



News Release

Four to be inducted into WBA Hall of Fame

Four others to be named Local Broadcast Legends

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For Immediate Release

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The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Foundation is proud to announce the 2018 Class of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame:

- Tom Koser, of Rice Lake, a broadcaster dedicated to his local roots and community service,
- Chris Lytle, of Chicago, a pioneer in innovative sales training with worldwide reach,
- Bob Smith, of Madison, who exemplified leadership in television broadcasting, and
- Gary Timm, of Milwaukee, an engineer who is selflessly committed to emergency broadcasting.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Hall of Fame was created in 1989 to honor broadcasters that have devoted a minimum of 15 years to the broadcasting industry including a minimum of 10 years as a Wisconsin broadcaster. The award recognizes an individual's history of exemplary leadership in community and statewide service as a broadcast professional. The Hall of Fame is housed at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center and at the WBA Hall of Fame website: www.wisconsinbroadcastingmuseum.org.

With this year's inductees, the WBA Hall of Fame membership roll grows to 144 members. The 2018 Class will be inducted in ceremonies on the evening of June 21 at the WBA Summer Conference at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center.

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The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association is also recognizing four Local Broadcast Legends:

- Kathy Keene, of Appleton, hosts a Fox Valley talk show that's lasted more than 30 years,
- Margaret Neader, of La Crosse, was known for her honesty, integrity, and marketing skills,
- John M. Wadd, of Rhinelander, was a mentor who hosted his show for 35+ years, and,
- Jeff Wagner, of Rhinelander, helped hundreds of young broadcasters while serving his community.

The Local Broadcast Legends Award is a great honor and recognition for individuals that work behind the scenes and within their communities fulfilling the commitment broadcasters have made to serve their local communities. They are individuals who exemplify localism. This award is a means to extend recognition of these individuals beyond their local communities.

The Local Broadcast Legends will be recognized on June 21 at the WBA Summer Conference luncheon at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center.

The biographies of this year's Hall of Fame inductees and Local Broadcast Legends are below:

2018 Hall of Fame Inductees



Tom Koser

Tom Koser is an exemplary model of a local broadcaster who is dedicated to his local roots and committed to community service through broadcasting. Koser has made numerous contributions to broadcasting as an industry as a station owner and as a highly engaged member of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association where he served on the Board of Directors and as WBA Chair.

Koser started his career in 1981 as an account executive at WISM-AM/FM in Madison for Mid-West Family Broadcasting after graduating from the UW-Platteville Broadcast Management program. He served the company for eight years as a general sales manager and general manager for stations in Illinois before starting Koser Radio Group in 1988. Koser first purchased WJMC-AM/FM in Rice Lake, and then built a 14 station group in Hayward, Rhinelander, and Escanaba/Marquette, Michigan. He owns and operates six stations in his home area of Rice Lake and Hayward. He serves on numerous boards and formed the Rice Lake Celebrity Charity Classic organization that raises more than \$100,000 a year for local youth organizations.

Koser has established a tradition of excellence and effectiveness that he will pass to the next generation.



Chris Lytle

Chris Lytle's innovative training has reached hundreds of thousands of broadcast salespeople throughout the world and his entrepreneurial spirit has its roots in Wisconsin broadcasting. He has helped radio sellers and their managers build careers and realize levels of personal success they had only dreamed of. Many people call him "mentor."

Lytle began his career in 1972, at WCLT-AM/FM in Newark, Ohio and joined Mid-West Family Broadcasting in Madison in 1973 where he was quickly promoted to local sales manager. It was there that he modeled relationship selling and coached with expressions like "Your clients get better when you get better." Lytle joined American TV in 1978 where he continued developing the character of "Crazy TV Lenny" in TV and radio spots. In 1983, Lytle, along with his partner and wife Sarah McCann, launched The AdVisory Board, a sales training company based in Madison where they produced recorded sales training sessions and management seminars that have touched more than 250,000 sellers, programmers, managers, and advertisers. Lytle has written four books, numerous distance learning courses, and given more than 2,300 presentations on four continents and in all 50 states always proudly representing Wisconsin broadcasters.



