



VALLEY BROADCAST LEGENDS

Issue #138 *"Honoring the Past, Sharing the Present, Embracing the Future in Media"*

April 2024

April 9 • Aviator's Restaurant at Executive Airport • Doors open 11 a.m. • Lunch service at 11:30

Career Longevity? Yes, It's Possible



"Career longevity" and "broadcasting" may seem like an oxymoron, but our April 9 program will feature several local broadcast personalities who have managed to do just that.

Take long-time KCRA anchors **Dave Walker** and **Lois Hart**. Dave and Lois began their careers in the 1970s and stayed in the television news business until their retirement in 2008. They met when they were both working at KQVR and married in 1979. Their many career distinctions include anchoring CNN's very first newscast in 1980.

Representing the radio side of broadcasting, we're pleased to welcome **Tony Cox** to the April 9 meeting. Tony was still in his teens when

he started his radio career in the 1970s and he's still going strong after nearly 50 years. His lengthy résumé includes voice-overs, media manager for the Kings, announcer for the Oakland Raiders and Athletics, and the San Jose Sharks, Creative Services Director for KFRC-The Big 610, and DJ at Sacramento's KROY-FM. Currently he is CEO of Tony Cox Videos. Just a few weeks ago, he appeared on the **Pat Walsh** call-in show on KFBK, along with fellow local legends **Big Jim Hall** and **Stan Atkinson**.



Then there's our own **Kristine Hanson**, who will be celebrating her 50th year as a weather presenter in September. Her career includes stints at KTXL and KCRA here in Sacramento, and at stations in the San Francisco market and Santa Rosa. Though this Emmy Award-winning meteorologist talks of retiring, she's still in the game, forecasting the weather on KQVR.

Speaking of Stan Atkinson, we're all aware of the recent tribute to "Stan the Man" that aired on KQVR, right? Our hardworking Secretary, **Allen Chamberlin**, notified all of us of the original and rescheduled air date. Just one of the benefits of membership. It has since been posted on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcGOLkPN-Eg>



This promises to be a fun and entertaining program that you won't want to miss. Remember, we need RSVPs at least a week in advance. In other words, by April 2.

RSVP for the April 9 Meeting:

Allen Chamberlin: 916/456-7654

VBL-geek@theguys.org

Cost: \$30 payable at the door. Cash or check only!

Reservations required by April 2!

Member Hobbies: On the Bus with Bud

by VBL Board Member **Ward Koppel**

Valley Broadcast Legend **Bud Kress**'s interest in bus transit predates Sacramento Regional Transit. It goes back to the Sacramento Transit Authority days. "In the spring of 1971, I noticed poles going up near my home on Steiner Drive in South Sacramento," Bud says. "A few days later, Bus Stop signs appeared on those poles, and after a few weeks passed, I was amazed to see a big city bus with a '7 Franklin-44th Street' head-sign and a 'Florin Center' card in the window come roaring down through our quiet neighborhood." Bud says as a teenager the bus system got him to school, to his grandmother's house in Oak Park, and gave him freedom to explore Sacramento.

He has built friendships in the bus community in both Northern and Southern California Transit Clubs. A highlight is the annual "Sho-n-Go Car Show,". Bud says his friend Scott has a fleet of old and new buses he provides to the movie industry. "If a TV show, commercial, or movie has a bus featured in it, it is more than likely one of



Scott's. The movie *Speed* is a great example," according to Bud. Scott brought some of his buses to the show. Bud says, "It is so much fun watching kids young and old come up the steps into these big moving whales. They instantly smile and tell their kids, 'These are the buses I rode as a kid going to school.' I enjoy watching restorations and riding on these older examples of GM new and old-look buses and taking excursions with other bus fans." Bud says older buses sound different and ride differently than modern ones.

Bud was even mentioned last year in the Regional Transit blog as the district celebrated its 50th-anniversary. He says, "Bus drivers in particular served as friends and mentors" and adds that he also found friendship among the other riders heading to and from work.

