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NEIL DREW 1941–2013



Longtime North Country radio and TV broadcaster Neil Drew passed away February 5 in Burlington. He was 71.

A native of Newport, VT, Drew worked at two radio stations in Maine before taking a job with WIRY-AM in Plattsburgh in 1961. He soon transferred to affiliate station WIRD-AM in Lake Placid, and, outside of a short stint at WNBZ-AM in Saranac Lake, stayed at WIRD as News Director until 1972, when he was offered the anchor job at WPTZ-TV.

He had a successful ten year run at WPTZ and served as a news producer for NBC during the 1980 Winter Olympic games in Lake Placid, where he witnessed the "Miracle on Ice" USA hockey game. Drew, however, declined a full-time job offer from NBC News, preferring to stay in the North Country.

Over the years, he interviewed newsmakers as diverse as Indira Gandhi, Kate Smith and Col. Harlan Sanders. He served as longtime local host of the Jerry Lewis MDA telethon on WPTZ. Drew also owned and operated the restaurant now known as the Red Fox Restaurant in Saranac Lake from 1967 to 1975.

He left TV to form a production company in 1982 but returned to broadcasting in 1997, when he became News Director for WICY-AM in Malone and its affiliate stations in the Martz Communication Group. He continued in that job until his recent illness.

The VAB Voice



March, 2013

CONGRESS GEARS UP TO FIGHT PERFORMANCE TAX

Last month, Reps. Michael Conaway (R-TX) and Gene Green (D-TX) introduced H. Con. Res. 16, the Local Radio Freedom Act, in the House of Representatives. The resolution is co-sponsored by 73 members of Congress and is expected to garner broad bipartisan support, as in previous Congresses where it attracted upwards of 200 cosponsors.



Rep. Gene Green (D-TX)

Radio's free promotion translates to as much as \$2.4 billion annually in music sales for record labels and artists. And this doesn't even include the enormous revenues they receive from concerts, merchandising, endorsements and other licensing arrangements.

We thank the representatives who have signed on to the resolution. They recognize the harm performance tax legislation would cause to local radio stations and their listeners.

DENNIS SNYDER TO "POWER DOWN" AFTER 50+ YEARS

Dennis Snyder, longtime Chief Engineer for Hall Communications in Vermont and longtime VAB Treasurer, has announced he will retire from radio on May 31.



Dennis Snyder

A native of Catawba Island, Ohio, Snyder studied electronics while in the Navy in Hawaii and worked part-time for radio stations there. On a visit home to see his parents, he was offered a radio engineering job for a group in Port Clinton, Ohio. He took the job and soon constructed a 500 watt directional AM for the company.

"They had never done a remote broadcast before, and I talked the GM into broadcasting live at the County Fair. It so happens, that is where I met my future wife Diana, she was the County Home Extension Agent. We were married in less than a year," Snyder recalled.

A visit to watch Diana do a TV show on Channel 11 in Toledo resulted in a job offer from the TV station. While in Toledo, he was once locked in a studio with Vice-President Hubert Humphrey and his Secret Service

agents as Humphrey took part in a satellite interview from England.

But Snyder says he missed radio, so he applied for a job at WJOY AM/FM in Burlington.

"Frank Balch made me an offer I couldn't refuse. November 1968, Diana and I became Vermont residents."

Balch wanted WJOY-FM (now WOKO) to be the first FM stereo station in Vermont, and Dennis made it happen. Hall purchased the two stations from Balch in 1983, and Dennis later oversaw the additions of WKOL-FM, WIZN-FM and WBTZ-FM.

He has served on the NAB Engineering Conference Committee, the NAB Engineering Advisory Committee, and the NAB Digital Audio Broadcast Technical Advisory Group. He also served many years on the South Burlington School Board.

He was inducted into the VAB Hall of Fame in 1999 and has served as VAB Treasurer since 1981. The VAB thanks Dennis for his invaluable help over the years, and we wish Dennis and Diana the most "JOY"-ful of retirements.

Thank you, Dennis!

Help Your Station Stand Out!

The VAB wants to help you and your station become as profitable as possible. We've lined up some valuable seminars for this year's VAB Convention on May 16 to help you do just that!



One of our three morning seminars this year will feature sales trainer Katey McGuckin-Woolam of P1 Selling. She'll help your station cut through the clutter of competition.

In a mid-sized market you will have a daily newspaper, a cable provider (or two), three television stations, twelve plus radio stations, three plus phone books, a business journal and direct mail. Oh yeah, and don't forget the new media of satellite, Google AdWords, Smartphones, and internet radio and television.

Let's face it, we are not alone and it's your job to stand out from this ever-increasing crowd of marketing "experts". So what's your strategy? In this session, we will take a look at 10 techniques to enhance your personal brand. The objective is not only to survive but to thrive in today's competitive environment.



Before joining P1 Selling, Katey was a longtime top-rated radio personality in Kansas City and a winner (and six-time finalist) for the NAB's Crystal Award for Public Service. She knows what stations need to succeed in promotions and sales.

P1 Learning is an online video based program that gives you the ability to train your entire team 24/7. The online program offers a complete set of training modules and services to meet the needs of your station, and starting this year you will have free access as a VAB Member. An afternoon session at the convention will introduce you to this great new member benefit. Registration for the May 16 convention will begin soon at www.vab.org.

SQUIER GETS HIS OWN AWARD

VAB Hall of Fame member Ken Squier picked up another award last month as he and fellow auto racing broadcaster Barney Hall were honored at the Fourth Annual NASCAR Hall of Fame ceremonies.



Squier and Hall were presented with the inaugural Squier-Hall Award for NASCAR Media Excellence. The award will become a permanent part of the annual Hall of Fame awards.

VPT'S MERONE HONORED



Belated congrats to VPT Senior Producer Joe Merone, who was inducted into the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences New England Chapter's 2012

Silver Circle late last year in Boston. The Silver Circle recognition honors television professionals who have performed distinguished service for more than 25 years.

Joe Merone began his professional career at Vermont Public Television in 1980. He has been a production technician, staff director, producer and executive producer. He has been nominated for multiple Emmy awards.

TYMECKI NEW PBS TECH CHAIR

VPT Chief Technology Officer Joe Tymecki of Fairfax has been elected chair of the PBS Enterprise Technology Advisory Committee. The group represents the technology interests of the 350 PBS member stations.



A graduate of VTC, Tymecki has been head of engineering at Vermont's statewide public television network since 2008. Good luck, Joe!

Reminder!

Entries for the VAB Commercial of the Year Awards must be post-marked no later than March 15, 2013.

Contest rules and entry forms are available at our website: www.vab.org.