



VALLEY BROADCAST LEGENDS

Issue #136 *“Honoring the Past, Sharing the Present, Embracing the Future in Media”*

December 2023

Dec. 12 • Aviator’s Restaurant at Executive Airport • Doors open 11 a.m. • Lunch service at 11:30

December Meeting: Holiday Memories

VBL’s December meeting is traditionally an informal one. No guest speaker, no formal program, just plenty of time for us to visit and enjoy each other’s company. This time around, your VBL board thought it might be fun to pass the mic around and share memories of the holiday seasons from days of yore. It could be broadcast-related. Those infamous station Christmas parties, perhaps. Or it could be a personal memory of a December you’ll never forget.

But what, you may ask, about our school grant program? Doesn’t our December meeting usually feature a teacher and several students? Not to mention the photo op with that giant check. The fact is, the board did our best to find a school with a broadcast journalism program that could use financial assistance from us, but nothing panned out. Maybe



it was bad timing on our part. Maybe the schools didn’t quite understand what we were offering. Money? No strings attached, other than that it be used in some way for the school’s CCTV or low-power radio station? Perhaps it sounded too good to be true. Better luck next year!

A reminder: We need your lunch RSVP one week in advance. That means we must hear from you no later than **Tuesday, December 5**. See details in below.

Menu

Shrimp Scampi

Prime Rib

Rice Pilaf

Scalloped Potatoes

Mixed Vegetables

Green Salad

**RSVP for the December 12 Meeting:
Allen Chamberlin: 916/456-7654**

VBL-geek@theguys.org

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

Reservations required by Dec. 5!



Legend **John Archer** ran across this very cool ad on the “Sacramento Memories 1940-1990” Facebook page. No idea of the date of this particular newspaper ad, but we do know KBET signed on the air March 20, 1955, and changed its call letters to KXTV in April 27, 1959, so it must have ran sometime during those four years. Supposedly the KBET call letters stood for “Best Bet in TV.” When the station was purchased by Corinthian Broadcasting in 1958, the new owners started the process to change the call letters.

Time to Pay Dues

Yes, indeed. When your mailbox is bursting with holiday catalogues, and all those Hallmark Christmas movies start popping up, and “The Little Drummer Boy” is playing on [That Christmas Channel](#) ... then it must be time to pay your VBL dues for the upcoming year.

Once again, we’re asking for \$25 to keep our beloved social club going for another year. Even though we run a tight ship, we do have some operating expenses: the Post Office box rental, picking up the lunch tab for our guest speakers, occasional office supplies, website hosting, things like that. 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 December 12 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. No one likes having to dun their friends for money, and that goes double for the VBL board.

Officers

Interim President: Joyce Krieg

Vice President: Bud Kress

Treasurer: Bill George

Secretary: Allen Chamberlin

Directors: Walt Shaw, Anita Fein,

Kristine Hanson, Ward Koppel

In Perpetuity Our Founder

Harry Warren

Newsletter Editor: Joyce Krieg

Webmaster: Allen Chamberlin

Audio-Visual: Bud Kress

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President's–Secretary's Message The Legends

by VBL Secretary **Allen Chamberlin**

President's Note: Allen beat me to the punch! Before I had a chance to pen a President's Message for the December newsletter, Allen put something together which pretty much sums up everything I had planned to say. Thank you, Allen—less work for Mother!

It may seem like not much is happening with our club of late, but much like a live news studio, the viewers have no idea what chaos it can take to deliver a half-hour broadcast.

We've been scrambling. We were lucky to relocate to Aviator's at the last minute in December of 2022, but we had to change our traditional lunch day from Thursday to Tuesday and have since been trouble-shooting the room's lighting. And if/when we return to the numbers we enjoyed pre-pandemic, we need to find yet another restaurant with greater capacity. Trust me, we're not waiting. We're looking. Any and all suggestions welcome!

Many of you may recall we got stood up by our teacher last December for the awarding of our annual school grant. This year we're not even being stood up. Nothing panned out when we attempted to find a school interested in our largesse this time around. Go figure!

We were lucky to have VP **Bud Kress** willing to jump in and provide leadership during **Jim Drennan's** final decline, and in the month's following his death. We now thank **Joyce Krieg** for accepting a promotion from one-time KFBK Promotions Director to VBL President *pro tempore*.

