

VALLEY BROADCAST LEGENDS

Issue #115

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

July 2020

President’s Message: Party in the Park? Zoom Gathering?

by VBL President **Jim Drennan**



If these were normal times, we’d all be reminiscing about our April and June luncheons and looking forward to our August doses of steak sandwiches or shrimp Louies, etcetera, etcetera. Unfortunately, these are not normal times and we’re all stuck in the limbo of COVID-19. And the worst of it is, we don’t know when we’ll be freed.

A few weeks ago, it looked like things were getting better and that we might be able to return to a semblance of normal sometime this summer or fall. But now, California and most of the rest of the country have taken a turn for the worse and it’s looking like it may be months before we can gather inside.

Until that day comes, maybe we can gather *outside*. In the hopes that can happen, we’ve asked the City of Sacramento for permission to gather on our next regular meeting date, Thursday, Aug. 13, at East Portal Park in the East Sacramento neighborhood. We’d all bring picnic chairs properly distanced from each other, we’d have a catered picnic lunch or make it BYOL, we’d have a public address system courtesy of our **Bud Kress**, and we’d have a talk by *Sacramento Bee* columnist **Marcos Breton**.

The city parks department decides on permits every two weeks, so we won’t know whether we’re good to go until the first of August. We’ll let you know by email or phone when we get a decision.

If that doesn’t work out, a possible Plan B would be to have a meeting by Zoom. We had a board meeting a few weeks ago using that method and it worked out pretty well. The problem with having a general meeting by Zoom is that even with only half our membership showing up, that’s a lot of

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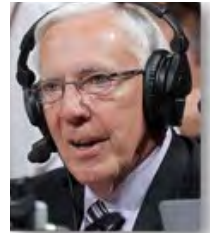
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News Nuggets

The 49th annual Northern California Emmy Awards were presented by Livestream on June 6, and our very own Legend **Joyce Mitchell** was one of the winners. Joyce was one of the producers of “Searching for Hope – Homeless in Sacramento” that aired on KVIE/6.

New Gig for Gary

Legend **Gary Gerould**, who’s getting perilously close to being an octogenarian, is taking on a new gig, as interim TV play-by-play announcer for the Sacramento Kings. Gary replaces **Grant Napear**, who lost his job calling Kings games after a controversy over his using the phrase “All Lives Matter.”



A Lousy Two Months

Legend **Bob Lang** has been hit with a lot of bad news about his friends. “It’s hard to believe,” Bob writes, “but after losing my friend and former partner **Tim St. Martin** in April, I got word that another radio colleague, **Terry Nelson**, passed away. Terry’s Zoom memorial, held on June 27, was such a nice event. (Terry was a featured speaker at a VBL luncheon a couple of years ago. What a great guy!—jd) And a week ago, I received an email that **Gary Mello**, a director at TV40 who started work there the same day I did, passed away as well. Then, the following day another e-mail arrived saying that we lost another Modesto radio guy, **John Chappell**. It’s been a lousy two months.”

Retirements Galore

On a much, much happier note, KCRA/3 alumna **Margaret Pelley Larson** has announced she’s retiring from hosting “New Day Northwest” on KING-TV in Seattle.

“We’re moving to North Carolina to be with (son) Kyle for a while, then who

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News Nuggets

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knows?” Margaret says. One thing she and husband Tim are looking forward to is voting in a swing state this November.



Meanwhile, June 30 was the last day Legend **Rick Eytcheson** served as President and General Manager of CapRadio. Rick tells us, “Tomorrow I become President Emeritus and I will continue to work (on a modified schedule) to raise money for our capital campaign. We’re raising \$15million to relocate the facilities to downtown Sacramento, move

the KXPR tower and transmitter closer in and build a larger endowment to see us through rainy days like, well, today!”

Rick describes himself as “a radio junkie as a kid.” His first radio gig, at age 26, was as a disc jockey in LA in 1976. He says, “I wasn’t a very good announcer, but I loved the business.” Thus he went into sales and sales management, then his first GM job at KOSO in Modesto in 1982. He came to Sacramento to manage KFBK/KAER in 1985 at the ripe old age of 35. In subsequent years, Rick’s had responsibility for stations in Fresno, Los Angeles, Riverside/San Bernardino, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, and now the CapRadio cluster which

includes Stockton/Modesto, Reno/Tahoe, and is about to expand to include Chico and Redding.

“I’ve always believed radio is a talent league,” Rick tells us. “The station with the best players wins. And I’m proudest of the accomplishments of the many incredibly talented people I’ve had the privilege of working alongside. **Dave Williams and Bob Nathan, Paul Robins and Phil Cowan, Kitty O’Neal, Tom Sullivan, Rush Limbaugh, Beth Ruyak, Donna Apidone and Steve Milne, Devin Yamanaka, Rob Sherwood, Don Imus, Gary Gerould, Dave Grosby and Tim Roye, David Glass, Bob Hogue, Chick Hearn and Stu Lantz, John Sebastian** and many many more.”

After 13-plus years at CapRadio, Rick says, “It’s been a great ride. I’ve put off retirement three times. Now it’s time to step aside from the day-to-day and become more of a consumer than producer.”

Speaking of **Beth Ruyak**, just as we were going to press, she announced her retirement as of July 3 to her CapRadio listeners. We’ll have more about Beth’s career in the August newsletter.

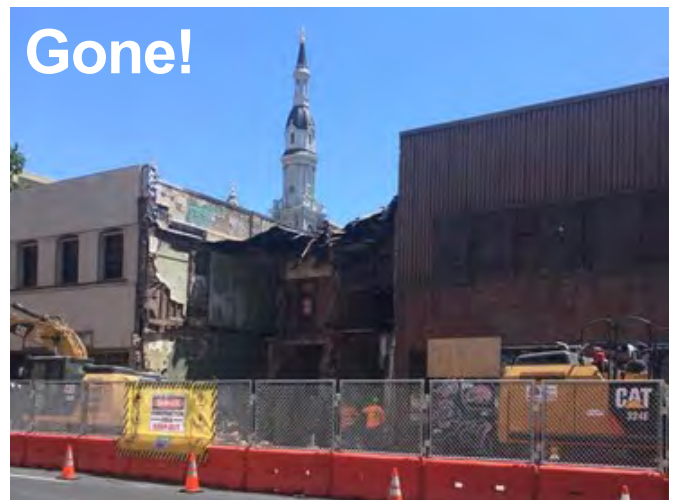
President’s Letter

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people all trying to talk at the same time. How do you folks feel about the idea? I imagine a number of you have been involved in large Zoom sessions. How did they work out? Please let us know at jdren88799@aol.com.

You may find a note of desperation in my remarks, and rightly so. After all the work we’ve put in building our organization and all the joy it provides to so many people for 19 years, I’d hate to see it fall victim to a tiny little critter like COVID-19.

Going, Going . . .



A bit of Sacramento broadcast history disappeared forever with the demolition last week of the building at 11th and J Streets that once held the Country Maid Creamery—and the radio station that started the Kelly Broadcasting empire, KCRA-AM. The station signed on in 1945 and anchored this spot until moving to 310 Tenth Street ten years later. **Jay Rudin** supplied this photo of the wreckage, and dug one out of the archives. Supposedly, a mid-rise building with a combination of retail and housing will be filling the space.