead of towing his import, Bob had driven it into the truck and packed his things around it. Once we had removed everything else, we began to look for a good location to get the car out.

We obtained two heavy boards and found a street that was close to a steep hill. Then, we backed the truck up to the hill, and put the boards down to form a track that we could drive the car across. Soon, the car was emerging from the truck.

"Birth of a car," Bob called it.

So Bob Raleigh was finally here and started doing his morning show. He attracted some attention with his voices and overall zaniness. When he answered the phone, he said, "Bob Raleigh Building." He constantly talked to "Sam Antonio," his 6-foot 18-inch bodyguard and number one sidekick. He gave the time "at the phinark" and you'd hear a stupid sound effect that sounded like phinark. And he had a great wake-up song:

"I don't wanna go to work; just let me lay here.
I don't wanna go to work; just let me stay here.
Oh heck, I gotta get up and go to work."

Even though Bob didn't do his Boris voice during the show, word got around that Boris Badinov was in town. Soon, the local newspaper came calling for an interview. The story, by Kay Mayfield, was headlined "DJ Is A Treasury Of Cartoon Voices." It appeared in the *Temple Daily Telegram* on February 1, 1981, with a photo of Bob.

The multi-talented Bob Raleigh probably should have been doing cartoon voices. Photo: Courtesy Bob Raleigh.

"I've even been accused of looking like Boris," Bob said in the article. He went on to tell the paper that he appeared in 144 cartoon episodes as Boris. The *Telegram's* readers even learned some new things: Bob had written comedy routines for George Carlin and had provided material for "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In." There was also a feature in the Sunday edition of the *Dallas Times Herald*.

Both the *Temple Daily Telegram* and the *Dallas Times Herald* were members in good standing of the Associated Press, the largest wire service in the country. The word "associated" means that subscribing media share their stories with each other. The AP thought the Bob Raleigh story was pretty interesting, and so they carried it on the wire to every AP newspaper in Texas.

KTEM was getting tons of publicity, and Steve and I were pretty proud to have Boris, er Bob, on our staff. So when Alex Burton dropped by, I introduced him to Bob.

Alex was still working at KRLD, but ever since the station had acquired the Texas State Network (TSN), Alex had been on the road doing features from all over the state. When Alex found an interesting interview, he would process the tape and write stories that he called in from his hotel room. KRLD would often run the stories and feed them to dozens of stations on the TSN line. Alex heard Bob do his Boris voice and was impressed.

And so Bob, as Boris, made KRLD and TSN, as fate would have it, about the same time that all the newspaper stories were breaking.

By this time, Raleigh was also the voice of "Astro" on "The Jetsons" and of "Mr. Arrax" on the "Star Trek" animated show. On Monday, Steve Cannon and I began to get calls from radio stations around the country who wanted to interview Bob live on their morning shows. Tony Garrett called me at home and asked about getting Bob live on KAAM the next morning. I told him I would try to accommodate him. But soon I got another call—this time from Steve Cannon. There was a problem.

On Monday night, February 2, 1981, I drove to the station where I met Steve, George Franz—and Bob. I already knew what we were going to discuss. Bob wasn't Boris. He wasn't Scooby Doo

or Astro. He hadn't published any science fiction or written for any television shows. Somewhere in the back of mind, I had known all along. But I suppressed it, just as Steve and George had done. It was fun having Boris Badinov at KTEM and working with him every day. It was fun having so many newspapers and radio stations wanting a piece of our guy. But stop to think. From the first, none of it made any sense.

There were two versions of how the charade was discovered. One report said an AP staffer in Dallas noticed that Raleigh, who was 36, would have been a high school student when Boris first went on TV. Another report said that Jay Ward Productions in Los Angeles had seen the story and had made it known that Boris' voice was that of veteran cartoon actor Paul Frees. Jay Ward Productions, the company that created Rocky, Bullwinkle, and Boris, had never heard of Bob Raleigh.

The news of the sham reached KTEM like a bolt of lightning. We all gathered in George's office while Bob tried to explain. At first, Bob admitted he wasn't Boris—but the rest of his story was true.

"Bob!" said George Franz.

Well, some of it was true.

"Bob!" said Steve Cannon.

Looking at me, he insisted his science fiction stories had been published.

"Bob!" I said.

None of the claims were true. Steve decided to do the morning show the next day, and we sent Bob home. Once Bob had left, Steve and I tried to convince George how funny the whole thing was going to seem later. We suggested that if Bob could be truthful, he should be allowed to remain with the station.

The next morning was a circus. All incoming calls were directed either to Steve or me. We both did interviews with print media and live bits on radio stations from major markets all over the country. Hoping that Jay Ward wouldn't sue the station, we chose our words very carefully. I talked to Tony Garrett again and explained to him why Bob wasn't available for interviews.

Kay Mayfield had another article in the *Telegram* that morning with the headline "Man Of Many Voices Admits Boris Badinov Not One Of His." In the article, Bob came clean with words that Steve Cannon and I had put in his mouth: "I am not Boris Badinov of the TV series. I have not done the voices of cartoon characters for television."

In the article, Bob went on to explain that his ego simply got carried away. He "projected himself" into a position he would like to be in. The article stated: "After conferring with KTEM-KPLE station manager George Franz and program directors Lynn Woolley and Steve Cannon, Raleigh admitted to the *Temple Daily Telegram* that his earlier statements about supplying the voices of the cartoon characters were false." Raleigh told the paper that he had been claiming credit for the voices for about fifteen years to make his resumé more impressive. No one had ever questioned his story until now.

The AP newspaper wire had its own version of the story in a dispatch headlined "Bogus Boris."

The AP story said Raleigh's claims went unchallenged for so long because he did uncannily accurate voice impressions of the characters. They quoted Alex Burton: "He sounded like Boris to me. He was damn good. I sat in the studio and listened to him do all those voices."

Raleigh told the AP that he was glad the pretense was over. But what about the folks in Hollywood?

The AP story quoted Bill Scott, a writer-producer for Jay Ward, as saying he'd like to talk to Raleigh.

"Have him give me a call," said Scott. "I may not have a job for him, but I'd like to hear from him."

The story wrapped up with a final comment from Steve Cannon: "Boris Badinov came to Temple, and he's going to stay here."

CHAPTER 18

The Lip Of the Cup

What would make a nationally known sportscaster want to spend his Friday nights in Temple, Texas? You may even think it's a silly question to begin with. The answer, however, lies in the rich tradition of high school football in my home town.

Temple, it has been said, has produced more than its share of winning teams and all-star players. To this day, they run an exhaustive list in each week's game program, beginning with Ki Aldrich in 1935, through Kenneth Davis, currently with the Buffalo Bills. In between, such players as Mean Joe Greene (Pittsburgh Steelers), Bobby Dillon (Green Bay Packers), and Brad Dusek (Washington Redskins) played high school football in Temple. Going even farther back, Temple was the birthplace of "Slingin' " Sammy Baugh, the quarterback who helped popularize the forward pass.

In 1981, the tradition was still building, thanks to the 1979 State Championship, and the fact that Temple High School was riding high with the longest regular season winning streak in the history of Texas high school football. Kenneth Davis, who had played on the championship team, was now off to Texas Christian University in Fort Worth where he would contend for the Heisman Trophy. But coach Bob McQueen had another emerging superstar. His name was Bret Stafford, son of an assistant coach, and the player many felt could take the Wildcats back to the state championship.

That's why Frank Fallon couldn't resist. He knew that the play-by-play job on KTEM was open, and he had been discussing the situation with George Franz. With Ray Eller (who'd been working the Wildcat games) about to leave town to manage a station elsewhere, Franz came to me and asked if I thought we should pursue talks with Fallon.

Frank Fallon? Voice of the Baylor Bears? "Absolutely," I said to George.

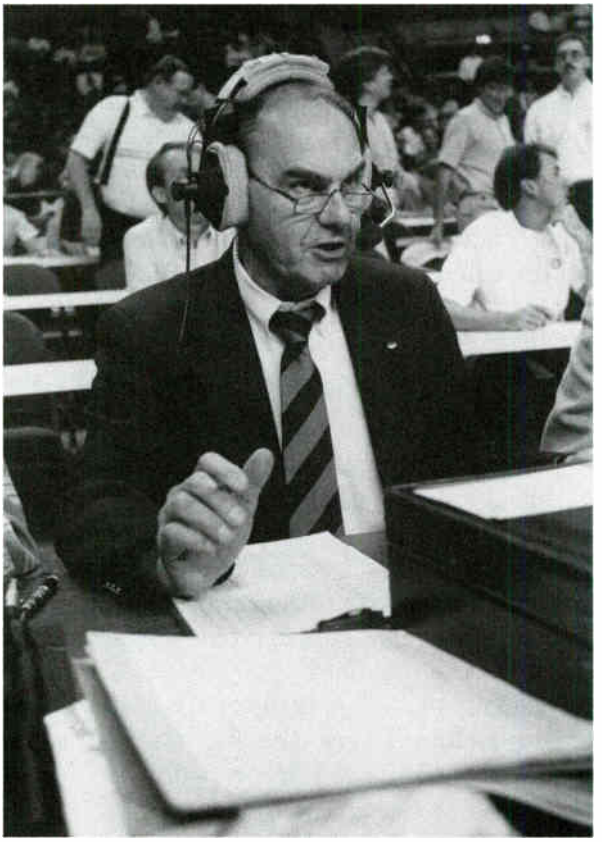
Even though I had never met Frank, I had followed his career for years. He had been working Baylor games since first joining KWTX radio in Waco in 1953. Some years, the Southwest Conference Network would assign him to handle other schools, such as Texas A&M. And from 1961 through 1964, he was the play-by-play voice of the Houston Oilers. It was during that period that ABC tried to lure Frank into moving to New York and joining the network, but his Texas ties were too strong. He and his wife June were raising four sons, and they preferred not to do that in New York. But living in Waco didn't stop Frank from getting plum sportscasting assignments. In 1977, he handled broadcasts of the Final Four basketball tournament on the CBS Radio Network, and since 1978, he has been the public address announcer for that event. He has called major bowl games for the Mutual Network, as well as TV basketball games for RayCom. And, of course, he freelanced for KRLD doing golf and tennis.

So I was pretty excited about having Frank do high school football on KTEM. George was going to lunch with Frank to finalize the deal, and he asked me to come along. That's when I got a major shock: Frank asked if I would agree to join him in the booth as the color announcer. I made it known that I had never worked as a play-by-play or color announcer except for that one WCT match back in Dallas. But Frank was familiar with my work at KRLD and thought I could handle the job. After some thought and consultation with Steve Cannon, I decided that working in the booth with Frank Fallon was an opportunity I could not pass up. I accepted and began to watch a lot of football on TV.

As it turned out, my first Wildcat game paired me with Eller instead of Fallon. Frank had a conflict on opening night, and so

Ray Eller was pressed back into service. Ray and I worked the game at Nelson Field in Austin with our engineer and statistician David Light. Temple entered the contest hoping to improve on a fifty game regular season winning streak. But with super back Kenneth Davis out of the lineup, the Cats faltered 23-14 to Austin LBJ High, and the long string of wins came to an end on my very first broadcast. However, it would be quite some time before the team would lose again.

The next weekend was the home opener at Wildcat Stadium, and it began three years of manic Friday nights for Frank, David, and me. The Wildcats got back to their winning ways, and I began to learn the principles of football play-by-play—the Frank Fallon way.



Frank Fallon broadcasts a Baylor basketball game. Photo: Chris Hansen, courtesy Baylor University.

Frank's booming delivery and years of experience made our broadcasts sound like a college or professional game would. Sometimes, Frank would tease the listening audience by going to a commercial break with, "This is the Temple Wildcat Football Network." David Light and I would be rolling with laughter. We could just imagine some poor traveler heading down Interstate 35 and stopping his seek-and-scan on KTEM. "Wow," he must have thought. "This high school team has its own radio network!"

Actually, we were broadcasting with all of 250 watts to about a fifteen-mile radius. But if you were inside that radius, it was big time high school football.

It was big time on the field, too. Temple managed to stay in the Top 10 poll for most of the time that we handled the broadcasts. And cross-district rival Bryan High School was ranked Number One on more than one occasion. That first season saw the Vikings undefeated and ranked 4th. But they had one problem. Their super running back, Rod Bernstein (later to star for the San Diego Chargers) was out with a broken leg. Temple won the game.

The next weekend, we did our first playoff game in a major stadium—72,000-seat Kyle Field on the campus of Texas A&M. A victory sent us to Baylor Stadium in Waco where the Cats' season finally came to an end.

A year later, the Wildcats were anxious to get back on a winning track, but they had already suffered a major setback before the first flip of the coin. I told the story in my pregame remarks:

> Standing six feet high . . . 170 pounds . . . and with a sleight of hand not seen in these parts in years, Bret Stafford was the man to take Temple back to the State Championship this year. After passing for nine touchdowns last year and scampering for 711 yards, Stafford was picked as *Texas Football's* preseason all-state quarterback. But Stafford was a coach's son, and a successful coach's son. When father Dick Stafford was lured away by the Belton Tigers, the Big Red gained the state's most ballyhooed signal caller as well.

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Stafford's talents were undeniable. He did well at Belton High and was recruited by the University of Texas. As a Longhorn, he established passing records that stood for years. But during what would have been Stafford's senior year at Temple High, his former understudy, Todd Mraz, became the man under. The man in the booth was still Frank Fallon.

The "Temple Wildcat Radio Network" was even more fun in its second year. David Light and I had become so identified with the football team and with Frank that we were almost local celebrities. Frank and I had learned each other's style and were blending together pretty well. Occasionally, Frank would spout a bit of wisdom while describing a play and then glance at David and me with a grin.

"That was a Southwestern Bell play," he would say. "All he did was reach out and touch." And the football was never placed on the goal line, or on the one-foot line. It was always sitting "on the lip of the cup."

When it came to descriptions of what was happening on the field, no one set the scene better than Frank. He began each broadcast with his trademark description of the team uniforms: "The Wildcats take the field tonight in their home team royal blue jerseys with the white numerals outlined in red. Their helmets bear the familiar block letter 'T'."

If the game reached a critical juncture where it was important for a fan to know several crucial factors, Frank would take a moment to update the action. It might sound like this: "We'll set the scene for you. The Wildcats have called a time out—their last of the game with just under three minutes to go. It's fourth down and three with the ball squarely on the Wildcat twenty on the near hash mark. The line to gain is the twenty-three—if the Wildcats are to keep this drive alive. There's a stiff breeze of about fifteen miles per hour, and if the Wildcats attempt to pass, they will be throwing into that wind as they move from left to right on your radio dial."

One night, Temple was playing a rather helpless team in the district, but that team did have one bright spot. His name was Todd Connor. He could play in the offensive backfield or in the

defensive secondary. He could kick off, punt, kick PATs, and play on special teams. In describing one play, Frank referred to "the ubiquitous Todd Connor," and glanced at me to see if I knew what the word meant. Without missing a beat, I said, "And he's everywhere, too."

One game against Killeen Ellison proved to be slightly embarrassing for me. The stadium in Killeen had a low press box, and the fans could literally reach into the broadcast booth if they wanted to. Ellison had never beaten Temple and the fans were hungry for a victory. Late in the game, the outcome was still undecided, and the Ellison fans were on their feet. Many of them were brandishing those large rubber hands with the index finger raised in a "we're number one" mode. Each time the Ellison team would gain yardage, the fans would fling these things wildly, and eventually, one of them flew into the booth and fell in my lap. I ad-libbed: "Frank, these Ellison fans are really proud of their team and what's it's done tonight. One of them has thrown us a finger." Frank failed to speak, so I picked up where I left off while continuing to watch the game through my binoculars. "It's their way of saying the Eagles are number one. I threw the finger back to him." I looked over to see what had happened to Frank and David. They had both turned off their mics and were laughing so hard they couldn't speak. Only then did I realize what I'd said.

Soon, it was Temple versus Bryan again. Even though it was a regular season game, it had to be moved to Kyle Field to accommodate the expected crowd. Number one Bryan had been upset, but still came in ranked number six. Temple had moved up to fourth in the polls. But Rod Bernstein was back, and the Cats went down in a blowout, 40-0. It was Bryan's first victory ever against Temple.

After an easy non-district win, Temple lost again, this time at Killeen. But the Wildcats still made the playoffs thanks to a new arrangement that sent two teams from each district. A week later, I found myself sitting in John Madden's chair at Texas Stadium.

We'd worked big games at Texas A&M and at Baylor, but this was our first time to broadcast from the home of the Dallas

Cowboys. It was another cold day, and the booth was open. There were heaters in the booth, though, and we stayed warm throughout the broadcast.

While we had heat, we didn't have dial tone. When David Light crept under the counter to find our telephone line, he discovered that the phone company had forgotten to install it. There were dozens of phone jacks under there, and David, who worked for a telephone company, began to test them. Soon, he found a hot one, and we plugged our equipment into it. I was concerned at first, but David assured me that whoever got the bill for our three-hour long-distance call would seek us out for a reimbursement.

The game proved to be tougher than establishing a phone link. The team from Nacogdoches ended Temple's season with no trouble. With the Wildcats through for the year, KTEM picked up the games of another nearby school, the Cameron Yoemen. We did two playoff games at Kyle Field with Frank arriving just minutes before kickoff because of his Southwest Conference duties. After one of the Cameron games, David and I drove back to Temple in a thick fog. We were tired and afraid of falling asleep at the wheel, so we tuned in a Mexican oldies station and sang at the top of our lungs to keep awake.

By the time the 1983 season kicked off, I was no longer working at KTEM, but was still doing the games on a freelance basis. As usual, we began the season at Austin's Nelson Field. Once again, we were having problems finding our dial tone.

David knew that KTEM had ordered a telephone line for the game, and that the end of that line was somewhere in the press box. But where? He had checked every phone jack in the booth and they were all dead. So, as air time approached, he decided to go hunting. A few minutes later, David discovered a phone closet full of wires about two thirds of the way down the hall. So he returned to the booth and hooked up our amplifier board into one of the dead jacks. My instructions were to put on my headset and listen while David tinkered with the connections in the phone closet. If he struck paydirt, I was to let him know.

So I put on the earphones and listened. Seven o'clock came and went. Then, five past and ten past. We were due to hit the air at 7:15, and we were all getting a bit concerned. Suddenly my ears were filled with a welcome buzzing that meant we had a telephone hookup. "Dial tone!" I yelled at the top of my lungs so that David could hear. Then I noticed that everyone on our side of the stadium was staring up at me. I took off my headset to discover that I had yelled right in the middle of the pregame prayer.

We established our link with the KTEM control room just in time for my pregame show. The Wildcats won the game handily with their new superstar running back, Melvin Collins, and our third season together was underway.

Two weeks later we took a charter airplane flight to Abilene for a rematch with the Cooper Cougars. Following that game, the Cats had once again cracked the state's Top 10.

The next week, the Cats were back home in Wildcat Stadium to face an undefeated Killeen Ellison team. Temple won the game as usual, but there was a bit of extracurricular activity as well. Shooting erupted beneath the stands in a private dispute that wasn't related to the game. Police reacted quickly and the game was not interrupted.

The next week found us at Round Rock Westwood where our worst fears finally came true. Our dial tone was missing, and remained missing until the first half was almost over. Someone at the local phone company office had mistakenly turned off our line, and it took all of David Light's telephone expertise to devise a way to get us on the air. He finally did, with three minutes left in a first half that saw Temple in big trouble against the Warriors. While we were off the air, Frank had been taking notes, and during the half, he reconstructed the entire first half for our listeners, one play at a time.

Temple found a way to win and entered the Bryan game ranked sixth. Bryan had been the preseason pick for Number One, but all its superstars had graduated. The team once called the "Super Vikes" was no match for the Wildcats.

A non-district game followed at Humble Kingwood. Humble is a Houston suburb, and the drive figured to be more than three

hours each way. So KTEM chartered the same light plane we had used to fly to Abilene. Our pilot flew us to Houston Intercontinental Airport where we parked the plane and took a taxi to the stadium. While David set up our equipment, I noticed a large man jogging on the track that surrounded the field. Some local folks in the booth told us who it was: former heavyweight champion George Foreman, who lived in Humble. I also noticed that an aunt and uncle of mine who lived nearby were attending the game.

