



VALLEY BROADCAST LEGENDS

Issue #117

“Honoring the Past, Sharing the Present, Embracing the Future in Media”

October 2020

President’s Message: Nibbled to Death by Ducks

by VBL President **Jim Drennan**



Those of us living in the Age of Covid-19 often complain of the lack of social interaction. Especially if we’re single, we’re stuck at home with only the TV, the phone and the internet to keep us company. After cleaning out the garage, weeding the garden, taking a regular walk (foul air permitting) and making an occasional foray to the barber shop and supermarket, we’re pretty much left to our own devices.

Unless we’re old.

At 84, I’m often reminded of such bromides as “Old age is a shipwreck” and “Old age isn’t for sissies.” In my case, old age is a time to be tethered to the doctor and the drugstore and to answer the call when summoned.

As I write this I’m getting ready to head for the Kaiser facility in downtown Sacramento for the fourth of seven rounds of infusion with an antibiotic. This became necessary when it was found I had a urinary tract infection.



The infection was probably the result of my having a Foley catheter because of my inability to urinate normally. And that was the result of the radiation I had nine years ago to cure my intestinal cancer. One thing leads to another.

I also have to go to the Kaiser lab once a month to monitor my Stage 0 chronic leukemia. And today, I’ll go to another Kaiser facility to pick up my new eyeglasses, necessitated by my recent second round of cataract surgery.

And then there’s my recent treatment to prevent skin cancer on my arms, my need to get my hearing aids cleaned, and to do some maintenance on my CPAP machine for my sleep apnea.

Continued inside

A VBL Double Header Zooming Your Way

Our first “virtual” Valley Broadcast Legends meeting was an experiment; we were unsure whether our members would care to take part in a “luncheon” without lunch and no chance to sit side by side to gossip and reminisce. As it turned out, our worries were misplaced.

An estimated 25 of you took part in the Zoom meeting on August 13. We had plenty of time to chat, and our speaker, *Sacramento Bee* columnist **Marcos Breton**, was terrific.



Carol Daly

So, we’ve decided to do it again for our Thursday, October 8 meeting, but this time it’s going to be a double header.

The first part of the program will be devoted to retired Sacramento County Sheriff’s Detective **Carol Daly**, who was one of the lead investigators involved in the East Area Rapist/Golden State Killer case. Carol will share with us

some of her most memorable experiences in that long-running nightmare.

The second part of the program will take a last-minute look at our crazy presidential election season. Our regulars, ace political writer **Steve Swatt** and journalism professor **Dr. Barbara O’Connor**, will be with us but also—thanks to the magic of Zoom—so will former KCRA/3 News Director **Bill Bauman** from swing state Florida and former KFBK news/talk host **Dave Williams** from deep in the heart of Texas. Bill is now a consulting partner with Bauman Media Group, and

Continued inside



Steve Swatt



Barbara O’Connor

Travel Tips from Ellie and Greg: BYO TP

by **Ellie Kuechler-VanAcker**

Dateline: Year 5 of the Covid pandemic. Oh, is it only six months? Some days seem shorter than others as we muddle along. I'd say our greatest successes have been our road trips. With a little planning, you can still be safe and yet feel as if you've had a bit of a vacation.

I was craving a walk on the beach, so Greg and I drove to Rodeo Beach, which is the first exit on the Sausalito side of the Golden Gate Bridge. You take a one-way tunnel to the beach, which is open and sparsely populated on a weekday morning. Well-separated visitors, most in masks, can enjoy marsh birds on the way to the beach, and surfers when you get there. There is also a hike upwards to get the Marin Headlands views the area is famous for. The day we went, it was sweltering here in the valley, so the brisk wind and wispy fog were very welcome. We brought and needed our jackets, making the jaunt feel as if we really had left our everyday lives behind.

I highly recommend Emporio Rulli for cookies and treats. This Italian pastry shop is just a little way up the road in Larkspur, and has widely spaced tables outside to enjoy, plus an accessible restroom. Speaking of restrooms, we have found Costco stores to be helpful with good safety protocols, and the big rest stop above Six Flags, called Hunter Hill, feels safe as well. Doors wide open ... bring your own TP.