On a personal note, I have always enjoyed talking to Bud about his love of the bus community. Growing up I lived in an area where bus service was limited or non-existent, so his experiences are something I have not had.

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Kristine Hanson, Ward Koppel

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Audio-Visual: Bud Kress

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LEGENDS**

P.O. Box 601861
Sacramento, CA 95860-1861

Stock up on Swag!

VBL logo mugs, t-shirts, caps and more:

<https://shop.spreadshirt.com/vbl-boutique>

President's Message:

News Good and So-So

by VBL Interim President **Joyce Krieg**



By now, most of you have heard the good news, but just in case . . . Aviator's restaurant has received not just a stay of execution, but an actual pardon. In early March, the County Department of Airports, which owns and controls the terminal at Executive Airport, announced it would no longer look for a new vendor to take over the Aviator's space. Instead, they will work with Chik, the current operator, to extend the lease.

This is, of course, great news for VBL, as we are no longer under the gun to find a new place to meet. Eventually we will outgrow Aviator's. As I like to say, that's a good problem to have. But until then, it's a huge relief to Madame President (Interim) not to have to fret about finding a meeting venue along with everything else.

It's also one of those rare situations where it gives a person faith in our elected and appointed government officials. They actually respected the will of the people, the outpouring of support from Aviator's thousands of loyal customers. They listened and did the right thing. How often does that happen?

As to that so-so news . . . our effort to incorporate as a nonprofit continues to plod along. We're dealing with lawyers and government agencies—what more can I say? One more form needs blanks filled in before we submit it to the IRS. Then there's a 90-day waiting period to see if our application will be approved.

Maybe by our August meeting we'll have some good news to report. Stay tuned.

Final Reminder: Dues are Due

If you've already paid your dues for 2024, you may ignore this article. But if not, please renew your membership now.

Just \$25 will keep our beloved social club going for another year. Also, we earmark \$5 per member specifically for the Oral History Project.

The easiest way to pay your dues is to bring cash or check to the April 9 luncheon. \$55 will cover the cost of the buffet and your membership for 2024. Can't make it to the luncheon? Make out a check to Valley Broadcast Legends and mail it to:

P.O. Box 601861

Sacramento, CA 95860-1861

We appreciate your prompt attention.

The Legends

Membership as of March 25, 2024

John Archer • Julie Archer
 Jay "DJ Jay" Arnold • Stan Atkinson
 Vic Biondi • Bill Bishofberger
 Thomas Blazowski • Matias Bombal
 Tom Buck • Allen Chamberlin
 Mark Chiolis • Tim Church
 Chris Cochran • Anita Fein • Curt Foley
 Vicki Fox • Bill George • Gary Gerould
 Marty Gonzalez • Samuel Gonzalez
 Dennis Grayson • Michael Guiliano
 Kristine Hanson • Bud Harmon
 Fred Harris • Mark Hedlund • Jerry Henry
 Betsy Hite • Rich Ibarra
 Rick Kavooras • Richard Kermickel
 Tip Kindel • Jan "Neely" Klevan
 Kim Kline • Cindy Koppel
 Ward Koppel • Bill Kreutzer • Bud Kress
 Joyce Krieg • Eleanor Kuechler-VanAcker
 Bob Lang • Dick Leeson • Mike Luery
 Jeanne Marie • Lizette Martinez- Hopkins
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 Bruce Riggs • Jay Rudin • Beth Ruyak
 Bill Schmechel • Walt Shaw • Dann Shively
 Barbara Souza • Roy Stearns
 Jim Stimson • Steve Swatt
 Gregory VanAcker • Bob Venditti
 Gregory Virtue • Tom Wagner
 Marla Wells • Dave Williams
 Adrian Woodfork • Dennis Yoder
 Jan Young • Steve Zraggen



Ken Day: 1956-2024

Television news photographer **Ken Day** lost a five-year battle with Multiple Myeloma on February 19. He had been undergoing a new form of treatment at Stanford Medical Center that involved re-engineered T-cells. The therapy actually got rid of the cancer—but the side effects were so severe, after a valiant struggle he elected to halt any further attempts to prolong his life.