Temple won the game handily, and my uncle offered to take us back to the airport. We thought that was a great idea until we realized that he was driving a pickup. So he and his wife climbed inside while Frank, David, and I got in the back. It was an extremely cold September night. We thought we were going to freeze to death before we reached the airport.

The next week was a benchmark for me. Frank had a Baylor game to do in Arkansas and couldn't be on hand for the Killeen game. So I moved up to play-by-play while David handled the color. It was my second outing as the lead announcer on a football game. I had handled a playoff game for a small suburban school—but this was different. The Temple Wildcats weren't just another high school team; we were now calling them "Central Texas' Team." I worked hard to prepare for the broadcast, hoping to be as interesting and descriptive as Frank always was. But it rained in torrents, and by the second half, all the players' numbers were obliterated, and so were the yard lines. Not that it mattered. The windows at Buckley Stadium didn't open, and the glass fogged up so bad that we couldn't see. We reported the Wildcat victory as best we could.

At 10-0, "Central Texas' Team" was in the playoffs again. First, it was Longview Pine Tree at Amon Carter Stadium on the TCU campus in Fort Worth. A week later, David and I were back at Texas A&M to handle a playoff game against Cypress Creek. Since Frank Fallon was in Austin to call the Texas-Baylor game, I had my second opportunity to do Wildcat play-by-play.

On November 26, 1983, David and I met Frank at Baylor Stadium to do what would be our final Wildcat game together. Temple was facing another set of "Wildcats"—a team from the

Dallas suburb of Plano that also had a rich tradition of winning. Both teams were undefeated, and both brought in 1000-yard rushers: Scott Huckabay for Plano and Melvin Collins for Temple. We did the game on the Diamond Shamrock Network which sent the feed to KTEM and a few other stations. (And this time it really *was* a network.) University of Texas coach Fred Akers joined us at halftime, and Frank interviewed him. The game was tight all the way and was decided when Temple came out on the bad side of a questionable call. The season was over, and so was my partnership in the booth with Frank Fallon. After three years, Frank had decided to retire from Friday night football—at least for a while.

On September 7, 1984, David Light and I were back for our fourth year of Wildcat broadcasts, and we were joined by a new play-by-play man. Steve Fallon looked a lot like Frank and sounded a lot like Frank. And, as Frank Fallon's eldest son, he took up right where Frank left off. Lots of people didn't notice any difference in the sound of the broadcasts.

The season opener was a routine Wildcat win, but week two was a whole new ball game. Coach Bob McQueen had signed a "home and home" deal with Midland High School, and this was Temple's year to travel. Even though Midland was half a state away, McQueen thought the long journey was well worth it. Midland was part of what many people considered to be the state's toughest high school conference—in fact, Midland had made it all the way to the state final the year before, beating arch-rival Odessa Permian twice in the process. If Temple could play with this league, McQueen reasoned, it could play with anyone.

To get his team to Midland, McQueen chartered two Rio Airways De Havilland Dash 7's. David, Steve, and I were given seats on one of the planes, and we settled in for the ride. We soon realized that most of the players had never flown. Some of them were visibly shaken as the planes began to taxi on the runway at the Temple airport.

Desmond Royal, a 240-pound noseguard, was sitting right in front of David Light and me. Desmond was highly regarded and

was expected to be a major college recruit, but he looked back at us and told us he would never play college ball. Sure you will, I told him. You'll get used to riding on airplanes after a while.

Soon, we reached twenty-thousand feet, and most of the players had calmed down. Then, the pilot came out of the cockpit to say hello. When Desmond saw him, he almost fainted. "We have a copilot flying the plane," said the pilot, and Desmond settled back. The plane ride took its toll. The team was on edge and lost the game 32-7.

Temple then settled in to a few routine wins. During one game, I thought Steve was really sounding a lot like his father. When the football was placed right on the goal, Steve intoned: "The ball is on the lip of the cup. Will the visitors be hospitable?" During the break, David and I were both staring at Steve. "I do my Frank Fallon impression when the game gets really dull," he said.

A few weeks later, Temple lost its annual shootout with Bryan and had to fight to reach the playoffs. They did, and David Light and I made the trip to Memorial Stadium in the Dallas suburb of Mesquite for the game against Texarkana Texas High. The Texas Longhorns were also in a tough game that day, against TCU across the turnpike in Fort Worth. That's where Steve Fallon was, covering that game for KVET radio in Austin where he was sports director. Steve's plan was to head over to our game as soon as the Texas-TCU game ended, but that game ran a little late, and as our game kicked off, Steve was not present. The first quarter was well underway when Steve finally arrived. As he joined us in the booth, David handed him a headset. During a commercial break, I asked Steve if he was ready to take over the play-by-play. He suggested that I finish the first quarter, and so I did, with Steve Fallon as my analyst.

After the Wildcat victory, we were on hand as Coach McQueen was tossing a coin with the coach from Conroe to see where next week's game would be played. Texas had beaten TCU that afternoon, and someone asked McQueen about his former running back, Kenneth Davis. "I thought it was my coaching," he said, referring to Davis' success as a Wildcat. "But he's doing the same

thing at TCU." McQueen lost the flip and announced that next week's game would be played in the Houston Astrodome.

The Astrodome was the home of the Houston Oilers, which was ironic because in a few years, Steve Fallon would become the voice of the Oilers for one season—marking the first time in history that a father and son had both broadcast the same NFL team. As it happened, though, Steve did not join David and me for this game.

George Franz had just hired a program director from Waco who also did play-by-play, and he decided to use him on the Conroe game instead of Steve. I had worked with Mike Wright in Waco and looked forward to doing a game with him. Mike, David, and I drove to Houston and set up our equipment in the Dome.

David asked me to listen for dial tone again, and so I put on my headset. Suddenly, I heard a voice asking me if I had enjoyed Baylor's victory over the University of Texas earlier that day. It was Frank Fallon. Knowing that I'm a big Longhorn fan, Mike and David had placed the call to Frank just to tease me.

About three hours later, my career with the Temple Wildcats ended with a failed field goal with no time left on the clock. KTEM did not renew my contract for the next season since I had taken a job with a competing station.

I am, however, still a fan. I would like to report that on December 19, 1992, the Temple Wildcats played Houston Yates at Memorial Stadium on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin for the State Championship of Texas. The final score was Temple 38, Yates 20. Once again, Central Texas' Team had reached the pinnacle of high school football in Texas.

CHAPTER 19

The Owl and the Pussycat

On May 11, 1953, a major tornado ravaged the city of Waco, and it's never been the same. In more recent years, the city has been the stomping ground for weirdos like David Wayne Spence (the Lake Waco triple murders); Kenneth McDuff (body count still unknown); and Vernon Howell (a.k.a. David Koresh of the infamous Branch Davidians).

Koresh claimed to be Jesus Christ. But in the early eighties, he wasn't the only person in Waco seeing visions.

Robert Weathers was the manager of Waco's leading AM and FM combo, WACO and KHOO-FM. WACO was a contemporary station and KHOO was country, but Weathers was thinking about switching the formats. So he called in his three top guys, program directors Rick May (Rick Mayfield) and Jim Miller (also a top rated morning man) and music director Mike Wright. "Sit down," he told them. "Close your eyes."

The three announcers took their seats and did as they were told. "You see a wide, rolling plain," said Weathers. "Now look at that plain. What do you see?" None of the three was sure what he saw. But Weathers was about to tell them. "You see a tree!"

Fair enough, they thought. But the idea behind this meeting was to come up with a new mascot for WACO's new logo after it switched to country music. KHOO's mascot had been an owl.

Robert loved the owl, but Rick, Mike, and Jim were hoping to de-owl the logo.

"What else do you see?"

Someone said, "A cow."

Someone else said, "A horse."

Wright felt a sudden inspiration. "An armadillo," he said. Armadillos were hot in Texas at the time.

"You don't see an armadillo," Weathers responded. "You see an owl!"

And so it came to pass that it was WACO with an owl that beckoned to Steve Cannon and me when our terse, final meeting with George Franz concluded. We had been fired because we had applied for a competing radio license. To make matters worse, KTEM had us both under a "market exclusion contract" that prevented our working in the county for six months. So Steve and I split up a list of radio stations in adjoining counties and began to call. The first place I called was KOOV in Copperas Cove. They were full up. Steve, meanwhile, had called Robert Weathers at WACO/KHOO. "He hired us," Steve said.

"Just like that? No meeting or anything?" I asked.

We were to find out soon enough about the Robert Weathers method of conducting business. With Robert, there was no chain of command and no long decision making process. He always shot from the hip, and on the day Steve called, he had been thinking about looking for some new talent for his morning show. Salaries, benefits, work hours—all trivial. Just show up in two weeks and decide who would jock and who would read the news. Cannon said he'd prefer that I handled the newscasts.

We called back and talked Weathers into a short meeting. He informed us that Steve would do mornings on KHOO, now a 100,000 watt contemporary FM station. I would handle newscasts on both WACO and KHOO. He took us to his Lion's Club meeting, the only time he ever bought our lunches. As we left his office, we walked right by two guys who were waiting in the hall outside Robert's office. We later found out that those two guys were Rick and Mike, the program directors who were going to be our supervisors. Robert never bothered to introduce us.

I came to work a week before Steve did, and started getting used to the old, beat up equipment in the newsroom. I met the station cat, a stray that had taken up residence in the station and had become quite loved by all (including Robert Weathers). The cat's name was "Watch Cat" but everyone called him W.C. The cat, in fact, was the only thing about the job that I liked at all. I was determined to make it the shortest job of my radio career. By the time Steve joined me on the morning show, I was ready for some familiar company.

Steve lived in Troy, a Temple suburb on the Waco side of town. So we would meet at 4 a.m. on the parking lot of the Troy Baptist Church and drive the thirty miles to Waco together. We had time in the car to discuss the morning show, and we began to make some plans for the FM station.

It was apparent to us that Robert listened only to WACO. His only interest in the FM station was that it made money. So we decided to see just how much we could get away with. Steve had decided to bring along his "Charlie Bob" character that he and Lou Saint had created at KTEM. We also wanted to do Gosney's "Aunt Mabel," but we couldn't steal the character directly. So we came up with "Miss Lillian" named after President Carter's mother. (Her last name was "McGillicuddy" after Lucy's maiden name on "I Love Lucy.")

Charlie Bob and Lillian needed something to do, so we made Charlie Bob our resident weather man, and Lillian did a daily advice column of the air.

Charlie Bob felt that all real Texans should have double names. He called us Steve Bob and Lynn Bob. In fact, he added a "Bob" to everyone's name—even the women's. And poor Joe Bob Whitt who worked in engineering was cursed with the name Joe Bob Bob. The District Attorney, Vic Feazell, was regularly mentioned on the show as Vic Bob, and his assistant, John Ben Sutter was John Bob Ben Bob. It became an honor in Waco to attain "Bob" status, and after a while, we had half the city calling everyone "Bob."

Lillian, meanwhile, had found her niche right after Paul Harvey at 7:35. The local paper carried a column called "Lynn's

Help Line" and Lillian borrowed the concept for her show. "Miss Lillian's Help Line" became a staple of morning radio in Waco with the stupid letters I would make up for her, and her even more stupid answers.

We made up long histories for both characters. Charlie Bob was a jack-of-all-trades who claimed he knew everything about everything. His primary area of expertise was weather forecasting, but at various times he had run a bail bond service, a boneless ham company, and an income-tax service. Like Mr. Spock, Charlie Bob believed in logic and even took several college classes in that field, always returning to the station with his lesson of the day.

Lillian had a degree from ICU with a double major in the Bible and Russian studies. She had a sister named Gertie. She was a tennis fan, drove a Ram Charger, and considered herself never to be wrong. She often had her hair done at Bernice's Curl Up and Dye Shop.

Charlie Bob and Lillian were pals but were a bit jealous of each other's air time. Charlie Bob would refer to her as an "old bat," and she would invariably hear him and start an argument.

Over on the AM side, I played the role of the steady morning news anchorman. Working with both Rick May and Jim Miller, I rewrote wire copy and used voice reports generated by ABC news and the other WACO staffers, Merry MyCue, Alan McCutcheon, and Katherine Alexander. After a while, I got a phone call from Howard Ball, the news director at KWTX-TV, the CBS affiliate. "I like your work," he said. But I never thought of myself as TV material, so I turned down his job offer.

After the morning show was over, Steve would do production while I went out to do some street reporting. Often, I would get stuck covering the McLennan county commissioners. This was an exciting bunch. I would sit there waiting for something to happen, but it never did. At one meeting, a letter was read from Mark Curtin who was the head of some county office. The letter asked for a new computer system. It was unanimously approved. After the meeting I asked Wayne Davis, one of the commissioners, about his vote. A hush fell over the room, and the

other commissioners walked over to watch the interview. Davis turned a little pale.

"You guys voted to give Mark this computer and nobody seemed to know what he wants it for. So why did you vote to give it to him?" I asked, putting the microphone to Davis' mouth. There was silence while Davis looked at his fellow commissioners for help. They all had big grins on their faces.

"Uh . . . " he said, "You haven't got that thing on?"

"Yes, sir, I do."

There was a smattering of laughter from around the room by this time. Most of it was coming from Davis' cohorts who had left him out to dry. I ran the interview in its entirety.

On another occasion, I went to Baylor University to attend a news conference put on by Lloyd Bentsen, the senior Senator from Texas—later to be Secretary of the Treasury under Bill Clinton. He was full of rhetoric about how a constitutional amendment would help get a balanced budget. Most of the reporters' softball questions were deflected with ease by Bentsen, so I began to hammer him about the issue. Why couldn't Congress balance the budget without the amendment, I asked? Why would it take an amendment to force Congress to do what it should do anyway? Bentsen gave me a dirty stare.

After a few weeks of covering Waco, I began to know who was who—the powers that be—in the city. Cannon and I began to poke fun at everybody who was in the news. The Rev. Cleo LaRue of the East Waco NAACP, Baylor president Herbert Reynolds, the Rev. Richard Freeman of the First Methodist Church, and assistant city manager Mike Meadows all were mentioned from time to time in our morning show routines.

Meadows was the city official in charge of making sure the low water dam on the Brazos River was functioning. When it didn't, which was most of the time, the Brazos Queen riverboat would get mud bound. Charlie Bob began referring to Meadows as "The Damn Commissioner." When I ran into Meadows and he realized who I was, he seemed to be enjoying the notoriety. Most of our "victims" did. Rev. LaRue once told me that he was a fan of the show, but the Rev. Freeman was a different matter. I called once

to ask for an interview about a serious news story, and his secretary told me he did not take calls on Monday. As a lifelong Methodist, I thought this strange, and said so. I informed the secretary that I would indicate in my story that the Rev. had declined the interview. That brought Freeman to the phone to threaten a lawsuit if I mentioned his name. A few weeks later, I was covering a ground breaking, and Freeman gave the invocation. I walked up to him and shook his hand, told him who I was, and asked him to appear on our show as a guest host for Miss Lillian. He did, and we were friends from that time on.

Miss Lillian's program became a vehicle for both humor and biting political commentary. Some of the letters and answers were pretty silly—even sillier when you consider that Steve was doing the answers in an old lady's voice:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I understand it's against the law in Russia to name a baby girl Ruth. Is this true? Why can't they call anyone Ruth in the USSR?

—Political Observer in Pendleton"

"Dear Observer:

The answer is obvious. It's because the Russians are totally Ruthless."

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I always picked out the name of a town in our listening area to sign the letter. I figured people would listen for their town, and it would help ratings. Here are some of my favorite "Lillians":

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I've been reading back issues of *National Geographic*. One thing I've noticed is there are many types of people in many lands. But I don't understand why some people are brown, some white, some black, and so on. What causes that?

—Reader in Rosebud"

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This letter caused some consternation among the staff driving to work at 7:35 in the morning. Bobby Weathers, a salesman who was Robert Weathers' nephew, told us later that morning that we had him quite worried. He was afraid that we had backed ourselves into a corner and wouldn't be able to extricate ourselves. But, as usual, Lillian's answer was so stupid that no one could possibly be offended.

"Dear Reader:

This is very simple. The colors you mentioned are caused by how much pork a person eats. That determines how much pig meat (pigment) is in the skin."

—•—

One morning, there was a story on the wire that Chevrolet and Toyota were forming a partnership to build a car. We made a Help Line episode out of it by having a listener ask what the new car would be called. Lillian answered that the first three letters of Toyota and the last three letters of Chevrolet would be combined, and the car would be called a "Toylet." About a week after that, the exact same bit was used by Paul Harvey. Even though we were reasonably sure he didn't steal the joke from us, we made a big deal of it on the air. Other Lillian routines made fun of our crosstown rival, KWTX radio and TV, and the literary world:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

If Channel 10's station in Waco is KWTX and its station in Bryan is KBTX, what will they call it if they ever get a station in Odessa.

—Troublemaker in Temple"

"Dear Troublemaker:

I can see by your signature that you already know the answer to this one."

—•—

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I understand that years ago, there was a so-called Lady of the Evening who operated in both Temple and Waco. I heard that she eluded the authorities for years, and that in more recent years has written a book about her escapades. Can you tell me the name of that book?

—Reader in Riesel"

"Dear Reader:

I certainly can. It's called *A Tail of Two Cities.*"

—•—

Another of my favorites was what you might call an "audio" episode. It concerned a man who had applied for a job at an animal shelter and was asked if he could operate a dew scoop. He wanted to know what a dew scoop was. Lillian, of course, was ready to explain:

"It is very very simple what a dew scoop is."
"What is it," we asked.
"Well, you can sit in it."
"Right!" we responded.
"And you can race it," she went on.
"Miss Lillian, I'm still not sure I understand what a dew scoop is," I said.
"If you will listen very very carefully, you will find out."

And with that, we played a Beach Boys record that began: "Little Deuce Coupe, you don't know what you've got." It took some imagination, but most listeners picked up the pun. Only one time did a Lillian episode cause a sponsor to react. There was a private school advertising on the station called 4-C Business College. Lillian used a double entendre in one of her answers:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I want to study to be a psychic. Is there a school for psychics in the Waco area?

—Mystic in Mexia"

"Dear Mystic:

There certainly is. It's called Foresee College."

—•—

4-C Business College failed to see the humor and registered a complaint. We never mentioned them again.

One week, the ill-fated von Erich wrestling family was in town. Charlie Bob made some rude comments about how fake professional wresting was, and Fritz called on the phone and threatened to punch him out. The setup was planned, but the phone call from Fritz was real. Lillian did her bit for the promotion by explaining that a "Full Nelson" was when Ozzie, Harriet, David, and Ricky had too much to eat.

Some of our better Lillian episodes involved the wacky city politics that were always going on in Waco. One day, a letter was published in the paper referring to "the powers that be" in Waco. We picked up on the phrase and "The Powers That Be" began to show up regularly on the show as the secret group that ran Waco.

One of the biggest controversies involved a city council election and the subsequent competition for the mayorship of Waco. There was no official method for naming the mayor. The electorate would vote for council members, then the council would elect a mayor. It was understood that the title of mayor would be passed around. The problem arose when it was Marilyn Jones' turn to be mayor. The council refused to bestow the honor on her, and Jones cried foul. We took advantage of the situation for some fun:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

There's a big controversy brewing because Councilwoman Marilyn Jones didn't get voted in as mayor by her fellow councilmen. Do you have any idea why she didn't get the job?

—Sizzlin' at City Hall"

"Dear Sizzlin':

It's really very very simple. If you ask one of the clergymen who attended the council meeting, he will tell you the decision was based on a religious principle. It's called The Passover."

—•—

Soon, Lillian herself was seeking the council seat left vacated when Ms. Jones resigned. She got a letter from a member of The Powers That Be asking about her qualifications. Another letter asked if Lillian might even be a member of The Powers That Be. Steve and I never knew for sure, but we imagined that the real power brokers in Waco were seething every time we made fun of them. We didn't care. After the show, we always left town anyway.

Some of our best Lillians were direct slaps at our own employer. One letter said:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I was getting my hair done over at Bernice's the other day, and the ladies were talking about you. Bernice said you had been bragging that you'd never missed a day of work at KHOO. That's crazy since you weren't at work all last week. Explain.

—Eavesdropper in Elm Mott"

"Dear Eavesdropper:

Yes, I was away from KHOO for a week. But I never missed it."