Beautiful Rodeo Beach, near Sausalito in Marin County, was the destination for a "Covid-safe" outing by VBL adventurers **Ellie Kuechler-VanAcker** and **Greg VanAcker**.

To take along: masks, reusable or disposable gloves, Clorox wipes, picnic lunch, hat, jacket and just in case—a roll of TP.

We're planning our next outing to the Golden Gate Bridge viewing area on the Sausalito side with our foldable bikes in the trunk. Mission: to pedal across the bridge, which we've never done. It will bring back memories of sailing under the bridge in another time. For me, the chilly bridge and the view will be enough for now. Well, plus Rulli cookies.

October Program

Continued from front page

Dave is the host of the morning news block on Dallas radio station KLIF.

The show will get underway on Thursday, October 8 at 11 a.m. Free, no reservations needed and no need to turn in your badge/lanyard at the end of the meeting. Watch your email the day before, Wednesday, October 7, as we'll be sending out the web link and instructions to join Thursday's meeting.



Bill Bauman



Dave Williams

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**VALLEY BROADCAST
LEGENDS**

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It's a Long Way from Sacramento

Now, here's a puzzle worthy of an episode of Netflix's *Unsolved Mysteries*. Namely, how on earth did KFBK's traffic plane end up all the way in upstate New York? Duh, a pilot flew it there—but how and why? Someone emailed this photo to the KFBK newsroom a few months back after spotting the Big Black Bird parked at a small airport near Alexandria Bay, NY. Inquiries to “Commander” Bill Eveland, now long retired and living in Nevada, failed to shed any light on the mystery.

Your newsletter editor has fond memories of riding shotgun with Commander Bill back in the early 1980s. I was working morning drive at B-K and had my afternoons free. So whenever I was in the mood for a little adventure, I'd head out to the old Phoenix Field in Fair Oaks and hop aboard Newsflight 1530 for the afternoon news block. Sometimes Bill would even let me do take-offs and landings—of course, he was sitting right next to me, ready to grab the controls if I screwed anything up!

Later on, when I was KFBK's Promotions Director, I coordinated several fundraisers, usually after a natural disaster, selling rides with Commander Bill at \$100 a pop. Those proved to be extremely popular with our listeners. They'd sell out quickly and we made boatloads of money for the Red Cross. But can you imagine trying to do something like that now? The lawyers would have us for lunch!

President's Message

Continued from front page

One of my favorite expressions is “being nibbled to death by ducks.” That's the way I feel sometimes, and I imagine a lot of you out there are coping with the same experiences. And I also imagine that most of us are willing to put up with all of this in order to keep on “stayin' alive.”

But don't let any of your young friends get away with thinking that getting old is easy. It's hard work.



The Legends

Membership as of Sept. 28, 2020

Jerry Agresti • Bob Aldrich
 John Archer • Julie Archer
 Jay “DJ Jay” Arnold • Stan Atkinson
 Linda Bayley • Vic Biondi
 Bill Bishofberger • Thomas Blazowski
 Matias Bombal • Mel Boyd • Jim Brewer
 Tom Buck • Dick Cable
 Allen Chamberlin • Don Chandler
 Mark Chiolis • Chris Cochran
 Jim Drennan • Mike Duncan
 Claire Elliott • Curt Foley • Vicki Fox
 Bill George • Gary Gerould
 Dennis Grayson • Cyndy Green
 Michael Guiliano • Kristine Hanson
 Bud Harmon • Fred Harris • Jerry Henry
 Betsy Hite • Tom Hughes • Rich Ibarra
 Steve Jackson • John Jervis
 Rick Kavooras • Richard Kermickel
 Tip Kindel • Jan “Neely” Klevan
 Kim Kline • Ward Koppel • Bill Kreutzer
 Bud Kress • Joyce Krieg
 Eleanor Kuechler-VanAcker • Bob Lang
 Dick Leeson • Dee McCafferty
 Michael McCarron • Jeanne Marie
 Lizette Martinez-Hopkins
 Michael Messmer • Dana Michaels
 Ron Middlekauff • Bob Miller
 Alan Milner • Joyce Mitchell
 Mike Montgomery • Keith Moon
 Ray Nelson • George Nyberg
 John D. O'Brien • Deborah Pacyna
 Mary Jane Popp • Tiffany Powell
 Craig Prosser • Rich Raymond • Rick Reed
 Bruce Riggs • Jay Rudin • Beth Ruyak
 Bill Schmechel • Walt Shaw
 Becky Shephard • Dann Shively
 Ken Shuper • Barbara Souza
 Roy Stearns • Barry Stigers • Bill Storm
 Bob Suffel • Steve Swatt
 Gregory VanAcker • Bob Venditti
 Gregory Virtue • Tom Wagner
 Frank Wallace • Marla Wells
 Dennis Yoder • Jan Young