Ken had a passion for photography since his teenage years, and made the dream of being a professional photographer a reality. He worked for 15 years at KOVR and then launched a freelance career, with ABC network news among his many clients.

Former KOVR anchor **Stan Atkinson** called Ken a “master talent,” with colleague **Joyce Mitchell** adding, “That he was, indeed. But everyone who knew Ken also knew that he was a truly all-around, outstanding, wonderful guy who embraced noble qualities like kindness, dedication, commitment, and values.”

As news of his death circulated, tributes began to pour in. ABC anchor **David Muir** honored Ken on ABC’s nightly newscast, calling him a member of the ABC family. **Steve LaRosa** remembered Ken’s “positive energy and great humor,” and former KOVR photographer **Stan Pechner** said, “Ken was kind, caring, and always took the time to answer my questions or show me how.”

Ken was a graduate of Sacramento State University who covered everything from earthquakes to Presidential visits and special assignments in Israel and Mexico. He won several Emmy awards and was inducted into the Silver Circle of the SF/NorCal chapter of the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, **Vicki Day**, and four children.



Dunbar Wakayama: 1948-2024



One-time Sacramento radio personality **Dunbar Wakayama** died at his home in Ogden, Utah, on March 12. Born Jon Reeves Wakayama in Pearl City, Hawaii, he took the air name of Dunbar from a character in the Joseph Heller novel *Catch-22*. He was also known to call himself “The Happy Hawaiian” on the air. He worked at a variety of Sacramento radio stations in the late 1960s and early 70s, including KSFM, KCRA, KXOA and KRAK.

Our own **Tom Buck** recalls Dunbar applying for a gig at KSFM in 1967, and before the boss showed up to do the interview, he’d already demonstrated his skill by untangling a tape deck. “One of those Muzak decks that piped music into stores on the station’s sub-carrier, and stopped the irate customer phone calls I was getting,” Tom says.

Dunbar returned to Hawaii in 1973 and opened his own shop, Audio-Media Recording, where he did everything from sound for films being shot in Hawaii to announcng pro wrestling matches. He retired in 1999 and moved to Ogden, Utah. He is survived by his wife and daughter.

Meeting Memories: February 13, 2024



Trailblazer **Adrian Woodfork** shared memories of being the first Black television journalist at KCRA, and possibly in the entire Sacramento-Stockton market. KCRA alums came out in force to support Adrian and catch up on old times, including **Alice Scott**, **Joyce Mitchell** and **Bill George**. *Photos by Matías Bombal.*

Another Legend Lost: Joey Mitchell



Just at press time for this issue of the VBL newsletter, word began to circulate as to the passing of long-time local DJ **Joey Mitchell**. Here's what his family posted on Facebook, edited for space considerations:

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Joey Mitchell, a beloved radio DJ who brought joy, music, and laughter to Sacramento airwaves for over 50 years on stations like 1140 KRAK Country, Cool Oldies 101.1 and 101.5 KHITS. Joey was a cherished voice in the community, a friend to many, a lifetime New York Yankees fan, and a passionate advocate for the causes he believed in.

The family is deeply grateful for the outpouring of love and support and ask that in lieu of gifts or flowers, donations be made to the Make A Wish foundation in Joey's name. <https://mawcanv.com/joeymitchell> This gesture would be a fitting tribute to Joey's generous spirit and his lifelong commitment to bringing happiness to others, especially children facing challenging circumstances.

Joey's warm presence will be dearly missed, but his impact on the community and the lives he touched will continue to resonate. He would have wanted to extend a personal farewell to each individual he met, thanking them for their friendship and support throughout his journey if he could.

Joey battled a lung condition called ILD (Interstitial Lung Disease) which was complicated by double pneumonia. Joey really enjoyed reading everyone's replies to his post about being in the hospital and couldn't believe all the lives he touched. Shortly after, Joey passed peacefully with family. For all of Joey's friends, listeners, and supporters, the family plans on having a "Celebration of Life" to be announced at a later date.