"Dear Miss Lillian:

I dropped by FM100 the other day to pick up a job application from that handsome Dave Dusquene. There's a section on the application that asks if I lie, cheat, or steal. What should I say?

—Job seeker in Jarrell"

"Dear Seeker:

Say, no. But I can learn."

—•—

That letter pretty well summed up how Steve and I felt about working at WACO/KHOO. The place reminded me of that "Star Trek" episode where Spock had the beard and you moved up in rank by knocking off the person above you. The Lillian bits not only made us the top rated show in town, but they also gave us an outlet for our personal frustrations. Meanwhile, Lillian kept getting more popular. One listener asked for a "Miss Lillian Doll" and another listener, Carlene Cox, responded by designing one and offering them at cost. About a dozen were made, and I still have one.

Most of Lillian's letters were concocted by Steve and me, but after a while, she began getting real letters from listeners. We used every one of them on the air, even though they were harder to deal with. When we made up the letters, we usually had a punch line in mind and wrote the letter to match it. But when we had real letters with funny questions made up by the listeners, we were pressed to come up with an equally funny answer. Of all the real letters, this was my favorite:

"Dear Miss Lillian:

We have a terrific idea. If basketball players can endorse tennis shoes, tennis players can endorse tennis racquets, and football players can endorse everything else, why can't crazy people endorse straight jackets? We are wanting to start a new line of designer straight jackets. However, we have one problem. We need a name for our new line. Being the very very very perceptive woman that you are, we know you will help us, especially for a cut in the profits or for a free sample.

—Wackos in Waco"

—•—

The pressure was on. This was a great letter that was put together by a group of real fans. Steve and I knew that they would be listening every morning to see if Lillian would have the answer. I sat on the letter for about a week trying to come up with a suitable reply. We finally answered the letter this way:

"Dear Wackos:

This is very simple. You should hire Baylor president Herbert Reynolds to endorse your straight jacket, and call it a 'Reynolds Wrap.' "

—•—

Meanwhile, Charlie Bob was not content to let Miss Lillian hog all the limelight. He didn't have a regular slot but appeared off and on during the program to give weather conditions that he had assembled "high atop the FM100 Weather Tower." The Weather Tower was an in-joke that stemmed from the old days at KWTX-TV when they used to refer to (seriously, even) the "TX Weather Tower." From that, Charlie Bob had gotten the impression that accurate readings could not be taken at ground level.

It was apparent to Charlie Bob's listeners that the weather job at FM100 was not lucrative. Charlie Bob was always operating some type of shady business to make a few extra bucks. He would do commercials for these "companies" and we'd play them during the show. His most famous enterprise was an income tax service:

"Howdy. This is Charlie Bob Bounceacheck, president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer of BITE, the Bounceacheck Income Tax Emporium. Income tax time is here. Remember, a good income tax company is like a ratchet wrench. It always has an extension nearby. Here at BITE, we're ready to file your extension. That's because we ain't got any of your returns ready to mail in. Remember, if you're called into court to explain your taxes, it's best to go quietly. Especially if you're handcuffed to a deputy. So get that extension in now. Just come by BITE headquarters and sign on the dotted line. We'll fill in the fine print later.

That's BITE, across from the Texas Dolls. Just call 773-BITE."

—•—

Charlie Bob's locator, the "Texas Dolls," was a real strip joint located near Baylor University that local officials had shut down and were trying to forget. But we used it in every one of Charlie Bob's commercials. When the income tax season was in remission, Charlie Bob would close down BITE and open up a company that might be especially useful to former BITE customers:

"This is Charlie Bob Bounceacheck. You know what's the matter with the country these days? That's right. Nobody ever thinks of the criminal. It's always the victim that gets all the sympathy. Well, over at Bounceacheck Bail Bonds, we cater to the crook. After all, you can't help it if you used to work at the EPA. At Bounceacheck Bail Bonds, that's the BBB, we'll post your bail. We don't worry about you skipping town. That's because Mavis'll take you home with her. Now write this down. Bounceacheck Bail Bonds right across from the Texas Dolls. Or call 773-3BBB."

—•—

Obviously, a scandal at the Environmental Protection Agency was in the news when this commercial was written. Another BBB routine was rushed into production when Waco Cablevision did a promotion offering amnesty to anyone who would turn in an illegal cable TV converter. "Mavis is walking up and down the aisles slashing prices on bail bonds," said Charlie Bob. "Perfect for those of you who forget to turn in your illegal cable TV converter." Mavis, Charlie Bob's silent girlfriend, was also making fun of a Waco furniture store that had been going out of business for years and was always "slashing prices."

Charlie Bob's next endeavor never made it to the air. We may have thought it was too stupid, even for him. It involved a product, as Charlie Bob put it in the commercial, that would increase the amount of "pig meat" in your skin:

"Howdy. This is Charlie Bob Bounceacheck. We're having a factory sale over at the Bounceacheck Boneless Ham warehouse. Some of our boneless hams have turned up with bones in 'em. And, as you might expect, there's something lacking in a boneless ham when it's got bones. Much as we hate to admit it, dang near all of our live boneless hams still have bones. Costs us a fortune to feed 'em and slop 'em every day. Not only that, but they get mud all over the house. Come on by and pick yours out. Good homes only. That's Bounceacheck Boneless Hams, across from the Texas Dolls. Or call 773-BONE."

—•—

Charlie Bob and Lillian rarely appeared together because it was too hard keeping all the voices accurate and separated. But one day, we decided to do a longer routine involving both of them. Steve liked to hunt and I enjoyed tennis, so we sent our two characters on vacations. Charlie Bob lined up a hunting trip to East Texas while Lillian had plane tickets to visit London and reserved seats at Wimbledon. Lillian came in on the morning they were both due to leave and informed us that the taxi was going to pick her up at the radio station. She had left her luggage on the back steps while she came to say good-bye to us. Lillian went to use the ladies' room, and in came Charlie Bob. He wanted to let us know that he had his old stepside truck gassed up and he was just about ready to head out. He had brought his suitcase in to check it one last time, and he was going to leave it on the back steps while he visited the men's room.

Naturally, the taxi driver loaded Charlie Bob's luggage, and Lillian didn't find that out until she got to England. Charlie Bob ended up with Lillian's luggage on his hunting trip. The mixup made for some funny bits during the next two weeks as the characters called in from their trips:

"Mr. Woolley, Charlie Bob had some strange things in his luggage," Lillian told me. "I found a wonderful headband with a noseguard, and I wore it to the Chris Evert match. Everyone called me an athletic supporter."

While Charlie Bob and Lillian were absent, we had local celebrities come in and guest host the Help Line. The Reverend Richard Freeman appeared, as did D.A. Vic Feazell. Baylor president Herbert Reynolds, a frequent subject of our comedy routines, was due to appear, but he suffered a heart attack and had to cancel. Another guest host was Bill Hecke, the weather guy at KCEN-TV, Channel 6. Hecke was anxious to get equal time for some of the things Charlie Bob and Lillian had said about him. We did a full week of weather related jokes, including the entire Hecke family tree:

> "George Washington Hecke: the only member of the family who didn't forecast the weather. He couldn't tell a lie."
>
> "Isaac Mohammed Hecke: got left out of the Old Testament after he told Noah to expect clear to partly cloudy skies and a 20% chance of rain."

—•—

Hecke became a good friend after that, and after he was dismissed at Channel 6, we helped him set up his own weather forecasting company. That was right after an incident where a slightly inebriated Hecke (due to a few drinks and a couple of pain killers mixed with codeine, according to Bill) bit the ear of news anchor Anthony Hennes. I named the new company "Weather Center," and today, Bill continues to forecast the weather for radio stations all over Texas.

Other than Charlie Bob and Lillian, we had one other continuing routine, and it was an early morning bit called the "Yep-Nope Commentary." It was loosely modeled after Jim Henson's Martians on "Sesame Street" that spoke only two words: yep and nope. We made two tapes—one that had speeded up "yeps" and one that had speeded up "nopes." We'd have a simple question such as "should we convert to a flat tax." Then, depending on our mood, we'd hit the "yep" or "nope" cartridge, or we'd play both tapes at one time if we wanted to straddle the fence. At the end of the commentary (comprised of all yeps and nopes), we'd say:

"for a written transcript of this program, write Program Director, FM100."

While Steve and I were doing Charlie Bob, Lillian, and Yep-Nopes on the air, things were just as crazy off the air. Robert Weathers, who would have killed us if he had ever listened to the FM station, was busy fighting with everyone else at the station. He jumped on midday announcer Ray Welch for playing a Waylon Jennings cover of Little Richard's "Lucille." Weathers thought Ray was making fun of his wife, whose name was Lucille.

Carl Ray, a salesman I had worked with at KAAM in Dallas, got fed up with Robert one day. All the station's walls were made of glass so Robert could watch everyone, and that meant we could all see the fight. Carl was shaking his fist in Robert's face, and Robert would recoil and yell back. We couldn't hear what they were saying, and soon, they disappeared into Robert's office. The story goes that once inside, Carl took his key off his ring and flung it at Robert. Robert ducked, and the key embedded itself between two books behind Robert's desk. Then Carl stomped out of the office heading for his car. Some time passed, and Carl returned to the station and sheepishly walked back into Robert's office holding the station key in his hand. "Could I get my house key back," he said.

A sadder story is that of Larry Allen, a longtime WACO deejay whom Robert had relegated to the all-night shift. Larry was distraught about the demotion and tried to put a good face on it. "Robert wants me to be the Bill Mack of Waco," Larry told me, referring to the popular all-night man at WBAP in Fort Worth. But not too long after that, Larry put a bullet through his head. Because it was a suicide, the family could collect no insurance money, so Robert had to pay for the funeral. Station employees put on a benefit to raise money for the family, but before the earnings were handed over, Robert reimbursed the station for the funeral.

To say Robert was eccentric would be a gross understatement. While most radio stations threw away hundreds of unplayed and useless records each year, Robert would keep them and call them "inventory." When he finally sold the station, the buyer paid for

every one of these record flops. And Robert's dream of a television station lived on in his mind—and on the front of the building. Robert had gotten a permit to build WACO-TV, Channel 25, years ago, but he had never been able to spend the money. What he did do was to put up a giant sign that said WACO AM-FM-TV, Channel 25. Prospective vendors would see the sign and come into the building only to discover that there was no TV station after all. The sign came down only after another company got the license and put Channel 25 on the air.

Keeping WACO on the air was the job of chief engineer Dave Fricker. Dave was a nice guy, but not without his eccentricities. Dave's house, for example, was a castle that Dave had built himself. And if you remember the movie, *Honey, I Shrank the Kids*,—that's what Dave's house looked like inside. Dave was an inventor who held a patent on some type of switch, and his castle looked the part. Each bathroom had a TV set. In one room, there was a bank of dials and buttons hanging from the ceiling. The buttons were remote transmitter controls for a number of radio stations in Waco. And when Robert wanted something fixed or built at the station, he called on Dave. One day, Robert decided too many announcers were using the FM production room. So Robert had Dave build a glass wall where the door had been, and the door was moved to inside the control room. That made it harder to get to the production room, and Robert was pleased. Another time, he had Dave convert part of what was going to be the TV news studio into a break room.

Right behind that new break room was the engineering area where Dave worked and W.C. lived. The announcers had a one-person restroom with a loose door that was held shut by a metal hook. Someone had learned that if you gave the door a solid slap while someone was sitting on the pot, the resulting noise would sound like a cannon shot. We had all been victims of that trick at one time or another. One day, Bob Raleigh, who had joined the FM staff, saw the door shut and asked me who was inside. I told him it was Steve Cannon. Raleigh, who fancied himself as a martial arts expert, decided to slap the door with his foot. He made a bold karate move, kicked hard, missed the door, and fell

on his rear with a thud. Cannon, who had finished his business, exited the restroom and helped Bob to his feet.

The craziness never stopped, and Steve and I kept looking for ways to get out. A hearing was called in Washington, D.C. regarding the FM license we had applied for. We took a few days off and took a night flight to the nation's capital. We rode the Washington Flier from Dulles International under cover of darkness. We checked into the downtown Embassy Suites with two of our partners in Progressive Communications and began to plot strategy with our attorney, Dan Miller. At this time, there were several groups competing for the Temple FM license, including that of Bill Watts, my former boss at KNOW. Bill's wife testified, as did Mary McFaddin Pyle, whom we considered to be our major competitor. Steve and I both took the stand as well. As lawyers for each group tried to discredit each of the other groups, I began to realize how stupid the whole process was. The commission was going to base its licensing decision on such things as how many hours each of us would work at the new station; whether there would be minority or female ownership; and how much civic involvement we all had in the city of license. All these criteria forced some things on all of us. Watts dropped out of the picture and made his wife the head of his company to show female ownership. He also found a minority female in Temple and brought her into the company. Mary Pyle, who actually lived in Beaumont, maintained an apartment in Temple and got credit for being local. One of our partners had a full-time teaching job and had to pledge that he would also work full-time at the new station. We knew, our competitors knew, and the F.C.C. judge knew that each group had been structured specifically to earn points before the F.C.C. When the commission made its final comparative review, it would be these things that would decide. Reality was completely beside the point.

I thought our lawyer was the best. There was a great deal of damage done to some of the applicants, and soon after, only Progressive, Mary Pyle, and the Watts group were still in the competition.

Back in Waco, Steve and I faced the fact that the commission was going to take its time, so we began planning another escape route. We went to a bank, borrowed $5000, and spent it all on audio equipment. Then, we rented a small office and opened a radio commercial studio called "Production Plus." Since we were off work by noon, we were free to do our free-lancing in the afternoons. Production Plus was not exactly a cash cow, but we began to pick up clients, and soon, we were dabbling in television, and even newspaper advertising. But our day jobs at WACO and KHOO were still paying the bills.

One day, I was asked to help with a special project. Waco had survived a killer tornado back in 1953. On May 11, 1983, the station celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the disaster by presenting a long documentary with actual news tapes from the scene. Someone in Waco had recorded WACO's coverage and provided us with an amazingly clean copy of the tape. We edited the recording and wrote a script around it. I was amazed to hear about the ambulances that took the whites to the hospital while other ambulances came for the Negroes. Yes, we have come a long way.

Speaking of coming a long way, Cannon and I had to make the thirty-minute drive to Waco on Saturdays, too. And since there wasn't much to do on weekends (Lillian and Charlie Bob never showed up), we planned a big breakfast. Steve and I would bring a skillet, a waffle iron, and a portable range. The all-night FM jock, Tim Stephens, would make a trek to the grocery store and return with a dozen eggs, breakfast sausage, and waffle mix. Sometimes, we'd be joined by Rick May or Mike Wright. Milton, our maintenance man, was usually on hand. And, of course, W.C. got the scraps. We cooked this massive breakfast every weekend for weeks, and Robert never caught us. He would have killed us.

One weekend, on November 6, 1982, Rick May asked if I would like to stay in town and attend the Baylor-Arkansas football game. Rick had a press box pass, and I couldn't resist. Rick and I settled into our seats and proceeded to watch the Bears roll up some points on the highly favored Razorbacks. Rick kept telling me that Grant Teaff's Bears would find a way to blow it. They

didn't. Baylor pulled off the upset, and Rick and I went to the dressing rooms to get some interviews. Grant Teaff was ecstatic, but I remember Arkansas coach Lou Holtz sitting with his pipe, silently wondering what had gone wrong. Arkansas's star defensive end Billy Ray Smith talked about the game while trainers worked on a cut on his face. On our way back to the car, we noticed the Rev. Grady Nutt talking to some people under the stands. Nutt was a Baylor alumni, and a regular performer on the TV show "Hee Haw." I asked him if the game would provide any material for a "Hee Haw" anecdote. The following Monday, I ran cuts from all the interviews and then put the cassette away. Only a few days later, Grady Nutt was killed in the crash of a private plane. My interview, which surely must have been one of the last times Rev. Nutt was interviewed, is in the Baylor archives.

The only other interesting thing that happened on a weekend was the day that Rex Allen, Jr. showed up. Rex, son of the famous cowboy movie star, was trying to make it as a country singer. He was pretty good, too. He had done a song with a Western flavor called "Yippy Cry Yi." He hung around the station for a while, and we interviewed him and promoted his Waco concert. He was pretty amazed that all the records were on big reels of tape.

For Steve and me, the drive back home was every bit as long as that early morning journey to Waco. Sometimes, we'd get a little wacky while passing the time. One day, we were talking about all the zaniness at WACO, and we began to write a country song of our own:

"I spent a week down in Waco.
'Twas the longest day of my life.
By the banks of the Brazos I met my true love.
But then we ran into my wife.
I'll meet you in Marlin, my darlin'.
Where the clear call of love never fails.
We'll sail together those old Sulpher Springs,
And make love in those Mineral Wells."

CHAPTER 20

The Man They Could Not Hang

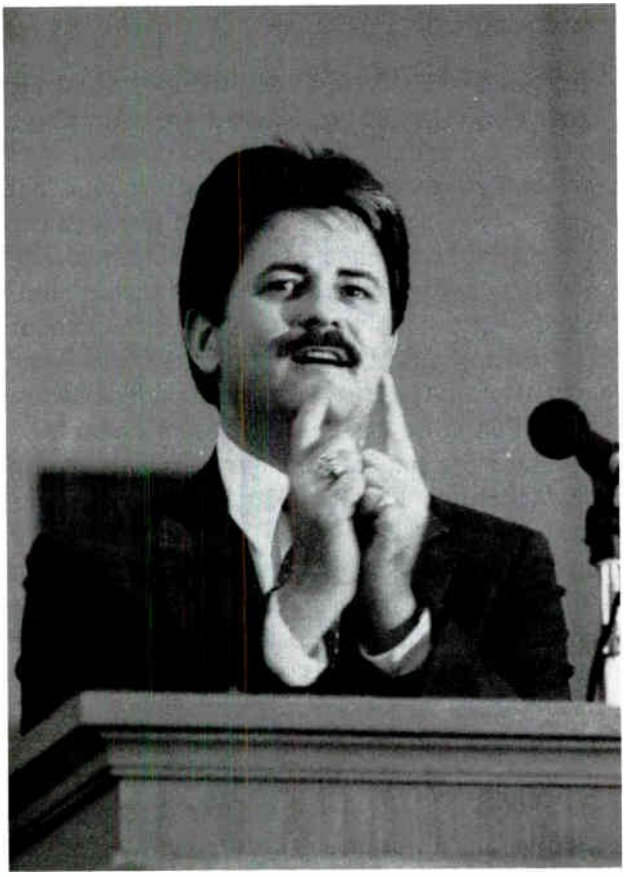
In 1982, not very many people in Waco thought that Vic Feazell should become district attorney. There were even fewer people who thought he had a chance of winning that office.

Felipe Reyna was not concerned about Feazell. Reyna had been the Waco D.A. for six years, and he saw Feazell—a young attorney barely out of Baylor Law School—as a minor threat. The murderers of three young people at Lake Waco earlier that summer were still at large, and probably not at all concerned about the race for district attorney. And the Powers That Be in Waco were paying little attention to the Feazell campaign. They were more than happy with Felipe Reyna. As for Steve Cannon and me—we were only looking for routines for our KHOO morning show. The race for McLennan County District Attorney was shaping up to be a natural.

As soon as we began to notice that Vic Feazell was taking on the Waco establishment, we got interested. Our morning show was built around irreverence to the city's political infrastructure, and Vic Feazell's campaign was presenting us with all the material we could use. Our characters began to talk about Feazell on a regular basis. After Vic defeated Reyna in a bitter primary, he took on a young lawyer named Paul Gartner in the general election. Gartner would become D.A. years later, through appointment, though he would ultimately fail to retain the office

by election. But for the time being, his presence in the media—especially television—was no match for that of Feazell. So Vic, as the new D.A., became a regular fixture on our show. We even created a fictional "D.A. Newsletter" that we quoted from on a regular basis. Feazell, out of self-defense, began to listen to the show, as did his wife, Berni, and his administrative assistant, John Ben Sutter, known to Charlie Bob fans as John Bob Ben Bob.

At first, the Feazell camp didn't know what to make of us. Most of official Waco had been pro-Reyna, and even though our comedy routines were never critical of Feazell, it took him a while to figure out which side we were on.