Which brings us behind the scenes. We don't know how much has leaked out (a lot of us being journalists with sources), but Jim left the club a legacy *if* we're incorporated as a non-profit. Therefore we have been slow-motion scrambling to incorporate as such. (If only lawyers and government understood what a real deadline is.)

Once we pull this off, Valley Broadcast Legends is going to have to be a clean slate and change how we deal with things off-air. We can't just count on a new set and engaging talent for good ratings. Not naming names, but what frightens one officer most is, he's going to have to become much more professional in how he records meetings and handles accounting.

Valley Broadcast Legends looks to 2024 as a year when everything gets better for us. You will not believe how much better. Stay tuned. We'll be back with the answer, after these short messages. Or, as we say in Public Broadcasting, "Made possible by viewers/listeners like you [Jim]."

Membership as of Nov. 30, 2023

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 • John Jervis
 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
 Dee McCafferty • Michael McCarron
 Michael Messmer • Dana Michaels
 Bob Miller • Alan Milner • Joyce Mitchell
 Mike Montgomery • Keith Moon
 Ray Nelson • George Nyberg
 John D. O'Brien • Alan Oda
 Sandy Ofsenek Helland • Deborah Pacyna
 Mary Jane Popp • Craig Prosser
 Rich Raymond • 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



Member Hobbies: Cindy Koppel

‘Queen of File Tape’ Preserves History

by VBL Board Member **Ward Koppel**



Cindy Koppel in her element.

This issue’s article on hobbies hits close to home for me. Valley Broadcast Legend **Cindy Koppel**, who is my life partner, has temporarily come out of retirement to help transfer KCRA’s video archives into digital files. It is a part-time job expected to last six months, but for those that know Cindy and her years of being the “Queen of File Tape,” this is much more than a job; it is a passion. She was in charge of the videotape archive system for most of her 42 years at KCRA. It was a task she took great personal pride in.

Hearst Television, the present-day owner of KCRA, has launched a company-wide effort to preserve the history in the videotapes at their 35 TV stations and make those files available to all the Hearst stations. The project started and is in progress

at WTAE in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Now KCRA is joining the project. Cindy and **Brian Frank** have been hired by Hearst Digital Studios to complete the KCRA portion of the project.

Their setup includes an equipment rack of 16 machines of various formats; 16 hours of video can be transferred per hour. The challenges include tapes that just won’t play anymore to clogged heads from degrading videotape. Another challenge: finding working machines that will play $\frac{3}{4}$ U-matic, MII, DVCPro and XDCam recordings. As of this writing, they are waiting on a working $\frac{3}{4}$ U-Matic deck. Hearst has located MII decks which are currently being rebuilt and will be delivered in February. Artificial Intelligence software will be used to identify prominent people, places and events by examining the video and the audio on the tapes.

The project includes 37 years of news masters from stories aired from 1976 to 2013. By comparison, the KCRA film archives, which were donated to the Sacramento History Center, cover 25 years, stories shot from 1957 to 1982. The History Center is still working to digitize those archives.

Once the KCRA project is complete, archive tapes from sister stations KSBW in Salinas and KOAT in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will be trucked to KCRA to be transferred. Hearst has found it is more effective to move the tapes from those stations to Sacramento than to move the dubbing equipment to those stations.

Cindy says, “This brings my career full circle. I started on the archives at KCRA in 1978.”



The equipment rack: 16 machines of various formats, transferring 16 hours of video to digital every hour.

Meeting Memories: October 10, 2023



Bill George seems quite proud of his "Ask Me For Help" button, while Luree Stetson from Save Our Capitol brought us up-to-date on the construction project at the state capitol. As usual, Aviator's presented us with a lavish buffet, and old friends had a chance to catch up with each other. *Photos by Matias Bombal.*



Looking Ahead

Got any ideas for programs for 2024? Know someone who would be a great speaker? Let any VBL board member know and we'll follow up!

For February, we're planning a panel on diversity in local broadcasting. In April, we're hoping to be able to throw a launch party for our new status as a 501-c-3 nonprofit. October will more than likely focus on the upcoming Presidential election. December is always devoted to the awarding of the school grant, which should be quite impressive next year due to the generosity of **Jim Drennan**.

That leaves the June and August meetings that are still open. The board is eager to hear your ideas of topics or individuals that would be of interest to a group of veteran radio and TV professionals.

Anyone Remember This?

1965 ad for the free Christmas show put on by KFBK, KOVR and the Bee.

