

Vermont Association of Broadcasters

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2015



**E. DEAN FINNEY**

1923 - 2015

Edgar Dean Finney, the first President of the VAB, passed away Oct. 14 in St. Johnsbury at the age of 92..



A, Connecticut native, Finney was hired to join the staff of WSKI in Montpelier in 1947. A year later, he began building and managing his own radio stations, including WTWN (now WSTJ) in St. Johnsbury, WIKE in Newport and WNIX (now WCFR) in Springfield. He sold his Vermont interests in 1979 and moved to Virginia. He returned to St. Johnsbury in 2005.

The VAB sends its deepest condolences to the family of the man who helped start it all.

**ROBERT F. COFFEY**

1928 - 2015



We were remiss last month in failing to note the passing of long time jazz disc jockey Robert

Coffey, who died Sept. 5 in Keene, NH at the age of 86.

He worked at stations in Keene and Peterborough before starting his Sunday morning "Coffee and Jazz" program on WTSA in Brattleboro in 1980. The show ran for 33 years and became a local institution. Donations in his memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association at [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

**REGISTER NOW FOR THE DEC. 5 AWARDS BANQUET**

The Hilton Burlington will again host the VAB's annual Hall of Fame Awards Banquet. The December 5 event starts with a cocktail hour at 5:30 p.m. This year, every registrant will receive three complimentary drink tickets. Cash bar will also be available. Dinner starts at 7 p.m. with the award ceremonies starting shortly thereafter.

Hall of Fame honorees this year include VOX AM/FM owner and General Manager Ken Barlow, Local 22/Local 44 Operations Director Ken Kasz and WJOY radio personality Ginny McGehee.

The Broadcaster of the Year award will be presented to the WPTZ-TV news team for their coverage of the Dannemora escapes. Meanwhile, Stewart Ledbetter of WPTZ and Vermont PBS will be presented with this year's Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his outstanding career.

Joe Tymecki, VPR's Chief Technology Officer and Director of Engineering, is this year's recipient of the Snyder-Teffner Award, which goes to someone who has demonstrated excellence behind the scenes.

The Alan Noyes Community Service Award will be presented to WSYB-AM in Rutland in recognition of their annual Christmas Fund drive to help bring holiday cheer to needy families in the Rutland area.

The VAB once again is helping to provide a special room rate for those who would like to stay the night of December 5. The special rate is just \$50 per room, while they last. People who would like to get the special rate can call (802) 658-6500 and ask for the VAB rate or book online by [clicking here](#).



Ken Barlow



Ken Kasz



Ginny McGehee



Stewart Ledbetter



Joe Tymecki

To register for the banquet,  
please [click here](#).

# FCC MOVES (FINALLY) TO REVITALIZE AM

By David Oxenford, Wilkinson Barker Knauer LLP



On Oct. 23, the FCC issued a plan for AM revitalization. Initially, the FCC adopted a number of changes to its rules, and made decisions as to a process by which AM stations can apply to FM translators. The FCC did the following:

It adopted a two-pronged approach to enable more AM stations to acquire FM translators. First, the Media Bureau will administer in 2016 a process where an AM licensee or permittee seeking to rebroadcast on an FM translator may acquire and relocate one and only one authorized non-reserved band FM translator station up to 250 miles, and specify any rule-compliant non-reserved band FM channel, as a minor modification application. Second, the FCC will open new FM translator application auction windows, beginning in 2017, for AM stations that do not file a modification application in 2016. There is more on this process on [our blog](#).

It modified the daytime community coverage requirement, for licensed AM facilities only, to require that the station's predicted or measured daytime 5 mV/m contour encompass only either 50 percent of the population or 50 percent of the area of the community of license;

It deleted the so-called "ratchet rule," which effectively requires that a Class A or B AM broadcaster, seeking to make facility changes that modify its AM signal, demonstrate that the improvements will result in an overall reduction in the amount of skywave interference;

It permitted wider implementation of modulation dependent carrier level control technologies;

It reduces the existing AM antenna efficiency standards by 25 percent as a means to provide relief to AM broadcasters;

The FCC directed the Media Bureau to entertain requests by existing AM broadcasters for experimental authorizations to operate with antenna systems that do not meet the modified antenna efficiency rules, provided that they can establish that such operation will not increase interference to other domestic or international AM stations and can demonstrate the stability of such systems. Also, they seek comment on other possible changes, including main studio rules and possible migration to an expanded FM band. Most of the rule changes will take effect 30 days after the order is published in the Federal Register.

There are many other proposals and details contained in the order itself that each AM licensee should review. The FCC's order is [available here](#).

(David Oxenford will host a FREE Political Broadcasting Seminar and Webcast on Dec. 16; Check the VAB website for sign-up and log-in information.)

## FREE SALES WEBINAR

Local Media Association is offering VAB members a free sales webinar.

"Overcoming Common Client Objections to Digital Advertising" will be presented live by digital consultant Stephen Warley on Tuesday, Nov. 10 from 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. ET.

To register, [click here](#)

FREE for all members by using the discount code: Broadcast1.

## NEW AWARD FOR COMMO



Vermont Lake Monsters radio broadcaster George Commo has been named

the winner of the inaugural Warner Fusselle Award for Radio Excellence, given to the best New York-Penn League broadcaster.

Commo is a member of both the VAB Hall of Fame and the Vermont Principal's Association Hall of Fame. Commo is also a ten-time winner of the National Sportscasters Association Vermont Sportscaster of the Year Award.

Commo has been involved with the Vermont Lake Monsters since the team's inception in 1994 (as the Vermont Expos) and has been the main announcer for 15 of the franchise's 22 years, including each of the last three seasons on WEAV 960 AM "The Zone." *Congratulations, George!*