Vic Feazell in May 1985, speaking at commencement ceremonies at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, just prior to the indictment. Photo: UMHB.

John Ben Sutter works on the Lucas case. Photo: Attorney General's Office.

If the truth be known, Cannon and I had no idea how divided the "sides" were. And, there was a lot we didn't know about Vic Feazell:

Vic was young (34) and as hard headed as they come. No goal was too lofty and no threat was too severe to stop him from achieving what he felt to be right. Before he was 17, he had already graduated from Leander High School where a teacher had commented that his "biggest problem was keeping enough for Vic to do because he spent most of his time figuring out what the class could do to catch up to him."

His high school years also included working at a chicken farm. Politics was never uppermost in his mind in those days; in fact, he didn't seem to notice political races at all until Bobby Kennedy ran for President.

As for law enforcement, he enrolled in cadet training at the Austin Police Department in 1968, but that lasted only a year.

One of Vic's police friends told him he should go to college. His father, a Baptist minister, helped him enroll at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor at Belton, a Baptist campus that had once been the female branch of Baylor University. While at UMHB, Vic worked as a counselor in the Bell County Juvenile Probation Department, learned to preach, was ordained as a minister, and became pastor of a small church near Temple.

Vic once said that his experience at the Dyess Grove Baptist Church would later help him argue before juries because most of his congregations consisted of about twelve people. In the long term, it was the Probation Department, and not the church that shaped Vic Feazell's future.

The head of the Probation Department, and Feazell's boss, was Walter J. Minica. Minica's presence could be quite influential, as I once found out when I was hauled into his office following an after school fight. Minica minced no words with me, and I never got into trouble with his office again. In Feazell's case, Minica became something of a mentor, teaching him about local government politics. Vic decided to go to Baylor and seek a law degree.

Baylor was full up. But soon, Feazell was taken off the waiting list and admitted, though he had little money to pay for tuition. He lasted only two quarters.

Moving to Waco, Feazell went to work for the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center running a drug abuse treatment program. It was a major challenge for two reasons. First, Feazell had to resuscitate the program following a scandal over the deaths of two people who had been in the methadone treatment program for heroin addicts. Second, Feazell had been open about the fact that he had tried both marijuana and LSD while a teenager in Leander. Still, he was able to turn the program around.

Soon, Vic was back at Baylor Law School. He continued to work a reduced schedule at MHMR, served a stint as director of the Waco Taxpayers Association, went through a divorce, and ran an unsuccessful race for Waco City Council. Finally, he got the law degree.

Then, promising to be "the people's lawyer," Feazell mounted a no-nonsense campaign to become McLennan County D.A. Soon after taking office, he ran smack into two major cases: the Lake Waco triple murders, and the Henry Lee Lucas investigation. The first case made him famous; the second got him handcuffed and thrown in jail.

This is where Steve and I came in. We picked up on the Feazell campaign story knowing none of his background, and little about why the Powers That Be were so opposed to him. Part of it stemmed from a lawsuit that Feazell had helped try against a large Waco bank. Vic's client, an upholstery shop owner who claimed the bank had wrongfully foreclosed on his property, was awarded the largest jury settlement in McLennan County history. Another part of it stemmed from their comfort level with Reyna. Under Reyna's regime, defense attorneys in Waco had the run of the D.A.'s office. Under Feazell, security was tightened; defense lawyers could no longer come and go as they pleased in the D.A's office. A special combination security device was installed on Vic's personal entrance. The office became known as "Fort Feazell." The more enemies Feazell made among the Waco Elite, the more sympathetic our morning show routines became. I found myself with easy access to the D.A.'s office.

One day, I dropped by with my cassette recorder to see if any news was being made and found that Vic and John Ben Sutter were huddling behind closed doors in Vic's office. When they emerged, I had my recorder on and my microphone ready. "What's the big thing you and John Ben have been discussing that I couldn't get in the office for?" I asked.

Sutter was laughing in the background as Feazell chuckled and answered, "How to get out of interviews with Lynn Woolley." I took the tape back and used it several times on the morning show. It was fun, but before long, the situation turned deadly serious.

Every time Feazell tried to do his job, he seemed to step on toes. He had inherited the most infamous murder case in Waco's history, a case that had produced few clues and no indictments.

Feazell aimed to change that, but to do it, he would severely aggravate the Waco Police Department.

Oddly enough, it was a former Waco patrol sergeant who helped Feazell get the evidence he needed to take the case to court. Truman Simons, who later joined the Waco Sheriff's Department, was as hard headed as Feazell and refused to let the Lake Waco murder case drop.

I can still remember the day it happened. Steve Cannon and I drove to Waco as usual, arriving at WACO/KHOO about 5:30 a.m. But on the way in, we heard special reports about three bodies being found at Koehne Park at Lake Waco—three young people, severely abused and murdered. Merry MyCue from our staff had been covering the story and had reports for use on the morning newscasts. The bodies were later identified as Raylene Rice, Jill Montgomery, and Kenneth Franks. But clues were sparse, and when Vic Feazell took office, the case was inactive. It didn't stay that way for long.

The case had been suspended just fifty-one days after the bodies had been found. Failing a surprise confession by the murderer, it was beginning to look as if the case would never be solved. That wasn't good enough for Truman Simons. He called Waco Police Chief Larry Scott and asked permission to continue the investigation.

Scott, a lanky, serious-minded policeman with a fifties style crew cut, didn't even know the investigation was on hold. Partly to avoid embarrassment, and partly because of Truman Simons' record in solving tough cases, he agreed. Simons continued to work on the case even after he left the Police Department to become a Sheriff's Deputy.

When Vic Feazell took over the D.A.'s office, his thoughts turned to the Lake Waco case. He didn't really know what was going on in the investigation, but he knew that his predecessor had not taken the case to the grand jury. He was afraid that time was becoming a factor, and that if the case was to be solved, it would have to be sooner than later. He didn't know about Truman Simons. He assigned his assistant, Dennis Green, to keep tabs of the police investigation. If a break in the case was not

forthcoming, Feazell would not hesitate to involve the D.A.'s office directly. In the meantime, Feazell was getting ready to prosecute his first case—an aggravated sexual abuse case against 24-year-old David Wayne Spence. Little did he know that Spence was at the forefront of the investigation being conducted by Truman Simons.

As time passed, Simons approached Green to discuss jail conversations he had been having on a regular basis with Spence. The two did not hit it off, and eventually, Simons came to see Feazell. Simons told Feazell what he had and that he was having trouble working with Green. Feazell had already formed a working agreement with the Police Department; now, he would have to bring Simons into the loop.

Simons continued his jail investigations, questioning Spence's codefendant in the sexual abuse trial, Gilbert Melindez. Gilbert and his brother Anthony were companions of Spence's, and Simons suspected they were also at Koehne Park the night of the murders. After a time, he was able to get Melindez on tape, while Feazell listened in an adjacent room. The D.A.'s office had offered to cut Melindez some slack if he would talk. And talk he did. He told Simons and Chief Deputy Dan Weyenberg about going to the park with Spence and finding the three teenagers there. He explained for more than an hour about how Spence had sexually abused the girls and had tied them up and killed them, as well as the boy. He told about loading the bodies in the car and taking them to Speegleville Park (also on Lake Waco) to dump them.

Simons felt something was wrong with Gilbert's confession, and after a while he figured out what it was. Gilbert was protecting someone—possibly his younger brother, Tony. Anthony Melindez was eventually named as a suspect in the case.

The uneasy collaboration among Simons, Feazell, and the Waco Police continued. At one point, the Police Department tried to convince Simons to turn the case back over to them. He refused.

It became apparent that the case would eventually go to trial. Feazell decided to bring in a prosecutor from Amarillo named Ned Butler. Butler arrived in Waco in April of 1983 and, after completing one trial, took over the Lake Waco case. Butler immersed

himself in the case. He soon found out that Truman Simons was working on a theory that the killings were a murder-for-hire scheme, and that the wrong victim had been targeted. The killers, Simons thought, had been hired by Muneer Mohammad Deeb, a 24-year-old Jordanian national, to kill Gayle Kelly Reyes for insurance money, but they had mistakenly killed Miss Montgomery. Butler didn't know what to think about Simons' theory. He wanted to study the investigation reports a bit more and look at the crime scene photos.

I was in Vic's office one morning, and he offered to let me see those photos. I imagined they were pretty horrible, and I passed on the offer. Butler, however, wanted to go over them with a fine tooth comb. Butler was a very large man, light complected, and bearded—not exactly the picture of a typical investigator that you might see on a television series. Yet, it was he who spotted the major clue that had eluded everyone else who had studied the photos, including the best eyes on the Waco Police force. I can imagine Butler galloping to Feazell's office with the news: there were tiny bite marks on the bodies of the victims—bite marks that might very well incriminate, just as a fingerprint might. Butler sought and got permission to take the photos to an expert in Albuquerque with whom he had solved a case while in Amarillo. The expert, Dr. Homer Campbell, confirmed Butler's observations. It was time to take an impression of David Wayne Spence's teeth.

Butler met with Truman Simons for the first time soon after that. Simons told Butler what he had, but Butler did not provide information on his bite marks idea. The D.A.'s office was still not sure they could trust Simons. But after the impressions were sent to Albuquerque—and were found to match the bite marks in the crime scene photos—Butler and Simons began to hit it off.

Eventually, David Wayne Spence, Gilbert Melindez, Anthony Melindez, and Muneer Mohammad Deeb were indicted for the murders of the three teens. The case was assigned to Judge George Allen in Waco's 54th District Court. The case began with pretrial hearings in March and April of 1984. After Judge Allen turned down a flurry of motions to dismiss the charges, some

stranger motions were made. One motion contended that David Spence had "super-unfriendly hair" and should be allowed to shave and blow-dry his hair before court appearances.

I attended several of the pretrial hearings and took several pages of notes. Among the things I jotted down: Deeb had passed a polygraph test and because of that, was released by Waco Police. I began to file reports from the McLennan County Courthouse:

> Lead in: "Pretrial motion hearings are over for the week in the Lake Waco Triple Murder case. And Lynn Woolley says not much has changed."
>
> Story: "Judge George Allen rejected motions to move up the dates of trials for Anthony Melindez and Muneer Deeb. And, failing that, he also refused to lower Anthony's bond to a point at which the defendant could be freed pending trial. Just a couple of motions remain to be heard—one concerning the admissibility of bite marks on one of the victims. And another concerning the testimony of witnesses who have been hypnotized."

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During one of the hearings, I sat in the courtroom next to Vic Feazell. I wondered aloud to Feazell why Butler wasn't taking a certain tack in his questioning. Moments later, Butler began asking the questions exactly as I had suggested to Feazell. Vic asked me if I'd like to go to work as a prosecutor. The critique of Butler's courtroom style was to be my last. I didn't know it, but my days at WACO and KHOO were rapidly drawing to a close.

While Steve Cannon and I were including the D.A. in our routines, our boss, Robert Weathers and his lawyer, Tony Duty, were much more closely allied with the Powers That Be. Perhaps it was influence from the bank that Feazell had sued prior to becoming D.A. Or perhaps it was toes he had stepped on during the Triple Murder investigation. But for whatever reason, I was called into the WACO control room and instructed by Weathers to "get Vic Feazell." Weathers explained that the folks in Waco just didn't like Vic. I was told to take my recorder and interview people who would say negative things about Feazell. I was

somewhat shocked. Never in my radio career had any management official ever told me do go out and do a negative series of reports. The only thing that wasn't shocking was that the assignment came from Robert Weathers. I had a decision to make.

I made the only decision that I could. I would conduct a series of interviews as Robert had asked. But, I told myself, if they didn't produce dirt on Feazell—real, provable facts—I would not air them. I had no intention of interviewing just those people who were known to be enemies of Vic's. First, I went to see Dan Weyenberg at the Sheriff's Department. I asked him what he thought of Feazell and the job the D.A. was doing. Nothing Weyenberg told me was negative. So I went to see Betty Denton.

Betty was a Democratic State Representative, having followed in the footsteps of her husband, Lane, who had also held that position. I went to her office and asked if I could talk to her about Vic Feazell. While we talked, she noticed that a button had come loose on my shirt. She sewed it back on while I interviewed her. Again, nothing said was negative.

I didn't know if the two people I had talked to were solidly behind Feazell, or whether they were being good politicians. I did know, however, where to find some negative comments if I really wanted them. There had been a letter published in the *Waco Tribune Herald* that was extremely critical of Feazell. I had a copy of the letter and I took it to John Ben Sutter. It turned out that the writer of that letter had been the loser in a bitter lawsuit. Vic had represented the winning side. I was not going to give Robert his story from the mouth of a sore loser.

I had two alternatives. I could either mount a real investigative effort, contacting Vic's enemies and going through court records and files looking for something fishy in the D.A.'s office. Or I could tell Robert Weathers that I wasn't going to play ball. I decided to ignore Weathers, but I told WACO program director Rick May that I wasn't going to follow through. I told May that I didn't have time to conduct a thorough investigation, and my preliminary interviews had not produced negative results. I was hoping the whole matter would be forgotten.

As the Lake Waco trials were getting underway, Steve and I were met at the back door one morning by KHOO program director Dave Dusquene and fired without notice. Robert was in Austin at the time, and he had not told Dave why we were being fired. It was one of the happiest days of my life.

Cannon was a fisherman, and he suggested that we go to Lake Waco and wait for the sun to come up. Some three hours later, we were sitting in Vic Feazell's office explaining what had happened. Vic offered to help, but we had no desire to get even with Robert. We were both relieved that the daily trips to Waco were over. Later, John Ben sent me a copy of Alex Burton's new book as a going away present. Both men had written a message on the inside back cover:

"Perhaps reading Burton will help you clean up your act."
—John Bob Ben Bob

And from the D.A. himself:

"I still think you're out to get me."—Vic

As the D.A.'s office continued with the Lake Waco trials, Steve and I began to work at our agency back in Temple. We changed the name to "Cannon & Woolley" and began to pick up a few clients. At the time we were fired, we were handling the campaign of Denny Knight, a Temple cop who was running for sheriff of Bell County. It was a bitter campaign, and though we helped Knight make it into a runoff, he lost the election.

While Cannon and I were running our small agency and looking for full-time jobs, Vic Feazell and his office were attending to business in the Lake Waco trials. Spence was given two death sentences. Feazell personally handled the prosecution of Deeb, and he was sentenced to die as well. Each of the Melindez brothers was given a life sentence. (Ten years later, Deeb won a new trial. In January 1993, a Tarrant County jury deliberated more than ten hours before reversing the conviction.)

With the Lake Waco trials behind him Vic began to look at another celebrated case. Depending on which version of his confession you were reading, drifter Henry Lee Lucas had killed as many as 600 people. Law enforcement agencies from all over the

United States were stamping "case closed" on dozens of murder investigations, attributing them to Lucas.

Feazell thought otherwise. He had been in contact with *Dallas Times Herald* reporter Hugh Aynesworth, who had been following the Lucas confessions very carefully. Aynesworth had followed the Lucas case almost from the start—June 1983 when Lucas confessed to killing 80-year-old Kate Rich and blurted out, "and I got at least a hundred more out there." Lucas said that he and his homosexual sidekick Ottis Toole had formed a cult called "Hand of Death" that traveled the nation practicing murder and cannibalism. That got Lucas an appearance on "Good Morning America" and marked the beginning of yet another ritual: those massive case closings.

Aynesworth's investigation turned up evidence that Lucas was not anywhere near most of the murder scenes. To clear seven of the cases attributed to Lucas, Aynesworth calculated he would have had to travel more than 11,000 miles in one month. And Lucas was driving a thirteen-year-old Ford wagon. What dawned

With Henry Lee Lucas during the Lucas grand jury in Spring 1985. Photo: Attorney General's Office.

on Aynesworth had not yet penetrated the skulls of those intrepid lawmen who were solving murder cases left and right. Lucas was their man, and he was making them heroes—each and every one.

It seemed that Aynesworth's deduction made sense to only one law enforcement officer—Vic Feazell. Feazell was ticked off that a Lucas confession had resulted in the release of two murder suspects in McLennan County that Feazell still thought were guilty. And so, because of that and the Aynesworth tip, he decided to mount an official investigation. Now, he was stepping on some really big toes.

When Feazell convened a grand jury in Waco to investigate Lucas, it was the fabled Texas Rangers whose reputations were on the line. Feazell had contacted Ron Boyter of the Texas Department of Public Safety in December of 1984 to say that he doubted the Lucas confessions to the McLennan County murders. The DPS listened but did not take any action. That may have been because the Texas Rangers, an arm of the DPS, was at that time, busy clearing hundreds of cases. And, adding to the legend of the

Vic and Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox meet the press in Waco regarding the Lucas affair. Photo: Attorney General's Office.

Rangers. It seemed that this young D.A. in Waco was out to tarnish that legend. Boyter alerted his superiors that Vic Feazell might spell trouble.

In January of 1985, Feazell discussed the case with Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox. Mattox had obtained information suggesting the possibility that various law enforcement agencies had given Lucas details of various murders—possibly to make it easier for Lucas to confess. In April, Feazell got a bench warrant to bring Lucas to Waco to begin the investigation. This did not sit well with Sheriff Jim Boutwell of Williamson County nor Texas Ranger Bob Prince.

Boutwell was the center of attention in the Lucas confession circus since he was keeping the suspect under lock and key in the Williamson County jail in Georgetown. Prince was head of the Ranger task force that was traveling twenty-six states helping law enforcement agencies chalk up those confessions. As Lucas was moved to Waco, the *Dallas Times Herald* came out with its report that Lucas could not possibly have been in all the locations he claimed.

Lucas changed his story. Once in Waco, he told the grand jury that he not only hadn't committed the murders, but that he had been furnished police case files to help him with the confessions.

The toes of the Texas Rangers had been more than just stepped on; they had been stomped flat. Prince called the Waco investigation "an attack on law enforcement around the country," and Boutwell went to Waco to try to convince Lucas to revert to his original story. He didn't, and "solved" murder cases began to reopen all over the country.

Col. Jim Adams, a former FBI man who headed up the DPS, was seething. He met with reporters to defend the task force. At the news conference, he mentioned some evidence connecting Lucas to one of the murders, but the evidence turned out to be flimsy. Stymied by the facts, Adams used other means at his disposal to convince Feazell that in Texas, you don't mess with the DPS.

An investigation of Vic Feazell was ordered—ostensibly by Col. Adams himself. DPS officers showed up in Waco to interview

some of Vic Feazell's assistants. The alleged charge: Feazell might be taking bribes from local attorneys in return for dismissing cases of driving while intoxicated.

Feazell had no problem standing on his record. He had, in fact, one of the state's highest DWI conviction rates—better than Dallas County and certainly better than Williamson County. But the DPS may have already been working with the Waco Police Department, whose toes were also stomped flat by Feazell.

I think it may have been a first when I was asked to "get Vic Feazell." But it was by no means the last time those words were mouthed. Vic was told that Waco City Manager David Smith had instructed Police Chief Scott to "find something" on Vic. Both Smith and Scott said that never happened. Another person who wanted to "get Vic" was radio station owner Tom Pauken. Ironically, I'm the reason he was in Waco.

A few months before Cannon and I were fired, I received a phone call from Pauken. He explained that he was interested in buying and operating an all-news radio station in Austin. He had gotten my name from someone at KRLD, and he was interested in having me run the news operation. I was intrigued and agreed to go to Austin with him to take a look at the property.

Pauken had an interesting background. He had been defeated twice by Jim Mattox in congressional races and had been taken in by the Reagan Administration to head up ACTION, a federal agency that directs the domestic volunteer programs of the United States government. Now, he wanted to leave government and get into radio. He had found a property for sale in Austin and was anxious to buy it.

Tom picked me up at my home in Temple, and we drove to Austin together. He had explained that the station, KTXZ-AM, was owned by advertising man Neal Spelce (now an anchor at KTBC-TV) and wasn't doing well in the ratings. We met Spelce at his downtown office and drove to the station in the Austin suburb of Westlake. After looking around, we drove to the landfill where the towers were located. Spelce explained that the station's towers had to be put at a certain location to meet FCC specifications, and they ended up being erected on this landfill. Because

of that, the land was unstable, and the ground shifted from time to time. The station's ground system was exposed at several points and needed to be relaid.