Bob Smith

Bob Smith exemplifies leadership in television broadcasting through a career of leading stations and staffs in Wisconsin and throughout the country. Smith started and grew his career in Wisconsin and continues to live in Wisconsin in his position of Executive Vice President and Co-Chief Operating Officer of Gray Television.

Smith was an account executive at WEAU-TV in Eau Claire when he started his career in 1986. He later became the station's local sales manager. His career with Benedek Broadcasting continued over the following decade taking him to leadership roles at stations in Virginia and Illinois where he went from leading sales departments to leading whole stations. In 2000, he became general manager at

WMTV-TV in Madison and he eventually expanded his responsibilities to overseeing seven markets for Gray Television after it acquired Benedek Broadcasting in 2002. He was promoted to his current position in 2013 where he has corporate responsibilities and oversees revenue and operations for Gray stations in the Midwest and Western regions of the U.S.

Smith is a mentor who guides his employees while giving them autonomy. He is credited with making stations run better and making them more community minded.



Gary Timm

Gary Timm is best known for his dedication to promoting and supporting the Emergency Alert System in Wisconsin and nationally. He embodies the commitment Wisconsin broadcasters have to serving their communities. His career in engineering, numerous consultant roles, and leadership as Broadcast Chair of the Wisconsin EAS Committee for more than 25 years have demonstrated his expertise, commitment to excellence, passion for broadcasting, and dedication to the important role broadcasters play in keeping people informed and safe.

Timm was an engineer at WTMJ-AM, WKTI-FM, and WTMJ-TV in Milwaukee starting in 1973 and spent much of his career working on EAS issues. Timm is the primary author of the Wisconsin State EAS plan, which was the first in the nation to be completed. From 2010 until his retirement in 2015, Timm was a senior consultant supporting the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In retirement Timm continues to be involved in EAS issues and has assisted the National Weather Service, Wisconsin Emergency Management, Amber Alert, the FCC, and FEMA. He has authored numerous articles and handbook chapters and is recognized as an EAS expert. He has won acclaim for his ability to explain technical issues to a non-technical audience.

2018 Local Broadcast Legends



Kathy Keene

Kathy Keene has a personal connection with her audience in the Fox Valley that has lasted for more than three decades, making her a prime example of the power of local broadcasting.

She is best known as the host of “The Good Neighbor” for the last 37 years on WHBY-AM in Green Bay.

Keene started hosting the show in 1982 after serving as the station’s receptionist. She was identified as having a “soothing” voice and was called up to fill in when the previous host retired.

She grew up in Wisconsin and has been in the Fox Valley long enough to know the decision-makers and politicians in the listening area because she’s interacted with them on the air. Her show features everything from recipes and stain removal ideas to local performances and conversations with community leaders.

Keene has hosted many travel trips, has participated in station events, marched in local parades, and supported charitable causes in the community, most notably, the United Way.

“To know Kathy is to love Kathy with her bright clothing, large baubles, quick blue eyes, and easy smile,” said Kelly Radandt, General Manager of Woodward Radio Group. “What’s more personal than tuning into the ‘Good Neighbor Show’ each day and hearing her advice, good thought of the day, and her guests?”

“She is the warm, smiling voice that would regularly host the mayor of Appleton for a listener call-in session or a Fox Cities historian to inform you of more fascinating facts about your hometown,” said Greg Bell, retired General Manager of Woodward Radio Group. “Kathy exemplifies the best in good local radio.”

She has also been recognized for her embrace of social media and digital technology to stay connected with her audience. She won a Social and Digital Media “Best Personality” award in the 2016 WBA Awards competition.

Keene has been praised for her kindness, quick wit, and ability to make callers and guests feel comfortable.



Margaret Neader

Margaret Neader was a preeminent representative of radio in La Crosse. Most of her time was spent behind the scenes making a difference in broadcasting and her community.

Neader was born in Chicago in 1935 and started her career in broadcasting in 1955 when she became an executive secretary at the ABC-TV network as part her effort to become a television actress. There she worked with the likes of Dick Clark. She also met her future husband, Scott, whom she married in 1963. After raising two sons, she restarted her career at KORN/KXON-TV in Mitchell, South Dakota, where she worked in sales and hosted her own show named "Margie's People."

In 1977 she moved to La Crosse where she worked in broadcast sales and management at WLXR, WKBH, and the WIZM family of stations. She was also the local marketing director for Heileman Brewing Company.