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“All in the Family” : Lloyd Shaffer, Marty Hernandez

by VBL President **Jim Drennan**

He played many roles in his 87 years of life...husband, father, teacher, engineer, broadcaster, VBL president ... but according to his loving daughter **Carol Grant**, his favorite role was as an entertainer ... specifically a magician.

We're talking about **Lloyd Shaffer**, who passed away in mid-September after a long battle with cancer.

Born in New Jersey, Lloyd and his new wife wound up in Sacramento in the mid-fifties. After his first job at Aerojet ended downsizing at the plant, Lloyd went to work at KXTV/10, where he served for ten years.

And then came what his daughter Carol says was his favorite stint, creating a high school radio station in Broderick. Recalls former student and KAHJ owner Legend **Jerry Henry**:

“Mr. Shaffer was instrumental in licensing and then building out the offices, studios and transmitter of KWHS, a student-run low power FM station that broadcast from the high school.

“Hundreds of high school students went through his classes over the years. Having an on-air shift was the highlight, but there are so many other things required to run a radio station. Chief engineer, program director, news director, music director, promotions director and all other staff positions were held by students. Mr. Shaffer taught classes on FCC licensing and we would take ‘field trips’ to the FCC office in San Francisco for our ‘final exam.’

“Many students, including fellow Legend **Becky Shepard**, went on to careers in radio and TV broadcasting.

“We had a number of reunions over the years and as Mr. Shaffer's health began to decline recently, we moved on to bi-weekly Zoom get-togethers. Recently he asked us to share a favorite memory of KWHS. I mentioned the time he walked into the studio, picked the needle off the record, and broke the 45 in half live on the air. All I did was fulfill a listener's request to dedicate a song to another student. The song just happened to be Elton John's new single, ‘The Bitch is Back.’”

On her Facebook page, Becky wrote, “Have you ever thought about how much a teacher has changed your life? Who helped you? In my life, Mr. Shaffer opened the doors of opportunity for me to become a disc jockey in Sacramento and beyond. After having a head injury in high school, he helped me at the age of 17 to receive a 1st Class Radio Telephone FCC license

to advance my career in radio. I'm grateful having Mr. Shaffer as a teacher, friend and someone who believed in me. Whatever you do in life make sure you have people who believe in you. Mr. Shaffer, I hope you are performing your magic tricks up in the sky with a big audience. You are special and loved.”

Lloyd was a member of VBL during our first decade, serving as vice-president for most of 2008. He stepped into the president's role in late 2008 following the death of president **Vic Sterling** and kept the ship afloat until February of 2009, when **Walt Shaw** took over.

After KWHS, Lloyd ran his own radio school on Del Paso Boulevard and taught in the Grant High School district. But according to daughter Carol, he was always up for a magic trick or two.

“He didn't always succeed,” says Carol. “But when he failed, he made a big joke out of it and everybody laughed.”

Now that's a real entertainer.

Legend **Stan Atkinson** reports that long-time KOVR/13 news cameraman **Marty Hernandez** passed away a couple of weeks back. Stan says diabetes was the culprit and that it had forced Marty to take an early retirement.



Marty Hernandez

Stan says, “We alumni threw a Marty Party on Zoom. We filled a Zoom Room with 60 other alum. Folks were seen and heard from numerous cities in California as well as Las Vegas, Phoenix, Tucson, Austin, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Chicago, Eugene, Puyallup and New York City. Most of us hadn't been connected for a decade or more. So it was a landmark gathering. Yours truly was the congenial Host. However, the Host had a Ghost ... Jameson, a 5-star IT guy, muting and unmuting along the way in our hour and 45 minutes together. As usual, someone else was making me look good. A now and forever cherished moment in time.”



Lloyd Shaffer at the last Zoom meeting of the KWHS alumni group.