By the time we arrived back at Spelce's office, I had decided the station could not compete with the major mainstream stations in Austin. Not only were the facilities lacking, but the frequency was way up on the right side of the dial, not providing for a lot of signal coverage. I was more intrigued with Spelce's ad agency, and I asked him several questions about it.

The following week, I discussed the situation with Frank Proctor, a friend at Drake-Chenault in Los Angeles. We looked at KTXZ's ratings and those of the other AM stations in Austin, including Lady Bird Johnson's all-news outfit KLBJ-AM. We concluded that KLBJ's years of service to Austin, its excellent signal coverage, and Lady Bird's bank account could not be overcome by KTXZ. I relayed this in a letter to Pauken. He was furious.

He accused me of welshing on an agreement to move to Austin to work at KTXZ and of being more interested in Spelce's agency than in the station. To the latter charge, I plead guilty. To the former, I am innocent. Once I had seen KTXZ, I realized that Pauken would be throwing away his money. I felt I was doing him a tremendous favor by talking him out of the deal.

I wrote Tom and suggested that he look into a small AM station in Waco, KRZI, that I knew was for sale. He might not succeed in Waco, but at least he wouldn't have as far to fall. I felt he could buy KRZI for a lot less than he could get the Austin station, and he could hire cheaper talent. There was no all-news competition in Waco, either. So Pauken bought KRZI. He did not offer me a position.

What he did do was to editorialize passionately against Feazell. Berni Feazell began to call me on a regular basis to keep me informed as to how often the attacks were coming and how Vic was responding.

Then, in June 1985, Dallas' WFAA-TV, Channel 8, got into the act. Reporter Charles Duncan aired the first in a series of reports questioning Feazell's handling of the DWI cases. "Getting Vic

Feazell" seemed to be the in thing, and everyone wanted a piece of the action. Duncan reported that he had learned of an FBI investigation into Feazell and about six defense attorneys in Waco and how they handled DWI cases. According to Duncan, the investigation centered on reports that certain lawyers were charging $3000 to get their defendants off the hook—about $2400 more than the usual price. Where was the extra money going? The obvious insinuation was that Feazell was on the take.

Vic called it a smear campaign. He had once told me that he liked to use the phrase "hurt and angry" when responding to criticism by other elected officials and the media. But at this point, Vic wasn't trying to look like a victim; he was mad. "Duncan is doing the dirty work for some of the big boys in Austin," he said.

So where was Duncan getting his information? One source may have been a disgruntled former employee of the D.A.'s office. Another source—without any doubt—had to be the Waco Police Department. They opened their files to WFAA-TV, even as they turned away local news people. As for the FBI's involvement, Feazell thought the Agency might have been approached by Duncan in the first place.

Things had gotten so bad by July of 1985, that Feazell was quoted by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* as saying he feared he might be murdered. The Waco Police, DPS, FBI, and the Texas Rangers all had sore toes, and to say they were ganging up on the young Waco D.A. would be a gross understatement. Besides that, the bashing continued on KRZI and Channel 8.

In mid-July, Assistant United States Attorney Jan Patterson convened a federal grand jury in Austin to seek indictments against Feazell on allegations of corruption and racketeering. The law enforcement sources who revealed that information asked the *Star-Telegram* not to print their names. Obviously hurt and angry, Feazell called the grand jury probe a "witch hunt" prompted by the DPS and Col. Adams.

Feazell revealed that in past months he had been followed, and his phone had been tapped. For his part, Col. Adams was still refusing to confirm that the DPS was in on the investigation. WFAA-TV, still bashing, offered equal time.

I first heard about it from Berni Feazell. She called me at my office in Temple to tell me that Vic was going to answer Channel 8. In late August, he traveled to Dallas, saying he wanted to frame his answer from the same studio that had generated the criticism. Actually, it was not a reply to Charles Duncan's reports, but rather to a station editorial by anchorman Tracy Rowlett. Rowlett, in delivering an official editorial praising the ten reports Duncan had done, made it possible for Feazell to claim the equal time.

Feazell was smooth and confident as he stared into the camera and delivered his lines. He answered Rowlett's editorial forcefully, citing his high conviction rate for DWI cases and his work in the Lake Waco murders. "Why didn't Channel 8 tell you the rest of the story?" he asked. "I don't know. I do know that when we exposed the fact that Henry Lee Lucas couldn't possibly have killed 600 people, a lot of powerful people got embarrassed. Then they got mad." Rowlett had mentioned that Feazell had refused to go on camera with Duncan, but had called Duncan a "sissy." Feazell answered that and then mentioned a new series of bumper stickers being circulated in Waco. He said you get honked at a lot when you put them on your car.

"Honk If You Hate Channel 8" stickers were getting popular. So were stickers saying "Go Get 'Em, Vic." If the Waco Police, DPS, FBI, Texas Rangers, KRZI, and Channel 8 were out to get Vic, the people of Waco were not. He made a decision to run for re-election.

The Dallas city magazine *D* decided to run a major article on Feazell in its October 1985 issue. Writer Carlton Stowers called the article "War In Waco" and was highly critical of Duncan's reports. Stowers proceeded to shoot holes in many of Duncan's reports. Duncan was quoted as saying "I'm not interested in talking about a story that will appear in *D Magazine* on something that is taking place in Waco." Later, Duncan accused Stowers of being "desperate to sell his book." (Stowers had been writing a book on the Lake Waco murders.)

Stowers went on to say that it seemed odd that a reporter from 100 miles away would be the one to "spot the rats in Waco." Why,

Stowers asked, didn't some reporter from the Waco paper or one of the three television stations instigate the reports? Why did City Manager Smith and Police Chief Scott talk only to Charles Duncan?

This was a question that had occurred to me as well, and I asked Vic about it at a meeting of the Bell County Communications Professionals Association. I had asked Vic to speak to that organization of media people in Temple, and he accommodated the group with a rousing speech about the whole ordeal. He even commented that Temple's Holiday Inn, where we were meeting, was just blocks from the main thoroughfare into town—Adams Avenue.

I suspect that the answer to the question lies in the fact that Channel 8 had the time, the talent, and the money to mount an investigation. Waco reporters, myself included, were usually required to turn in one or more stories every day. Charles Duncan, however, had the deep pockets of the Belo Broadcasting Corp. behind him. He could spend all the time he wanted interviewing and probing. Besides, the Powers That Be may have felt more comfortable talking to an outsider.

Speaking of Belo Broadcasting and deep pockets, the D.A. was, by this time, considering filing a libel suit against Channel 8. Rumors were that Vic was going to ask for $5 million in damages for each report aired. He said there might be more reports, so he would "keep the meter running."

The whole story surrounding Feazell seemed to be taking on a life of its own. KERA-TV, the public station in Dallas, convened a media panel on the evening of October 27, 1985 to discuss the media's role in the story. Even CBS was interested. The network had sent Harry Reasoner to Waco to do a piece on Feazell for "60 Minutes." Dallas' CBS affiliate, KDFW-TV, had also begun a series of reports. August rolled around, and Col. Adams was still refusing to confirm that the DPS was participating in the investigation.

In November, Jan Patterson took custody of a 21-year-old burglary suspect named Clyde Kelly, Jr. In media interviews, Feazell said he suspected that Patterson was going to try to

convince the Austin grand jury that Kelly burglarized the offices of some Waco lawyers—on orders from Feazell. Police Chief Scott refused to answer questions about the allegations.

While Patterson was investigating Kelly, police in eighteen states had reopened murder cases once cleared by the Lucas confessions. Feazell called it a "domino effect" and predicted the case reopenings would continue. He wrote a letter to the United States Justice Department asking for a full investigation of the Lucas affair. In the letter, he claimed his civil rights had been violated by Jan Patterson, Col. Adams, DPS investigator Ron Boyter, and Chief Scott. Col. Adams called the request "silliness."

Harry Reasoner put a wrap on his "60 Minutes" story in December, and it ran coast to coast on the 29th. John Ben Sutter issued a long press release detailing the contents of the program, which was largely pro-Feazell. The release ended by quoting from Reasoner's interviews of a hurt and angry Feazell:

> Asked by Reasoner if the experience of being investigated for exposing the Lucas fraud made him want to quit, Feazell said, "Even if I'd thought about not running for re-election, now I've got to. My back's to the wall and the only way I can get out is to fight my way out."
>
> "You know," Feazell said, "the Rangers have a saying, 'You can't stop a man in the right if he keeps on a comin'.' Well, they're up against one now."

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With the election nearing, the authorities stepped up their effort to return indictments against Feazell. The Internal Revenue Service entered the case and reportedly told several lawyers they might have "tax problems" if they did not come forth with information about bribes. Criminal defense lawyer Whitney Fanning told the *Dallas Times Herald* that he had been offered immunity from prosecution by Jan Patterson if he would provide incriminating testimony. Fanning, who felt the Feds were bluffing, replied that he had nothing to tell.

Time was growing short. A host of Waco lawyers had been interrogated, the Clyde Kelly affair had bombed, the IRS had

investigated possible tax violations, and after a year and a half of serious investigating, there was still no basis for indictments. The Austin grand jury investigation had failed. Did the Feds give up? No way.

On the Friday before the election, Patterson called a grand jury into session in Waco and began to subpoena people. Even John Ben Sutter, who was running for county judge, was called to testify—or perhaps to be indicted. The news media was told it might get shots of Sutter in chains. But John Ben was out campaigning, and DPS agent Boyter couldn't find him. Later, Sutter tried to turn himself in, but by that time, Patterson was no longer interested. Feazell had no problem winning the primary.

Patterson finally managed to get indictments out of that Waco grand jury—even though it had heard no live witnesses. Only the word of lawyers Don Hall and Dick Kettler did the damage. The two were former law partners of Feazell's. They admitted they had tax problems and were involved in plea-bargains with the U.S. Attorney's office. Now it was Feazell himself who would be videotaped in chains.

On September 17, six weeks before the general election, Feazell was arrested and handcuffed as he arrived for work. There were TV crews everywhere. The video shot of Vic being led away in 'cuffs became a famous image in Waco, Texas.

The trial was moved to Austin on a change of venue. The government paraded sixty-five witnesses before the jury. But following just six hours of deliberations, Feazell was found not guilty. On July 7, 1987, the *Dallas Times Herald* called for a full investigation of all the agencies that had probed Feazell.

The Bell County Communications Club was getting ready for its annual awards banquet, and I asked Tracy Rowlett to be the keynote speaker. He arrived in town early enough to have lunch at the Stagecoach Inn in Salado. We discussed the affair only in general terms, both expressing amazement that the story had grown so large.

Since then, Feazell has filed—and won—his libel suit against Channel 8, settling for something over $10 million dollars. He and

Berni have moved into an 8,000-square-foot home in Austin. He works only when he feels like it. There is talk of a major movie.

Col. Adams, who still says there was no retaliatory investigation, has retired. Jan Patterson was transferred out of her position even before the trial. Ron Boyter was transferred and is no longer in Waco. John Ben Sutter is attending law school. Practically all of the murder charges against Lucas have been dropped.

State Representative Betty Denton, who sewed my button and supported Feazell, is the subject of a campaign fraud investigation being mounted by Travis County D.A. Ronnie Earle. Her attorney, Vic Feazell, is working at no charge.

CHAPTER 21

The Morning Stretch

By the time we left Waco, I had learned that my mother had cancer. She was determined to beat the disease, and I was glad that losing my job was making it possible for me to be with her more often. The only problem was, I didn't have an income.

Steve Cannon and I were still operating our small advertising agency, but there wasn't much money there. We decided to head for the Texas Employment Commission and file for unemployment benefits. Before the unemployment started, we had to make one last trip to Waco to pick up our final paychecks from WACO/KHOO.

We arrived in Waco at midmorning instead of the usual five a.m. Several of our former coworkers said hello, and we got our checks. We decided to say good-bye to Robert Weathers.

Robert was on the phone. His back was turned to the door, and he was crouched over, obviously in high conference with someone on the other end of the line. We walked up to the front of the desk, not making any noise on the thick carpet, and waited for Robert to finish his call. When he did, he hung up the phone, turned around and saw us, and almost jumped out of his seat. He jumped again when we extended our hands. We thanked him for the two years of work he had given us, and then we left.

For the next few weeks, we got by with the small income from the agency and the unemployment benefits. Then Steve heard a rumor that KTON was being sold. We decided to contact the new owner.

Ken Williams was a smart operator. He had a history of buying radio stations that had no ratings and turning them into winners. Ken's biggest triumph had been taking KLEN, an AM-FM combo in Killeen, upgrading the FM to 100,000 watts, and selling the stations for a huge profit.

Ken had tossed out the KLEN call letters and renamed the station KIXS. He had brought in outstanding air talent and had programed the station to target the 50,000 soldiers at Fort Hood, the largest military post in the free world. He knew full well that KTON, a low powered FM located between Temple and Killeen, would have to go up against the KIXS monster that he had created.

Ken knew what Cannon and I had done on the morning show at FM100 in Waco, and he felt that a crazy morning show might be the way to attack KIXS. As an entrepreneur himself, he wasn't at all concerned about our efforts to obtain our own frequency in the market. So we made him an offer he couldn't refuse: we'd do the morning show as a team at reduced salaries—if we could be off by 10 o'clock to work at our agency.

Ken was bringing in his old sales manager from KIXS, Rick Archer, to run the sales department of the new property, and we all met at the house Rick was renting to discuss strategy. The first thing needed was a set of call letters. We had heard that Tom Pauken might not keep the KRZI letters in Waco. So we tried to get Pauken at his Washington home, but he was on his way to an Orioles game in Baltimore. Ken finally decided to change KTON to KTQN and call the station Q-106. Within a few weeks, the rest of the staff had been hired, and we were ready to change KTON from country to the contemporary hits of Q-106.

The first morning began with Gaylon Christie of KOOV in Copperas Cove barricading himself in the control room and refusing to come out. Christie had been the driving force behind KTON in the station's early days when it was the top rated station in the market. Now, he was playing the last few country records that would be aired on KTON and protesting the new ownership and format. It was all a put-on. Ken had hired a deputy to break into the control room and lead Christie out in handcuffs while the TV

cameras rolled. Then, Steve and I entered the control room to do the first Cannon & Woolley Show on the all new Q-106.

Charlie Bob made the trip from Waco with us, but Steve had decided that Miss Lillian would be retired. To replace her, we invented a bodyguard character named Huge Pipeline. (Huge rhymes with Doogie. Pipeline is pronounced Pep-uh-leen-ee.) The name came from an Aggie joke that weatherman Bill Hecke had told us. The voice, very deep and breathy, came from the fact that Steve had a bad cold. Huge was originally from New Jersey and had been stationed for a time at Fort Hood. He had entered the bodyguard business at Copperas Cove, a small town on the other side of Killeen. During the morning show, he worked part-time guarding what he referred to as "the alleged bodies of Cannon & Woolley."

Charlie Bob and Huge went on the air with us every morning, but we also had a large cast of new characters that were talked about, but who never showed up in person. The first was Cleve Pastriani, an old friend of Huge's from New Jersey. Cleve was a developer and had a huge subdivision in Jersey that he had named after himself—Cleavage Estates. Along those same lines was Charlie Bob's real estate agent, Honest Ernest Ennis, who wouldn't sell property unless you put up some "Ernest money." And there was Huge's tailor, Jimmy "The Stitch" Lapel, whose shop may have been a front for who-knows-what.

Charlie Bob still had his girl Mavis, but he never talked about his family. Huge, on the other hand, had a rather large family, and we introduced them in a routine that was a parody of the old "Claude Clifford" bit that Johnny Carson did with Jack Webb:

Lynn: Huge, you look a little pooped this morning.
Huge: I'm pooped, but proud.
Lynn: Why's that?
Huge: Well, we gave my wife a birthday party.
Lynn: A party? No wonder you're pooped. By the way, what's your wife's name?
Huge: Penelope.
Lynn: Penelope?
Huge: Yes, Mr. Woolley, Penelope Pipeline.

Lynn: Where'd you have the party?
Huge: Pelican's.
Lynn: Pelican's?
Huge: Yes, I'm pooped but proud from the party for Penelope Pipeline at Pelican's.
Lynn: I can understand that, Huge. Uh, what did you give Penelope?
Huge: Pearls. You might say the pearls of Penelope.
Lynn: Who else was there?
Huge: My daughter, Puberty Pipeline. And Penelope's sister, Pauline.
Lynn: And what did Puberty give Penelope?
Huge: Pajamas.
Lynn: Pajamas? And Pauline? What'd she give Penelope?
Huge: Pantyhose.
Lynn: Let me see if I got this. You're pooped but proud from a party for Penelope Pipeline at Pelican's and you gave her pearls but Puberty gave pajamas and Pauline gave Penelope pantyhose.
Huge: Yeah, right after we finished the prime rib.
Lynn: By the way, Huge, you never told me where you and Penelope first met.
Huge: Are you ready for dis, Mr. Woolley? In Pendleton.
Lynn: It figures.

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Huge also had a dog that he discussed quite often. Huge called the dog "Herpes" because he wouldn't heel.

Since I wasn't doing any news reporting at all, we had more time to devote to writing comedy than we had in Waco, and we introduced several new routines. One was called "The Morning Stretch." We taped several Q-106 announcers—including the women—stretching and yawning. At seven a.m., we'd invite the listeners to stretch with us, and Cannon and I would begin to stretch, making all the accompanying noises. Then, we'd punch a tape cart or two and build up to a loud chorus of ooh's and aah's. We always warned anyone driving to not stretch with his foot on the accelerator pedal. After a minute or so, the stretch would end

and we'd be back to music. There was a segment of the audience who thought the stretch was a bit suggestive, and we were always getting phone calls.

Another continuing routine had Charlie Bob taking "Logic 101" at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. The school was real enough, but the class was bogus. Even so, UMHB would occasionally have someone try to sign up. Charlie Bob was always bringing his "pop tests" back to the station to try them out on us. Charlie Bob *always* scored 100, but we could rarely "logic out" the answers. One such test involved cities:

What's the most bashful city in America? Cheyenne.

What Texas town gets the best TV reception? Plainview.

What city near Dallas was named after Berlin? Irving.

On another occasion, the logic question asked what high school football team was going to win a playoff game. Charlie Bob taught us how to build a "logic chain."

"Now, the Conroe team has a long way to go to get here," he began. "So they'll ride in busses. That means they'll have to drive through Brenham. There's a McDonald's in Brenham. Bus drivers eat free at McDonald's. So the busses will all stop at McDonald's. All the players will have a Big Mac. For dessert, they will each have an apple pie. And so they will lose the football game."

"Charlie Bob, that's all very logical," we admitted. "But what does McDonald's have to do with football?"

"Everyone knows the team with the most turnovers will lose."

It was the type of humor that real announcers—like us—could have never pulled off. But having a character do it gave it a certain kind of charm. Charlie Bob became more popular in the Killeen-Temple market than he had been in Waco, and when our first Arbitron ratings book came out, Q-106 was a solid Number One, beating KIXS quite handily. We had a swimming pool party to celebrate.

Charlie Bob was still doing the weather when winter arrived, and the mercury dipped. One morning, it was down to 16 degrees when we arrived at the station. Shortly after six, Charlie Bob climbed the weather tower and reported that he couldn't take a

reading. "It's so gol-danged cold up there that the thermometer froze." he told us. He then proceeded to go buy a new thermometer. A short time later, he was back up on the weather tower with the new thermometer, and ready to report the temperature.

"High atop the Q-106 weather tower," he intoned, "it's ninety eight point six degrees."

"Wait a minute, Charlie Bob," I said. It was 16 degrees when we arrived this morning. It *can't* be ninety eight point six." So Charlie Bob climbed the tower again.

After a couple of records had been played, he was ready with the new reading: "Ninety eight point six degrees."

In frustration, I finally asked, "Charlie Bob, just what kind of thermometer did you go get?"

"The only one I could find," he answered, "was this here rectal thermometer." (A sound effect went "Ooooh.")

"How are you taking the reading?" I went on.

"Boys, I'm just following the directions on the box."

