

I went to Brown Institute in Minneapolis after graduating West Concord High School in 1971. It was a radio/tv broadcasting school. We also had radio engineering training as well. Actually that part of it was more memorizing the answers to questions so that one could get a first class FCC engineering license so that we could work solo at the radio station. It never did make much sense unless you were actually going to be doing some electrical or radio engineering. It's not even a requirement today and hasn't been for a long time. After graduating from Brown, I attended Mankato State to study journalism. In 1974, while working at the college radio station KMSU, which was located on the upper floor of Old Main on the lower campus, I got a call and an offer to work part-time at KOWO in Waseca. So I started in the summer of 1974, the summer that Richard Nixon called it quits. The two events have nothing to do with each other; it just helps me remember the date I first got into commercial radio.

At this first 'real' radio job I didn't have many highlights. The two that come to mind include the time at the Waseca County fair where I had an interview with George Jones lined up but he was a no-show. I was told that I shouldn't feel too bad because in those days, George drank a lot and did that to everybody. The Waseca County fair also brought in Frank Sinatra Junior. Frank Jr. was not the singer or the audience-draw that his dad would have been. Actually I think the fair board wished they would have passed on him.

After about a year of working in Waseca, I took a hiatus from radio and came back to the farm. Let's fast forward to 1987. I actually went back to KOWO in Waseca to work for one week. During that week, I interviewed at KDHL in Faribault. Short story long, I became the third farm broadcaster in KDHL's history that started in 1948. Many of you remember Dean Curtiss. He was the first voice heard on KDHL. He was President of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB) in 1971 and is a member of the NAFB Hall of Fame. Rod Johnson of Cannon Falls became the 2nd farm broadcaster at KDHL. He left in the summer of 1987 and I started there in September of that year. I still see Rod around Cannon Falls. He was the public address announcer for the Minnesota Timberwolves for 21 years having retired from that last year. Today he runs a very successful auction business.



Among the people I had the opportunity to interview while I was at KDHL include singers Dan Seals, Lee Greenwood and Marilyn Sellers. Hockey player Bill Goldsworthy came to the studios one day as we were going to carry the North Star games on KDHL. We did a half hour interview on air and then another 20 minutes off air. I still have the autograph framed along with his hockey card.

From Faribault I moved on to Sioux City, Iowa to work at farm and news station KMNS. It was there that I got to work with Col Jon Phillips. He's a colonel because of his auctioneering

abilities. At one time, he auctioneered the largest livestock sales in Nebraska, South Dakota and Iowa. He later got into the commodities business and while doing that got started doing ag markets on the radio. He and I worked together a lot traveling across the Midwest to various ag events and fairs and conventions. One of the memorable events was at the Cherokee County fair in 1994. We were doing live broadcasts from the fairgrounds in Cherokee and it was hotter than a 'two dollar pistol', to quote Conway Twitty. It was 110 degrees in the shade. So we're out there interviewing people and to the tent comes the local banker. He's complete with suit and tie. I got hotter just looking at him. But he didn't seem to mind the heat. In fact after he left, Col says to me; 'Did you notice he didn't even sweat?' 'That's one cold blooded banker!' We told that story as we traveled around northwest Iowa and it seemed that everyone we told that story to knew who he was as his reputation preceded him. He literally and figuratively was a cold blooded banker.

Col Jon and I were investors in a brand new FM radio station in South Sioux City, Nebraska in the mid 90's. We did our broadcasts on that station for a couple of years before it was sold and the format changed. I ended up in West Point, Nebraska to work with radio station KTIC, which was part of the Rural Radio group. KRVN in Lexington is the flagship station for the group that was started and owned by farmers. It's the only one like it in the nation. The RVN stands for the Rural Voice of Nebraska. They've expanded since I left the station in 2001 and they own about 9 radio stations plus the Rural Radio Network. It was a great environment to work in as they were ag oriented. We always joked about it being the only place where an ag or market report would supercede a song. Most radio stations want short concise reports if any at all because they want to play more music.



From West Point, NE I moved on to work with the Waitt Farm Network. They were based in Yankton, South Dakota for about a year and then moved headquarters to Omaha. Norm Waitt



Senior was a big cattleman in South Dakota and Nebraska. His sons, Norm Jr and Ted started Gateway Computers. You might recall that they would ship their computers in black and white boxes that resembled a Holstein. The story they told us as to why was because they needed a loan from their dad to expand the computer business. He said that in order for him to be able to write off some of this on his taxes, the loan had to have something to do with cattle, hence the Holstein boxes.