After she retired, she returned to work at Mid-West Family as a receptionist for many years and was loved by all her co-workers.

Neader was known for her honesty, integrity, and marketing abilities. She was a listener and took time getting to know people. She served as a mentor for young salespeople, and connected with them personally, offering them advice.

"Advice from Margie was usually gospel," Family Radio National Sales Manager Dick Record said. "She was important to the everyday life of our radio stations."

Neader gave her time to her church and community groups. She served as director of the La Crosse YMCA, on the La Crosse Jail Ministry Board, and the committee of the La Crosse County American Red Cross. She prepared meals for the Salvation Army "Feed the Kids" program every year. She spent more than 20 years teaching Sunday school and visiting parishioners who were in nursing homes or home bound.

She was also dedicated to her two sons, her grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren.

She died in July 2017. She was 81.



John M. Wadd

John M. Wadd exemplified the power of local radio. He served the residents of northern Wisconsin in numerous ways during his long career and believed that “broadcasting is a privilege and a sacred trust.” He was known as the voice of Northwoods Wisconsin.

Wadd’s lifelong love of broadcasting started at Wauwatosa High School where he produced and hosted a weekly radio program. After serving in World War II and studying stage performance at Lawrence University, he started his professional radio career at WAUX in Waukesha.

Wadd spent a few years at a television station in the Twin Cities before returning to Wisconsin in 1951 to take a job at WOBT-AM in Rhinelander where he spent the rest of his career. There he served at various times as a host, program director, news director, and general manager. He hosted “The JW Show” for more than 35 years. His true passion was time spent on air.

As the station’s lead news reporter, Wadd was on call 365 days a year for more than 30 years and covered some of the biggest news events in northern Wisconsin. He interviewed numerous political and community leaders.

He also broadcast Rhinelander high school football and basketball games both in the role as play-by-play announcer and color commentator. Over 30 years he covered every high school varsity football and basketball game, both home and away.

Wadd was a prolific copywriter and starred in most of the commercials produced at the station during his career.

He was a mentor to numerous young broadcasters who went into successful careers in journalism. He was involved in fundraising efforts for scholarships at local schools.

Wadd worked both on and off the air with charitable and service organizations. He helped raise countless dollars for health, education, and family charities. He was a huge presence in Rhinelander and surrounding communities and remains an inspiration decades after his death.

Wadd died in 1987. He was 65.



Jeff Wagner

Jeff Wagner has spent his career serving his local radio audience and helping hundreds of aspiring broadcasters to further their own careers serving the public.

Wagner started his career in radio in 1975 and has been committed to small town rural Wisconsin radio ever since. He got started in radio with high school play-by-play in Antigo which he continued for 13 seasons.

In 1979 he was hired as a sales representative for WRLO-FM and WATK-AM in Antigo and in 1988 he became managing partner of Ad Mark Communications, which owned the Antigo stations. In 1997 he became regional manager of Marathon Media Radio Group which owned stations in Antigo, Rhinelander, and Minocqua. In 2001, Wagner became manager of Badger Communications, a five station group in Marinette/Menominee, Michigan before going in 2002 to Eagle River where he was manager of WRJO-FM and WERL-AM.

In 2005, Wagner was named regional sales manager for Heartland Communications stations in Eagle River, Park Falls, Ashland, Houghton, and Iron River.

At age 70, Wagner is currently general manager of Coyote and Northwoods Sports Radio Rhinelander and general sales representative for Results Broadcasting stations in Antigo, Shawano, and Iron Mountain.

“Jeff was about doing what is best for the client and doing what is best for the communities served by the radio stations he’s working for,” said Bruce Grassman, President of Results Broadcasting. “Jeff is always willing to help even his competitors at other stations.”

Wagner trained hundreds of broadcasters, many who have gone on to successful careers.

Throughout his career he’s been involved in coaching little league baseball and hockey, volunteering, serving Rotary Clubs in numerous communities, and serving on the Antigo Chamber of Commerce Board. He was elected to the Antigo School Board and served for 12 years and he served on the Langlade Memorial Hospital Foundation Board for 15 years.

Wagner has always wanted to do what’s best for the communities he’s serving.

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