At the peak of Charlie Bob's popularity, the local ABC affiliate, KXXV-TV decided to do a feature on the Cannon & Woolley show. So they sent a reporter to interview us. The first thing he did was tape segments of the final hour of the show. That morning, we were doing a trivia contest called "stump Cannon & Woolley." It was just the opposite of what most radio shows did. We invited the listeners to ask us a trivia question. If they stumped us, they won.

The TV station ran segments of the trivia contest and then had an on-camera interview with Charlie Bob. Since Charlie Bob was never seen, we had to figure out a way to have him appear—yet, not actually show him. A friend of ours by the name of Cuzzin' Homer Page provided the answer. Homer was the person we knew who was most like Charlie Bob. He even sounded like Charlie Bob. So he played the part for the TV interview with the camera pointed squarely at his feet. "It must be hard to climb the weather tower all the time," said the interviewer. "It's muh job," said Cuzzin' Homer.

The feature ended with a sit-down interview with Steve Cannon and me. Trying to be serious, the reporter asked us if the

toughest thing about a morning show was keeping the ratings high. "No," we answered. "The hardest part is convincing the listeners to bring us doughnuts."

That answer really wasn't true. Cannon and I were neither one a big fan of doughnuts. But it was a running bit with Charlie Bob and Huge, and it was a rare morning that some loyal listener didn't show up with doughnuts.

Since we were off work early, Steve and I didn't get as involved with station activities as most morning announcers do. I did a season of play-by-play of the Killeen High football team with Dave Robbins and Rick Archer. And on one occasion, Steve agreed to participate in a wrestling promotion at the Bell County Expo Center.

Steve was going to emcee the event, and to prepare for it, the station asked him to take a wrestler to lunch. The restaurant Steve chose was Cuzzin' Homer's Bar Be Que, owned by the very same Cuzzin' Homer who had portrayed Charlie Bob on TV. In his own way, Homer was every bit as much of a character as Charlie Bob. He weighed somewhere in the neighborhood of 300 pounds, he was a champion barbecue cook, and his chief goal in life was to own a tilt-a-whirl. Homer was also a master storyteller, and he was in good form the day we showed up with Eric Embry.

Eric was a big, macho wrestler, and he was a really nice guy. We ordered and proceeded to discuss the upcoming promotion. Eventually, Homer joined us at our table. As the conversation unfolded, Homer mentioned that he had a pet tarantula, and would Eric like to see it? I knew something was up, and so did Cannon, but Eric was unsuspecting.

Soon, Homer reappeared with a small box that had a hinged top and two tiny screened windows. "He's in there," Homer told us. "But he likes to get in that back part, behind the partition, and hide." Homer shook the box, but the spider wouldn't come out. "He's real stubborn," said Homer. "But sometimes, I can smoke him out." Homer proceeded to blow smoke into one of the tiny windows. Eric was straining his eyes to try to glimpse the creature. Nothing happened.

Homer kept trying. "I think he's starting to come out," he said, and he gave the box another shake. Eric's eyes were glued to the little window. "Here he comes," shouted Homer as he tripped a spring under the box with his finger.

All of a sudden, the top of the box sprang open and a large, black, plastic tarantula jumped out and almost hit Eric in the face. Startled, he fell over backward in his chair and lay sprawled on the floor with the fake spider resting on his stomach. Steve and I asked him if he was all right.

"I've been got," he said. "But I've never been got that good."

On another occasion, we were told that we'd be doing the entire morning show from the showroom of a Killeen car dealer, Mike Kilpatrick Pontiac-Buick. We had to figure out something to do about Charlie Bob and Huge since they never appeared in public.

I scripted the full three hours of the show, putting down on paper every word that Charlie Bob and Huge would say. Then, Steve and I taped the voices and put all the routines on a cassette. When the announcer at the station played the cassette, it sounded as if the characters were holding things together at the station while we were doing the remote broadcast. Naturally, Charlie Bob and Huge had a blast being in control. Here's how we began the show:

Charlie Bob: Well, now, welcome to the Bounceacheck & Pipeline Show, right here on Q-106.

Huge: That's right, Charlie Bob. And dis morning, I, Huge Pipeline, am guarding the alleged bodies of myself, I, Huge Pipeline, and Charlie Bob, whilst Cannon & Woolley are over at Mike Carpatrick Pontiac-Buick.

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The reference to "Mike Carpatrick" was a usual thing for the characters. They would routinely refer to any sponsor by the wrong name. Foxworth-Galbraith Building Materials became Foxbreath-Galworth, for example, and half the people in town thought that was the store's real name. An antique shop named Mrs. Robinson's Neighborhood became Mrs. Neiborson's

Robinhood. The name bobbles caused quite a bit of extra publicity for the sponsors and not one ever complained.

The rest of the broadcast day was tame compared to what we did in the morning. We worked under two program directors, Bob McKenzie and Ken Richards, who thankfully stayed out of our way. Consultant Lee Randall, whom we had worked with at FM100, liked to keep a tight reign on the station and the music. Randall was always screaming at us to keep our routines shorter. On the other hand, Steve and I felt that it wasn't the music that had made the morning show number one; it was Charlie Bob and Huge. And if their comedy bits were too long, you couldn't tell it from the listening audience.

One morning, we put together a routine that began as we opened the show at six a.m. and lasted until we went off at nine. We invented a story about a backup in the sewer system and explained that water was getting into the station. Steve and I couldn't do anything about the problem because we were on the air, so Charlie Bob and Huge were going to have to fix it. As the morning progressed, the problem got worse. Soon, we had water a foot deep in the control room. (It's amazing what you can do with sound effects.) Charlie Bob and Huge decided that the only way to get rid of the water would be to ream out the sewer lines out behind the station.

"I'm going over to K-Mart to get a sewer snake," Huge said to Charlie Bob.

"What are you gonna do with a gol-danged snake?" Charlie Bob asked.

"That's simple, Charlie Bob. I'm gonna cram it up the sewer."

"But, Huge. You can't do that. It might come out in the men's room."

Charlie Bob was all right after we explained that a sewer snake was not really a snake. Soon, Huge was back from the store and ready to ream out the sewer. As the show ended, Cannon and I announced to the listening audience that the water level was receding. Charlie Bob came in to tell us the good news.

"Huge says he's broke it loose, boys. The water'll soon be out of the building."

"What was clogging up the sewer?" we asked.

"Well, I'm not entirely sure," replied Charlie Bob. "Huge pulled out something—he said it was some kind of housing project."

"Housing project? In a sewer? Charlie Bob, tell us exactly what Huge said," we demanded. And then came the punch line that we had taken the whole morning to set up:

"He said somebody flushed a whole mess of condominiums in there."

It was a typical morning show bit with lots of funny punch lines and sound effects. But in real life, I was not laughing very much. On the morning of May 12, 1986, my father died of a massive heart attack. My mother, who was losing her battle with cancer, lasted less than three months. On August 2, she went to join my father.

I had trouble being funny after that. In September, I had a talk with Steve and then turned in my resignation.

CHAPTER 22

Small Wonders

I was still working on the Q-106 morning show in November of 1985 when I received a curious telephone call from Neil Haney. From the conversation, it was obvious that he wanted me to do something, but he didn't want to talk about it on the phone. He asked if we could get together for lunch.

Neil was married to former KPLE announcer Marsha Haney and was Director of Development at Scott & White Hospital. That meant he looked for special opportunities to raise money for the giant medical facility—often through estate planning or major donations. But Scott & White was one of the institutions that put Temple on the map: a medical facility seven stories tall and two blocks long with thousands of employees and hundreds of thousands of patients from all over North America. I was pretty sure that my will was not on Neil's mind. So what was?

I talked to both Steve Cannon and Jodie about it. "I don't know what it is, but the answer is going to be 'no'." I said. I thought very highly of Neil and agreed to have lunch at the hospital on November 14.

Lunch was served in a private dining room. Neil introduced me to a new person in his office—Judy Heartfield—and the three of us made small talk while the meal was served. I had my guard up. A private lunch in the Doctors' Dining Room gave me the distinct impression that whatever they were going to ask was not going to be easy.

About midway through the meal, Neil looked me straight in the eye and said, "Lynn, have you ever heard of the Children's Miracle Network Telethon?"

I admitted that I had not.

"We hadn't heard of it, either," Neil said. But he and Judy went on to explain that the Osmond Foundation in Salt Lake City had contacted the hospital about participating. Scott & White officials had been skeptical. But after studying the history and by-laws of the three-year-old event, they had decided to take a chance on it. Judy was the brand new "telethon coordinator" at Scott & White. Then, they hit me with it:

"We want you to be our television host."

I was stunned and flattered at the same time. But I had come to the meeting with the word "no" firmly implanted in my mind, and I was not yet ready to change that answer. Besides, I had dozens of reasons why I was not the best choice. I brought them up, each and every one.

To begin with, I said, I'm a radio guy. I've always felt that I have a face made for radio. I'm used to ad-libbing in front of a microphone, but not a camera. I'm not used to cue cards and TelePrompTers and the like.

Neil and Judy were prepared for all those dodges. We want a radio person who can ad-lib. We don't want a TV newscaster who's used to a TelePrompTer and who may move to a larger market at any time. We want a host who will stay with us for a long time to come.

I explained about my mother's cancer, and how, as an only child, I was helping my father take care of her. I wasn't sure that I could devote the time that would be necessary to do the telethon. My answer was still no.

Neil and Judy were understanding about all that. But they asked me to come back for one more meeting. I agreed, and that left the door open, if only slightly.

I explained what had happened to Steve and Jodie and told them that I was planning to stick with my "no" answer. But when I discussed it with my parents, I began to waver. They were both quite proud and excited that I had been selected for the job and

they urged me to accept. I told them that I would have to fly to Salt Lake City to attend production meetings, and I didn't feel that I should go on a long trip under the circumstances. Then my mother looked at me and said, "You need to be away from us for a while."

I knew what she was trying to tell me. She wanted me to have a life outside of her weekly blood tests and X-rays and chemotherapy. She felt that I needed a break from all that, and she wanted to assure me that I could go to Salt Lake and not worry. Still, I was not so sure. I knew that the "thon" in telethon came from the word "marathon," and that I might be looking at a full day and night—or longer—of live television. In addition to that, I wasn't even sure what benefit would come from the telethon. I wasn't sure I even liked telethons.

During the second meeting at the hospital, Judy Heartfield pulled her trump card. She didn't make any additional pitches or do anything to convince me to accept the host's position. All she did was take me on a tour of the hospital's fourth floor—the children's wing. Intellectually, I had always known that children can come down with terrible diseases, but I never had any reason to think about it. As we toured the wing, I began to meet some of these "small wonders," and I realized what a difficult and frightening thing it is for a child to face serious illness, surgery, or chemotherapy.

With my hands freshly washed, and wearing a special gown, I was allowed to hold a premature baby. I was amazed, and I asked how long these tiny babies can live. These babies will grow up and lead normal lives, I was assured. On our way back to Judy's office, we stopped at the bedside of a little girl. She was dozing, and Judy bent down to give her a little nudge. "She'll want to see us," Judy told me. When the little girl raised her head to look up, I saw that she had a large tube inserted into her throat. Because of that, she could make no sound. But she clutched her teddy bear and smiled at us. At that moment, I knew that I was going to host the Scott & White Children's Miracle Network Telethon.

This was 1985, and the telethon had been in existence for only three years. It was the brainchild of two Salt Lake men, Mick

Shannon and Joe Lake, who had worked on local and regional fund raising events for the March of Dimes. The Osmond family had donated their Orem, Utah studio for regional telethons, and those successes gave Mick and Joe the idea of putting together a national telethon. They took their dream to New York, but March of Dimes executives there were not so excited. They flatly turned down the idea of a national March of Dimes telethon to be produced in Utah.

Mick and Joe still felt that their concept was solid, and they didn't want to drop the association with the Osmonds. They had been working with "Dukes of Hazzard" star John Schneider on some of the March of Dimes projects, and so they went to Southern California to discuss their ideas with him. They explained their new concept: a national telethon to benefit participating hospitals for children. The telethon would be upbeat and positive, and all money raised in each local area would stay in that area to benefit the local hospital. No other telethon had ever done that.

Schneider thought it was a great idea and a workable concept. So Mick and Joe scheduled a meeting with some Osmond family members. They met at Alan Osmond's home, ate tuna fish sandwiches, and discussed the possibilities with Alan and his brother Merrill. The outcome of this meeting was a restructuring of the Osmond Foundation as the charity behind the new Children's Miracle Network.

The Osmond Studios in Orem would never be home to a big time telethon for the March of Dimes. But it would be the home of this brand new endeavor from the first broadcast in 1983 until 1986. Mick and Joe now had their cause, their studio, their charity, and their host. They decided to ask for one thing more—Marie Osmond to be Schneider's partner and co-host. Marie not only agreed to take the job; she made personal appearances on behalf of the CMN to help sign up new hospitals, television stations, and sponsors.

With John and Marie on board, Mick and Joe began to line up a stellar list of celebrities to lend their names to the cause. Singer Marilyn McCoo and former Los Angeles Ram Merlin Olsen signed on early. Others, like Rich Little, Joe Theismann, Paul Anka,

Malcolm-Jamal Warner, and Mary Hart have been involved with the telethon. And, following a guest appearance on a Bob Hope TV special, Marie convinced Bob to become chairman of the Honorary Board of Trustees.

Even with the Osmond Foundation and all the celebrities, the first year was a struggle. But on May 29, 1983, the first Children's Miracle Network Telethon hit the air, representing just twenty-two hospitals. The final tote board figure of $4,760,444 was not the highlight of the telecast. That honor went to a sparkling six-year-old from Nashville named Daniell Dyer. Danny was bald from chemotherapy treatments, but he had a song for other "miracle children" and he wanted to sing it for them. Everyone watching in the studio and at home had a lump in his throat as Danny sang a song that his godfather had written for him:

"Each day I get a little stronger, Lord,
Each day I love you more.
Every day I'm learning, Lord,
'Cause that's what life is for."

—•—

Danny finished his song, and his therapy, overcoming a three-by-five-inch tumor that had encompassed the main artery leading to his brain. Danny was the first "Miracle Child" to appear on the telethon.

The success of this first telethon and the two that followed convinced Scott & White and dozens of other hospitals to join the Network. By the time we signed on in 1986, the CMN was growing rapidly, even though most people in our local area did not know of it. Scott & White had definite plans to change that.

There was one more decision to make before the local publicity campaign could start: the telethon needed a co-host to work with me during the broadcast. Neil, Judy, and I discussed several possibilities, but I kept coming back to Marsha. "Why not?" I asked. "She's attractive, talented, and would be great on TV."

It wasn't Judy that was hesitating; it was Neil. He was afraid that since he was married to Marsha, it might look bad if he named her as a co-host. It soon became apparent, though, that

Marsha was by far the best choice. She and I had worked well together at KPLE, and she would be willing to dedicate the time and effort needed to get the telethon off to a good start. Judy finally informed Neil that she would offer the position to Marsha.

With Marsha on board, we were soon involved in photography sessions, videotapings, and news conferences. Judy wrote a long press release announcing us as the hosts and handed it out to the news media. The *Temple Daily Telegram* carried a three-column story headlined "S&W Names Telethon Hosts." Marsha and I thought we knew how John Schneider and Marie Osmond felt—but we still had a lot to learn.

On March 10, 1986, we flew to Salt Lake City for our first production meeting. The city, snuggled in a beautiful valley near the Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains, looked just as I remembered it from my prior trip. Our telethon crew, including production people from KCEN-TV, made its way to the Salt Lake Marriott.

The next morning, the convention got underway with an opening session in the hotel's main ballroom. Representatives from all the participating hospitals and television stations were on hand. There was also a large number of corporate sponsors at the meeting.

For the first time, I heard Joe Lake and Mick Shannon speak. They talked about the telethon and its history, and they played video tapes about the kids they called "miracle children"—kids who had overcome some terrible accident or disease through the efforts of CMN hospitals. As each story concluded, Mick and Joe would have the child and his or her parents come on stage to address the crowd. It was very touching, and the children always received standing ovations. I began to realize what children's hospitals mean to their local communities. John Schneider and Marie Osmond showed up to address us and my final question was answered: yes, these celebrities take this event very seriously. They really do care about the children. When Marie talked to us about kids, the tears in her eyes were very very real.

This opening session was designed to motivate everyone involved in the Children's Miracle Network from hospital officials

to TV producers to hosts like Marsha and me. From this event, we went into individual seminars designed to help us put together our local telecasts in the best manner possible. After one of the sessions, we all gathered in front of the Salt Palace for a group video and greeting that was to be aired on ABC's "Good Morning America."

Following that came one of the biggest treats for Marsha and me. CMN officials had set up a remote TV studio atop the Marriott, and each local telethon would be able to tape a custom television spot with their hosts and John and Marie. We arrived an hour early. The other hosts, most of whom anchored the local news in their markets, seemed calm enough. But Marsha and I kept practicing our lines; we were quite obviously the only hosts who had never worked at a TV station.

As the time approached for our taping, they called us to makeup. Makeup? I never had to worry about that in radio. I looked at Judy and Marsha rather sheepishly and noticed what a kick they were getting out of my squirming. Eventually, I had to sit in the makeup chair. As the makeup artist began to apply pancake and whatever to my face, I had my face scrunched up and my eyes clamped shut. I didn't know this at the time, however, Judy was taking pictures.

The set was comprised of a backdrop and bleachers. Marsha sat next to John Schneider and I sat next to Marie Osmond. We had thirteen children gathered around us and sitting in our laps. While the cameras rolled, the four of us delivered our lines, reminding people to support the Children's Miracle Network Telethon on KCEN-TV, Channel 6.

They snapped a still shot of us on the set, and in less than five minutes, we were finished and another set of telethon hosts were taking our place for another taping. John and Marie, as they do every year, worked late into the night so that every market could have a custom promo.

It was a great meeting, and Marsha and I returned home quite inspired. We expected some down time between the production meeting and the telethon broadcast, but things continued to happen at a steady pace.

Our first celebrity promotional photo taken in Salt Lake City in March, 1986. That's John Schneider, Marsha Haney, me, and Marie Osmond. Photo: CMN.

I had mentioned to Judy that I had written a song about children during my folk singing days. I offered to rewrite the lyrics if she was interested in having a telethon theme. I did a demo of the song, and she liked it well enough for me to proceed. I completed the rewrite in a few days and contacted Bob Haley at the Sound Arts recording studio in Waco. He agreed to donate studio time.

In April, I took several musician friends to Sound Arts to lay down the vocals for "A Children's Song." We did some last minute arranging at the studio and then began to record. Cheryl Mashburn, a reporter for KXXV-TV, turned out to have a beautiful voice, and I asked her to sing lead. Later, Haley added a full music track with studio sidemen. The final result was a telethon

song that summed up the philosophy of the Children's Miracle Network with its final verse:

"And now it's time for a miracle.
A healing power for one and all.
Please won't you join us; reach out your hand.
And help the children be well again."

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We pressed several hundred copies of the record, sold them at fund raising events, got some radio station airplay, and used the song for several years as a theme.

On April 28th, I got two calls from Judy. Scott & White is a big hospital, and from time to time, notable people show up for medical procedures, or to visit a patient. On this particular day, Jeannie C. Riley, who had scored a number one hit with "Harper Valley PTA," dropped by. Marsha and I interviewed her on videotape and then were hurriedly called back that afternoon when Larry Gatlin showed up.

Marsha Haney and I interview Larry Gatlin and a young patient. April 1986, Photo: Scott & White.

We taped an interview with Gatlin as he visited with a child who was in a wheelchair. I asked Larry about his new album. "It's round, black, and about this big," he answered, forming a circle with his hands.

"Does it have a small hole in the middle?" I asked without smiling.

He laughed and gave us a great interview, talking about children and the telethon. We used both tapes several times during our broadcast.

On May 10, Dan Seals made an appearance in nearby Copperas Cove. He had just had a hit duet with Marie Osmond called "Meet Me In Montana." Judy thought that was a natural telethon tie in, so we got backstage passes to do an interview.

Finally, the big day came. At 10:30 on May 31, Marsha and I kicked off our first Children's Miracle Network Telethon. As the broadcast began, we were standing on a huge set that had been constructed in the lobby of the clinic. There were several TV cameras pointed at us, two banks of telephone volunteers, and what seemed like hundreds of people milling about. We were nervous. I was hoping Marsha would volunteer to talk first.

After the first two minutes, we were on a roll. Judy had the program well planned, and there were multitudes of sponsors, check presentations, pledges to read, interviews, and our pre-taped celebrity interviews. We also had several feature stories about miracle children at Scott & White.

We continued through the night, breaking only for the national segments from Salt Lake City. The next day, I got a big surprise. My aunt, Elizabeth Connell (Aunt Libby), had brought my mother to the hospital to see a couple of segments. As she sat in her wheelchair watching me perform, I could see a special light in her eyes. It was her last great moment of pride. Unfortunately, my father did not live to see the telethon.

When the telethon ended, it was pronounced a huge success. The tote board reached only $92,000 but it was a great start, and the cause of children's health care had received a big boost in our television market area. During the following months, we continued to do telethon events and tapings.

On January 14, 1987, several of the Houston Astros came to town on a promotion tour and agreed to visit the kids at Scott & White. Marsha was out of town, so I had to do the interview alone. I was excited to find that one of the people I would interview was Yankee legend Yogi Berra, who was a Houston coach at the time. As the camera rolled, I interviewed Yogi, manager Hal Lanier, and pitcher Jim Deshaies. They presented me with a silver anniversary Astros hard hat, and after the taping, each of them autographed it for me.

As time went by, we interviewed country stars Razzy Bailey, Eddie Raven, Foster and Lloyd, Steve Wariner, and Joe Stampley. The Stampley interview was especially fun for me, because I remembered his first big hit ("All These Things") when he was lead singer for a Louisiana group called "The Uniques." I

I've just completed a video-taped interview with members of the Houston Astros—Manager Hal Lanier, pitcher Jim Deshaies, and baseball legend Yogi Berra. January 1987. Photo: Scott & White.

even knew all the words to the song, so Joe and I hit it off pretty well. After the interview, Marsha and Judy and I took Joe to lunch and then dropped him off at his hotel. Before we left, Joe brought out a Walkman cassette player and asked me if I'd like to preview his next album. I kept thinking about how I used to dance to "All These Things" when I was in high school—and now, here was Joe Stampley asking me what I thought of his new record.

One recording star we interviewed was based in Temple, only a few miles from Scott & White. "Little Joe" Hernandez had been big in the Tex-Mex music field for years, but he was beginning to get some big time recognition. He had been signed by Columbia Records, he had a duet with Willie Nelson coming out on a new album, and he was a Grammy winner. We were all pleased when he agreed to do an interview aimed at the Spanish speaking community. Marsha and I did the interview along with a translator. To this day, neither of us knows what Little Joe said.

It was about this time that Judy learned of a country singer from the Waco area named Mac Abernathy. Mac was an accomplished songwriter, had several records out, and toured with his own country band. Judy had arranged to see him perform at a place called "The Farmer's Daughter" in San Antonio, and she asked me if I'd like to go. We arrived in the Alamo City, checked into our rooms at the Marriott, and drove up Loop 410 to find the club.

The "Daughter" was a laid-back, typical Texas honkey tonk. It had a stage, a dance floor, waitresses to keep you furnished with beer, and a wall full of photos of country stars who had appeared there. Judy and I listened to Mac do a set, and then we all discussed the telethon. Mac was willing to help, but wasn't sure just how much he could contribute. He asked me if I was a singer, and would I like to sit in with the band. I hadn't performed in a while, but it was close enough to Christmas that I did a few bars of "Blue Christmas." Then, with Mac's commitment to the telethon in hand, we headed back to the hotel.

While we were in the club, it had started to rain. As we pulled back onto Loop 410, it was coming down even harder. Without

realizing it, we headed the wrong direction on the freeway, and with the downpour, it took us a while to discover the mistake. Loop 410 goes all the way around San Antonio—and so did we.

Back in Temple, Judy held a news conference to announce Mac as the celebrity chairman of the telethon. Soon after, she had another major announcement to make.

Temple, along with the cities of Belton and Killeen, were in the process of building a new convention center to be called "The Bell County Expo Center." The complex would feature a 10,000-seat domed arena suitable for sporting events and concerts. As the center neared completion, several groups scurried to be the first to book it for an event. Judy managed to secure that honor for the telethon.

With 10,000 seats to fill, she wanted an attraction that would bring out a lot of people, make money for the kids at Scott & White, and create publicity for the telethon. She booked the Osmond Brothers as an opening act, and Marie Osmond as the headliner.

The Osmonds all flew in to the airport at Austin, and Judy borrowed a large motor home from her relatives to pick them up. A few people connected with the telethon went along, including me. At the airport, we met two of the brothers, Marie, and her family. The hour-long trip back to Temple was interesting. Marie asked if we could stop at a Wendy's in Georgetown. I didn't get out, but I noticed a long line of people following Marie as she got back into the motor home. We all chatted during the trip, and Marie's son played a game of "Chutes and Ladders."

The concert was held on May 21, 1987. We began with a VIP dinner for telethon contributors at the Expo Center banquet room. Then, it was almost time for the concert to begin. Judy was still sweating out the crowd, but enough people showed up at the door to make the evening a great success.

Just before the first set by Mac Abernathy, I was asked to make the very first announcement at the new center, and I did: "Ladies and Gentlemen, the restrooms are stopped up. Please do not use the restrooms at this time." It was only a ball of wadded up duct tape that had stopped up the plumbing, and

it was soon corrected. Marsha and I introduced Mac, and the concert was underway. The Osmond Boys (the next generation of Osmonds) performed, as did Wayne, Alan, and Merrill—the Osmond Brothers. Then, Marie came on stage and charmed the crowd with her personality and talent.

While the Osmonds were in town, we took advantage of the opportunity to do some TV tapings for the telethon. Scott & White had used telethon funds to create a beautiful play room for children in the hospital, and we used that as a set for a video with the Brothers. I had been teasing about singing with them, and during the interview, Wayne turned the tables on me. We were talking about the telethon when he suddenly changed the subject:

"How would you like to sing with us" he asked.

"I was only kidding," I protested.

Marsha and Lynn in formal clothes with Marie Osmond, backstage at the Bell County Expo Center on May 21, 1987. Photo: Scott & White.

"How about 'Any Time'?" said Wayne. The three brothers began to hum in perfect harmony. I looked at Marsha and shrugged my shoulders.

"Any time—you're feeling lonely," I sang. The Osmond Brothers were singing behind me.

"Help me, Marsha," I pleaded. She chimed in with the next line to the song, "Any time—you're feeling blue."

We did a few more bars and then completed the interview. It was a fun tape, and we ran it several times during the next telethon.

On the evening following the concert, we all gathered at the baseball field at Fort Hood for a softball fund raiser. Marie had left already, but the Osmond Brothers and the Osmond Boys were there. Steve Cannon and I handled the announcing chores, and I had a chance to sing along with the Brothers on the national anthem. After the game, we all went out for pizza.

For some time, I had been thinking of putting together my own fund raiser for the telethon. I wanted to do a concert for children using the slogan:

"No Adults Allowed Unless Accompanied By Children"

I secured a local auditorium and invited several local performers. Steve Cannon was emcee, and I did a set of folk music with Cheryl Mashburn—including a few choruses of "A Children's Song."

A couple of years later, we did another "Concert For Kids." Judy had discovered that someone named Jim Newton had done an album of children's songs and was touring hospitals to perform for kids. Even better, one of the performers on the album was Noel Paul Stookey—"Paul" of Peter, Paul & Mary.

Judy knew that I was a big fan of Peter, Paul & Mary and she asked me if I would check into the possibility of bringing Paul and Jim Newton to our market for a concert. I made a few calls, and soon we were nailing down a date and looking for an auditorium.

Jim Newton was to drive to Temple from his home near Fort Worth. Paul Stookey and his group "Bodyworks" were flying American Eagle to the airport at Killeen. We sent a Scott & White

van to pick up the group. Judy and I personally drove Paul, who prefers his real name, Noel, to Temple. "Would you like to sit in front?" I asked. He indicated that he preferred the back seat.

During the twenty-minute drive to Scott & White, he sat with his tall, lanky body leaning forward so he could look out the front window and carry on a conversation with Judy and me.

I bored him with endless questions about his days with Peter, Paul & Mary, and about folk music in general. At the hospital, while he was tuning, I asked him to pick the lead guitar part to one of my favorite PP&M songs, "A'Soalin'." After that, Neil Haney walked in and asked to hear a few bars of "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right." (I didn't know that Neil was such a big fan of Peter, Paul & Mary.)

We had scheduled two events prior to the main concert. One event was a concert for the kids in the hospital. Noel and Jim Newton picked and sang to the delight of some forty hospitalized children of the fourth floor. Noel did some clowning with his famous expressions and sound effects, and he got the kids involved in sing-alongs. One child, gamely cooperating with Noel's instructions to make a sound effect during "The Marvelous Toy," accidentally spit his gum across the room. We had a TV crew on hand so we could run clips during the telethon.

That night, at a reception for telethon donors, Noel signed autographs and played a few songs. I waited until he was occupied with some people across the room and picked his guitar while he wasn't looking. Neil Haney also took advantage of the opportunity. I had an old PP&M concert program that I had gotten from Steve Goddard at WFAA, and another program from the late seventies Reunion concert I had attended in Dallas. I had Noel sign them both.

The concert was marvelous. Jim Newton was the opening act, and then Noel appeared with Bodyworks. Stookey took time afterward to sign autographs in the hall and on request, even did a verse of "Puff the Magic Dragon." One lady claimed to have attended high school with Noel, and she had his picture in her yearbook to prove it. He autographed the picture for her. A couple of years later, Stookey returned to do another fund raiser for us.

A major turning point for the telethon occurred when Neil and Judy began to visit with Drayton McLane, Jr. McLane, estimated by *Texas Monthly* to be worth several hundred million dollars, was the owner of McLane Co., the nation's largest distributor to convenience stores. With more than twenty major distribution centers from coast-to-coast, it figured that McLane Co. had the wherewithal to involve hundreds of vendors and thousands of employees in the Children's Miracle Network. Since the company was headquartered in Temple, Neil and Judy asked for a meeting with Drayton to ask him to become involved. His answer has become part of CMN lore.

"Does the world really need another telethon?" he asked.

And so, for the time being, the McLane Co. did not get involved in the telethon. Still, Neil and Judy felt that the telethon would be a great match for McLane Co., and they continued to bring up the possibilities from time to time.

Then one day, Drayton got a call from one of his biggest clients, Sam Walton. Mr. Walton, who had founded the Wal-Mart chain, explained to Drayton what CMN meant to his company, and he strongly suggested that McLane Co. get involved. Drayton decided to take a closer look. Soon, McLane Co. became a major national sponsor of the Children's Miracle Network. Drayton became so involved that he was asked to serve on the telethon's board of governors, and he became chairman of that board in 1993.

Each year, the company's fund raising activities culminate with a major golf and tennis event at a Temple country club. Vendors from all over the nation fly to Temple to take part in the event and play golf and tennis with a number of celebrities. Golfers Ben Crenshaw and Al Geiberger; football stars Walt Garrison and Earl Campbell; and tennis stars Tracy Austin and Rod Laver have participated along with one or more stars more closely associated with the CMN. Donnie and Marie Osmond made a rare appearance together at the McLane event one year, giving them a chance to poke some good-natured fun at each other during the awards dinner. It also gave Marsha and me a chance to do our first interview with Donnie. Drayton flew him to Temple

on his private Lear Jet, and we met him at the airport with a camera crew. Though not as closely associated with the telethon as his sister, Donnie is still very involved and gave us some great video tape to use during our broadcast.

The event also gave me a chance to visit with Rod Laver, whom I still consider the greatest male tennis player ever, and talk about the days when I covered some of his matches in Dallas.

During this time, Drayton's client and friend Sam Walton, the billionaire owner of Wal-Mart, had been having some serious health problems. He had been on a hunting trip in 1989 when he began to experience soreness, and a bone in his arm began to ache. Sam had been under treatment for some time for hairy cell leukemia, but the condition had been in remission. He had undergone several evaluations both at M.D. Anderson in Houston and at Scott & White in Temple, all indicating that the leukemia was under control. During one of these trips to Temple, Sam was having lunch at the Inn at Scott & White, a hotel located adjacent to the hospital. As it happened, Judy Heartfield was having one of her frequent lunches with her two telethon hosts. I glanced over at a small, thin man, wearing a baseball cap and thought nothing of it. As he approached our table, Judy stood up and said, "Well, hello, Mr. Walton."

Marsha and I stood and shook hands with the wealthiest man in the world, just beginning to realize who he was. He had met Judy before, and he called her by name. Marsha spoke, and then it was my turn to say something. "My middle name is Walton." I said, not really knowing why I said it.

A short time later, Sam Walton went back to Houston and was diagnosed as having multiple myeloma, otherwise known as cancer of the bone marrow—a disease that would eventually take his life.

Before Sam Walton died, he made one big business deal that would significantly impact the McLane Co. In an announcement that started the business community, it was disclosed that Wal-Mart and the McLane Co. would merge. This move made Drayton McLane the largest Wal-Mart stockholder outside of the Walton family and also provided the impetus for Drayton to form other

companies and ventures. Stepping down as CEO of McLane Co. in the early nineties, Drayton decided to do something completely different from anything he'd ever done before. He bought the Houston Astros.

With Drayton in professional baseball ownership, it wasn't long before the team was involved in a fund raiser for the Children's Miracle Network. "Temple Day In the Dome" was held on May 15, 1993, with a portion of ticket sales to benefit the kids at Scott & White. The Astros defeated the Dodgers on CBS-TV, and then Drayton threw a barbecue at AstroHall for the 2,342 Temple people who attended the game. Earlier, Marsha and I had dressed up in jeans, T-shirts, and baseball caps to videotape a promotional spot for the event. I caught a lot of flak about the way I threw the ball in the commercial, but Marsha got lots of compliments.

The telethon has continued to grow over the years, and following an association with the Walt Disney Company in 1988, the annual production meeting was moved to Anaheim, California. Instead of doing our celebrity promos and satellite feeds from the hotel, they are now done from Disneyland. Marsha and I have done taped promos or live feeds over the years with John and Marie, Rich Little, Marilyn McCoo, Merlin Olsen, Todd Christensen, and several Miss Americas. Bo Jackson even showed up to speak to us one year, but we didn't get a chance to interview him.

In 1991, the Anaheim Marriott was not available for booking, so the production meeting went back to Salt Lake City. Marsha and I were set to do a live feed with Marie Osmond to run in the six o'clock news on KCEN. By this time, there were too many hospitals and TV stations to fit into the hotel, so we went across the street where the uplink was set up at the Salt Palace. The Palace was a busy place. The Utah Jazz basketball team was still playing there while its new arena was being built, and the Dallas Mavericks were in town. Prior to the evening game, the telethon had half the arena, while an antidrug rally for teens had the other half. Marsha and I stood on a pedestal with Marie Osmond between us while we waited for a cue to begin the interview.

Marsha was wearing an earplug called an "IFB" that allowed her to hear the anchor team back at Channel 6. Just as we were about to do our interview, a rock and roll band started playing over at the drug rally. I couldn't hear myself think. I turned around and watched the band for a moment, then looked at Marsha and realized that we were on the air.

Marsha had asked Marie a question, and I hadn't heard it. After Marie finished her answer, it was my turn to ask something. I had no idea what had already been asked, but I made up a quick question, and Marie answered it. None of us could hear over the noise of the band anyway.

Back at the hotel, I got on the elevator with two guys, one ordinary enough, and the other quite tall. The shorter one surprised me by asking if my name was Lynn Woolley. I admitted to that and then learned that he was Allan Stone, whom I had known in Dallas. Allan was doing play-by-play of the Maverick games; the tall guy was a member of the team.

Back home, Judy continued to bring local celebrities into the CMN fold. Tom Penders, the head basketball coach at the University of Texas, brought his team to see our kids. R.C. Slocum, the head football coach at Texas A&M, agreed to be our celebrity chairman one year. We had gotten a large telephone pledge from a Ray Perryman during one telethon, and Judy wondered if it was the famed Baylor economist. It was. He had been working late and had the TV on watching our broadcast when he decided to phone in a pledge. The next year, Judy invited Ray to be celebrity chairman. He not only agreed, but stayed the entire twenty-one hours of the telethon working phone banks with his two daughters.

The real stars of the Children's Miracle Network Telethon are not the celebrities. It's the children who come to Scott & White and all the other participating hospitals who provide the magic that makes our telethon work. I'll never forget the lump in my throat during our very first broadcast when Marsha interviewed little Chrissy Boswell who had written a poem for other kids with cystic fibrosis. I'll never forget four-year-old Lester Swift who told Marsha and me about his chemotherapy just three days before he

died. I'll never forget Jennifer Phillips, the high school cheerleader, whom we interviewed by telephone while she awaited a double lung transplant in St. Louis. And there are so many more.

Fortunately, for every child that succumbs to a deadly disease, there are dozens more who go into remission or are cured permanently. We've had two set of premature quadruplets born during the years we've been involved with the CMN—the Ruckers and the DenHarders. The four DenHarder boys—Tobin, Edwin, Gideon, and Casper—have literally grown up with the telethon since their birthday almost coincides with the broadcast. One year, when the boys had just turned three, Marsha was interviewing them and parents Peter and Cora while I was off camera. I was squatting down, holding a microphone, and preparing for my next interview when I suddenly looked up and saw one of the boys coming at breakneck speed. I didn't have time to prepare for the collision and was sent reeling backward from the tackle to the delight of the child and the studio audience. The director managed to get a shot of the whole affair, and so the TV audience saw it, too. It was a funny moment, but it pointed out quite graphically that these four little boys who had been born prematurely were now perfectly healthy.

The Children's Miracle Network is now firmly established in the United States and Canada. At Scott & White, the tote board is passing the half million dollar mark annually, while at the national level it exceeds $100 million, making it the largest single fund raising event in the world. It continues to have the lowest administrative cost of any major charity, and it adheres to a strong code of ethics. Millions of children are touched by the Children's Miracle Network every year, and more and more companies and volunteers are getting involved.

Small wonder.

CHAPTER 23

Hit the Road, Jack

Soon after I left Q-106, weird things began to happen there. One morning, I was awakened by a phone call from Steve Cannon, who was still doing the morning show. "Kristie Ciattarelli was found in the trunk of her car last night," he said.

Kristie was a pretty, young account executive for the station who had been on hand for the charity softball game we did with the Osmonds. She had also been in my office at the agency the morning before she was killed.

At the funeral, Steve and I speculated that the murderer might be present. It turned out that we were most likely right. As the police investigation began to turn up evidence in the case—likely involving drug deals—Kristie's husband committed suicide. More strange events were still to come.

Not long after the books were closed on the murder case, another member of the Q-106 sales staff met an untimely end. During an afternoon rendezvous in a motor home, JoAnn Fanning and her male companion failed to realize that they were both slowly being put to sleep by fumes. Neither survived.

Following both tragedies, it became apparent that Q-106 was not going to survive either. Ken Williams had sold the station at its peak to Heart of Texas Communications, a group of investors from Austin. As was his custom, he had received top dollar—$2.6 million. Now, ratings were edging down, but the debt service wasn't. After a while, Cannon bailed out, the station was becoming insolvent, and the lending bank was becoming involved in

station management decisions. The station's slow decline became a free-fall.

By this time, Steve Cannon and I had decided to dissolve our partnership at the agency, now known as Chandler/Woolley. However, each time the owners would bring someone in to salvage the station, he would visit the agency to explain the new strategy. After a misfire or two, I received a call from a radio veteran named Thomas Blair Weaver. He was going to be in town on Saturday and wanted to discuss the new Q-106 over breakfast.

Weaver was a nice guy. He was tall, dark, and nice looking, and he knew how to talk radio. Over breakfast, he filled me in on his background and explained what he intended to do with Q-106. He was an attorney, had some ownership in a Nashville production house, and had worked a stint with NBC—in addition to his radio management career. And he had definite plans to take Q-106 back to the ratings pinnacle.

The plan was this: Q-106 would become KYZZ and would be known as Z-106. It would program a young, urban sound aimed squarely at the 50,000 troops at Fort Hood. The deejays would have street-gang-sounding names like "B.J. and the Bone." And the station would promote heavily with on-air contests and lots of media advertising. That's where I came in.

Weaver wanted to hire Chandler/Woolley to create and place the advertising for the new Z-106. He was going to call the station "the Outrageous FM," and he wanted television commercials that looked the part. Money was no object.

At a staff meeting, I put much of the project in the hands of my creative staff. Marsha Haney, who was working as a TV producer, and Terri Matthew began to write copy and negotiate with production companies.

Marsha met Tom, and we toured his lake home, where we had decided to shoot the spots. By this time, I had formed an opinion, and I was anxious to see if Marsha formed the same one. I waited until she said something.

"Lynn, do you smell something fishy about Tom Weaver?" she asked.

"I smell something *real* fishy," I replied.

I told Marsha that all the claims Tom had made on the morning we had breakfast had made me suspect that he might be a fraud. On the other hand, the owners seemed to have confidence in him, and he had given me a financial statement. Still, I decided that Tom would have to pay half up front for any work we did, and he would pay in full before the final product was delivered. We completed several scripts for the campaign.

Marsha wrote a spot about a mysterious character called the "Cash Crusader" who would patrol the region handing out IOU's for cash to people who listened to KYZZ. Tom had met a local midget, and he asked us to work him into a spot. So I wrote a commercial that featured a Z-106 staff meeting with the midget in charge. The midget tells the deejays that they're simply not outrageous enough on the air. The jocks protest that they play the best music and give away the most money. "I know you're playing music," the midget screams, "but do something outrageous." At that point in the spot, the animated logo comes on screen to be followed by a quick shot of the midget hanging from the ceiling by a rope as the smiling deejays swing him like a pendulum. Terri Matthew wrote a spot that was even more outrageous:

VIDEO	AUDIO
Dripping female wrapped in towel just out of shower with eyes closed, leaning against shower door, reaches out and gropes for radio dial.	It takes a zoo just to get some people up in the morning.
Hits on button, woman's eyes pop open, she reaches into stall for shower massage head, using it as a mic she begins to mouth words to song (very animated).	(Voice of Z-106 personality leads into music.)

Cut to Z-106 logo.	(Music fades, anncr voice up:) Now there's a radio station that really wakes you up and keeps you moving all day long.
Cut to woman, still wrapped in towel hair, dry and styled, waving shower head and boogie-ing with invisible partner.	
Cut to Z-106 logo.	(Music up)
Cut to woman, now dressed, applying lipstick, cut to CU of lips being outlined, then wider shot of woman using tube as mic to mouth more words.	(Music fades, anncr voice up:) All over Temple, Belton, Killeen, Fort Hood, and the Cove. (Music up)
Cut to Z-106 logo, then back to woman, sultry, puts on sunglasses, flings back scarf and walks out door with keys.	Z-106. Always the most outrageous FM in Central Texas.
Close with Z-106 logo.	(Jingle sing out)

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All that in thirty seconds. And it wasn't going to be cheap. It would take quite an actress to pull it off (so to speak) plus the location, sets, camera crews, and post production people. Tom wanted to shoot the "shower" spot and the "midget" spot. Our bid came in at $10,770.43. We asked for a check for half the amount.

We had found our talent in Houston and had hired an Austin production company, but as the shoot day got closer, we still had no check. Marsha and I made some phone calls.

We called the Dallas voice-over man who had cut the station's ID's and promos. We called Jam Productions, the company that had produced its jingle package. We called the printer who had done the Z-106 bumper stickers. No one had been paid.

I faxed Tom a terse memo. Either the check would be delivered immediately, or we would cancel the shoot. On March 20, 1990, I called everything off and wrote Weaver a letter resigning from the

account. As I was soon to discover, a host of other people were also getting wise to Tom Weaver.

KYZZ signed on the air on February 22, 1990 with fifty-five hours of "Hit the Road Jack" by Ray Charles. It was the oldest trick in the book, but Weaver succeeded in causing people in the market to talk about the station. Then, he started his regular format of rap and urban dance music.

Weaver sent the Cash Crusader out to cruise the county, giving away IOU's to listeners, and began to award huge cash prizes to listeners for calling in to name the last three records played. But still, no one was getting paid. Listeners started to complain, and on May 1, 1990, the *Waco Tribune Herald* published a six-column story headlined:

> "'Cash Crusader' Contest Winners Say Radio Station Stiffed Them."

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The story quoted several disgruntled listeners and outlined a litany of bounced checks and broken promises that stretched from Killeen to Dallas. Weaver blamed it all on the bank in Austin. "I was just caught in the middle," he told the paper. "I'm not a bad guy."

Marsha and I were counting our blessings that we had bailed out on Weaver before any major expenses had been incurred. Perhaps a dozen other companies were not so lucky. A beeper company repossessed several pagers for nonpayment. One car dealer repossessed a van because KYZZ had failed to keep up an insurance policy. Another company said it loaned Weaver a van for what amounted to a test drive (Weaver wanted to have an artist estimate a logo job) and got the vehicle back a week later with 2500 miles on it. And no sale.

Weaver was also stiffing his own employees. Several were working overtime for no extra money, and then paychecks began to bounce. Soon, Weaver was gone from KYZZ. But he was anything but forgotten.

He turned up next at KJNE in Waco, but some of his former employees at Z-106 were turning up the heat. That job soon faded and he decided to try his luck in Austin.

Austin is, in fact, where Tom Weaver's luck finally ran out. Police and the Travis County District Attorney began to mount an investigation of Weaver's activities. They referred to him as "a smooth-talking con artist" who took advantage of about five local women—and as many as ten banks.

The women all gathered in a circle on the TV tabloid show "A Current Affair" and described how the "charming" Mr. Weaver asked each of them to marry him. They were all ready to do it, too. That is until they found out about the others. And until they found out that he was only interested in their money.

While the ladies were letting off steam on national television, authorities in Austin had five felony theft-by-appropriation cases filed, and were looking at filing more. They had discovered that Weaver was a Kentucky native who was on parole for similar crimes in Tennessee—two cases of bad checks and two cases of fraud. In Austin, police suspected him of writing checks on closed accounts. The bad checks added up to about $50,000.

While Weaver was in jail without bond, even his estranged wife, June, told him to "hit the road." She filed for divorce but admitted, "He can be the most charming man you'd ever want to meet."

CHAPTER 24

The Last Great Days of Radio

What made radio great? In the sixties and seventies, radio had given up its claim to drama and situation comedy. It had accepted its role as a source of music and information, and it used that new position to give the American public what television still could not—specialized music formats, theater of the mind, and instant information.

Music was a natural replacement for the old shows like "Amos 'n' Andy," "The Green Hornet," and "Dragnet." It could fill up a broadcast day without incurring great expense, and it could deliver what advertisers had to have: an audience. But with most radio stations converting to music formats, the competition to get those listeners became fierce.

Innovators like Gordon McLendon created new ways of programming such as Top 40. They also looked for new and better ways to keep that audience tuned in. Cash giveaways, secret sounds, and mystery records were among hundreds of promotions designed to keep listeners tuned in. In the fifties, radio programmers realized that radio was "sound," and they used that attribute to great advantage.

Early Top 40 stations in big cities would often scurry to play new music first. And when a deejay job opened up at a big station, management would listen to dozens of tapes to find just the right announcer with the perfect style.

The morning "team show" was born. Many deejays began doing character voices on their shows—there were dozens of "Grannies." Listeners were taped or put on the air live. And when big news was breaking, radio could really shine.

From the beginning, radio could go to the scene of any big news event, and by dialing a telephone, get the story on the air immediately. Stations maintained "mobile units" with two-way radios so they could provide live coverage of major fires, accidents, or political events. TV might have "film at eleven," and the next morning's paper might have all the details, but radio had the ability to report the news as it happened. Until the mid-seventies, most big city AM stations had large news departments, and smaller stations had at least some staff in their newsrooms.

Things are different today.

During the late eighties, the government, acting through the Federal Communications Commission, began to deregulate radio. In 1981, the old requirements of news and public affairs had been tossed out, so stations no longer had a "commitment" to do news. Now, the commission was making it possible for small FM stations to increase their power and move to a bigger city.

This relaxation of the rules made a lot of instant millionaires. The radio station owner who had a 250-watt station in a city of 8,000 people could file for a power increase, and, if he could get his signal pattern to work out just right, he could move to a major market like Dallas or Boston, and that could make his station worth millions. In Austin alone, FM stations moved in from Killeen, Georgetown, Luling, Bastrop, and Lampasas—almost doubling the number of high powered, commercial FMs in the market. Suddenly, the advertising pie was being sliced much thinner, and the opportunity for a station to fail was higher.

AM stations were feeling the crunch even before the FM move-ins. The high powered AMs like KRLD were maintaining their ratings with news, talk, and sports formats, but smaller stations were losing listeners rapidly. Most of them survived by paring their staffs and broadcasting foreign language or religious programming. There were even a few AM move-ins.

In the early nineties, the FCC realized what it had done. In its fervor to deregulate, the commission had created a situation where several stations in most medium and large markets were destined to fail. So the commission made a decision that to correct the deregulation problem, it would deregulate some more. So local management agreements (LMAs) became possible.

Under the new rules, a successful broadcaster in a market that is over endowed with radio stations can operate two FMs, or two FMs and an AM under the umbrella of an LMA. The successful station simply leases the frequency and facilities of the failed station and takes over operations. In some cases, the rules allow the arrangement to go beyond a lease. In all probability, multiple ownership within a market—unheard of through the eighties—will become commonplace.

What does this mean?

To those working in the industry, it means fewer jobs. If three or more radio stations are operating under one roof, management is likely to save money by selling commercials on all the stations with only one sales staff. Of course, that means fewer people are on the street selling. Even if all three stations run newscasts, it's likely that one news department will serve all three. And only one engineering department will be retained.

To the listening public, this combining of radio stations represents an affront to the original intent of FCC licensing procedures: diversity. Since the airwaves, unlike the print media, are limited, they theoretically belong to the people. An FCC license to broadcast was a trade-off. The broadcast corporation was allowed to design its programming to make a profit, and in exchange, the people were to be served with a certain amount of news and public affairs. In order to avoid monopolies and to keep varying points of view on the air, broadcast owners were limited to owning only a few stations, and the stations had to be geographically separated.

AM and FM combos were originally allowed because of the weak profitability of FM, and later due to the deteriorating condition of AM. But in between, there was time when the commission's big goal was something called "divestiture." This

process was not meant so much to break up the AM-FM combos, but rather to break up the larger conglomerates of radio and television, or (worse yet) radio, television, and newspaper ownership in the same market. These rules played a role in the splitting of KRLD in Dallas from what was once KRLD-TV and the *Dallas Times Herald*. Even in smaller markets some properties were sold off in the name of divestiture.

Today's rules are a step backward. The FCC, in going beyond simply an attempt to shore up a weak band, is using multiple ownership to try to correct its own mistakes. Like most failed government ventures, it is those who use the product—in this case, listeners and advertisers—who will suffer.

If a company in a medium market becomes successful in operating the three highest rated stations in town, here's what could happen:

1. Management could charge artificially inflated rates for commercial time.
2. Advertisers might be pressured to buy two or even all three of the stations in order to get any commercial time—thus curtailing or eliminating their expenditures with competing stations.
3. With by far the largest income in town, the three stations would be able to advertise themselves more, have stronger on-air giveaways, and better air talent, in effect, buying the ratings and scaring off direct competition.
4. If the three stations shared a news department, as is usually the case, the listening audience would get only one point of view instead of three.

In a nutshell, it is possible to visualize a scenario in which advertisers are held hostage, competition is stifled, and the airwaves virtually belong to the largest broadcast companies rather than to the people.

The shortcomings of radio in today's marketplace, however, are not all the fault of government ineptness. The rise of FM and its higher quality of sound has created a new generation of radio listeners. According to conventional wisdom, these listeners—

young people, and older people who have abandoned AM—want nothing but music. But how to find out what kind of music they want and how to present it? That has become the task of consultants.

It has never ceased to amaze me that almost all of today's radio stations have consultants on retainer. Consider: most stations employ a general manager who has years of experience, often in sales and on-the-air. Virtually all stations have a sales manager who knows radio right and left. All stations have a program director whose job it is to know what the trends are, set the station's programming policies, and monitor the competition. Most stations even have a music director who carefully selects the records to be played. Then, what is the role of the consultant?

Simply put, the consultant is the person who takes the heat if a radio station fails to succeed in the battle for ratings. Most consultants entered the field after working at successful stations in medium to large markets. Supposedly, they have a special insight that will make it possible—even likely—for a certain radio station to succeed over others in the market.

Unfortunately, there are several factors at work that often result in a consultant's getting his walking papers early.

To begin with, consultants on most music formats seem to be sliced from the same loaf. Most like to maintain strict control over what the announcers say; they keep a very tight music playlist; they hate news programming. That is to say, they advocate a "sameness" to the station that often makes it hard to tell it apart from other stations with the same format—even in the same city.

Second, even if a station has a weak management team, it gets no competitive edge from having a consultant. If only one station per market could have one, then perhaps a smart consultant could provide that edge. But all stations have them. If a consultant is, as some general managers seem to feel, a hedge against failure, then no station with a reputable consultant should ever fail. But they do.

Third, a consultant undermines the ability of a good program director to do his job. Under a consultant, a program director (PD)

often becomes nothing more than the "head disk jockey," posting weekend shift schedules and making sure that the consultant's edicts are obeyed.

Naturally, consultants come in handy when the ratings are down, and the parent company wants to know why.

Another problem with radio today is a lack of innovation. The corollary to the "music only" theory of FM programming is that there are only two types of music: rock and country. Almost all music formats are hewn from these two basic forms.

From rock we get:
- Adult Contemporary
- Contemporary Hit Radio (formerly Top 40)
- Album-Oriented Rock
- Urban/Black
- Soft Contemporary
- Golden Oldies
- Contemporary Christian

And from country:
- Modern Country
- Traditional Country
- Progressive Country
- Gospel

What you won't find on the FM band in most cities are all-news formats, talk, play-by-play sports, and off-beat music formats. You won't find much in the way of big-band, jazz, early popular music, or folk music. That type of programming has been relegated to the AM band, or to noncommercial FM where some of today's best programming originates. What you will find is dozens of stations playing the same records over and over—as directed by their consultants.

Radio news has also taken a giant step backwards. Because of deregulation and the perceived desires of the listening audience, few stations are willing to make the budgetary outlays needed to support a real news department. So we've "progressed" from the days when a large market might have as many as a dozen competitive radio news departments, to a day when only the AM

all-news stations cover news at all. This development hardly serves the listening public.

Look at how news is presented on many of today's FM music stations. Typically, a newscaster will read a few short news items, use no tape cuts and no reports from the scene, and return to music with some humorous tidbit about a music star. Content almost always comes from the wire services or is plagiarized from the local newspaper. Traffic reports and weather are now considered the most important news items of the day.

Over on the all-news AM, reporters are still covering news events, but with reduced competition, there doesn't seem to be the same drive as before. Competitiveness within a market to get the news on the air before the other stations is dead in most small and medium markets, and in some majors as well.

News writing is a lost art in many markets. No longer is a five-minute newscast carefully crafted with well-written stories embellished with meaningful tape cuts and voice reports. The FM stations have eliminated that kind of newscast, and AM all-news outlets broadcast such a glut of reports that they're happy to introduce each reporter with lead-ins such as:

> "County commissioners met this morning. Bob Smith reports."

The tape-free newscasts heard on most FM stations can be described with a single word: boring. Listening to them is like watching a television newscast with no video or reading a magazine with no photographs.

I'm also bothered by the trend away from call letters. You'll notice that early in this book, we talked about WFAA and KRLD and WLS. Later, we were discussing stations with strange-sounding names like Q-106. Most of today's FMs have abandoned call letters in favor of such handles as "Magic 95," "Mix 102," and various letters of the alphabet. For some reason, the letters B, Q, and Z seem to have the most appeal. It's as if consultants have found those letters to have some mystical drawing power. "Magic" has come to mean a soft rock contemporary format, while "Mix" is an industry term that refers to how the music is programmed.

If "Mix" works, why not have a format called "Daypart 93," or "Ratings 105?" Some markets even have stations known as "Froggy." Really.

Why do I prefer call letters? Because call letters preserve a station's individuality. There may be a "Magic" in Austin and Salt Lake City and Sacramento and Denver. But there's only one WLS. And when WLS used its classic positioning line "the Rock of Chicago," the slogan was always subordinate to the call letters. Universal slogan names are yet another testament to the stagnation of sameness.

Here's what I'd like to see in radio over the next several years:

First, the commission needs a well-thought-out policy on how to deal with the problems it created. Since I believe in a free marketplace, I find it hard to advocate the strict rules and regulations that radio used to come under. Perhaps it's best if news and public affairs content are dictated by an open market.

However, something must be done about the commission's decision to allow for multiple station management and ownership in individual markets. Of course, this relates to an earlier decision to relax regulations on signal coverage, and allowing stations to move from market to market. It's too late to do anything about that one. You can't tell a company that paid millions for a small town station that moved into Dallas that it now must move it back to the small town and reduce power. But the FCC can do something about multiple management.

I have long felt that even AM-FM combos were a problem to some extent, because many of these combos had a weak sister. If the FM was successful, the AM might suffer from lack of attention on the part of management. On the other hand, if the AM were the only station, then management would work hard to ensure a good product. I'd like to see an end to joint AM and FM ownership within a single market.

My feeling is that some AM stations have little reason to exist. With FM stations now totally dominant, small AM stations often come within the ratings margin-of-error of having no listeners at all. These stations usually have a more successful FM counterpart that is bringing in the bulk of that company's revenue. The

commission should move to do away with the smaller, unprofitable AMs. Once the AM dial is "cleaned up" then the AMs that remain should each be a powerful regional or national channel capable of serving a segment of the population that is bored by the endless music-for-the-masses on FM. Under this plan, most low frequency AMs would broadcast twenty-four hours a day at 5,000 watts, while higher frequencies would have 50,000 watts. How do we pay for this conversion? Suppose those who retain a competitive AM station pay a fee to the commission, which in turn, uses the money to compensate those whose stations go dark. This would leave the country with a smaller but stronger group of AM stations. And since there would be no cross ownership with FM in any one market, management would be eager to compete.

Further, the commission should move to reinstate the one-FM-station-per-market system that we used to have. It promotes the free market, stimulates competition, provides divergent points of view, and creates more jobs. As markets mature, they may be able to support the additional stations. If not, and some go dark—that's business.

The FCC, which is still opening up new channels in many markets, needs to look carefully before it approves new stations. In a city of 50,000 people, for example, the market is not served by having ten radio stations. A market that size is better off with three or four strong stations than with several that are struggling to survive.

In local markets, I'd like to see the return of innovation. I'd like to see some broadcast company, especially in small and medium markets, take a chance and do something different from what everyone else is doing. How about a five-minute hourly newscast on an adult music FM with tape cuts and voice reports just like AM used to do? For that matter, how about an all-news FM station? Or a C-Span type station that broadcasts major events live—such as a speech from the governor. Why shouldn't stereo FM stations broadcast live concerts in their markets? How about a new music format?

When Top 40 was originated in the fifties, it was brand new and innovative. That type of music is played today by oldies

stations. Why not create a format that plays that style of music, but with new product? Certainly there are enough record companies and artists to provide the music if there were radio stations willing to air it.

With most music stations playing only the hits, could a station attract listeners by playing a mixture of hit music with other records that no one else will touch? There's something to be said for playing a song that "you can only hear on this station." Besides, a lot of good records fail simply because they never get airplay.

Has anyone ever asked the question "are there any commercial formats other than music, news, and talk?" Would a major market radio station succeed with a "game show" format? How about a new dramatic series for radio such as the "CBS Mystery Theatre" of the seventies?

Of course, there are a lot of bright spots in radio today. Dallas' KVIL-FM is doing quite well with Cowboys play-by-play in stereo. KGSR-FM in Austin has pulled ratings with an eclectic sound that is largely acoustical. At the national level, Rush Limbaugh's program is an excellent example of what a well-informed and innovative talk show host can do.

Radio will continue to change. With a constant flow of new people and new talent, there will come new ideas. Even though television is today what radio was yesterday, radio may yet evolve into the medium of the future. Unencumbered by pictures or cables, it may well become our only free source of entertainment and information. Radio's greatest days may still be yet to come.

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