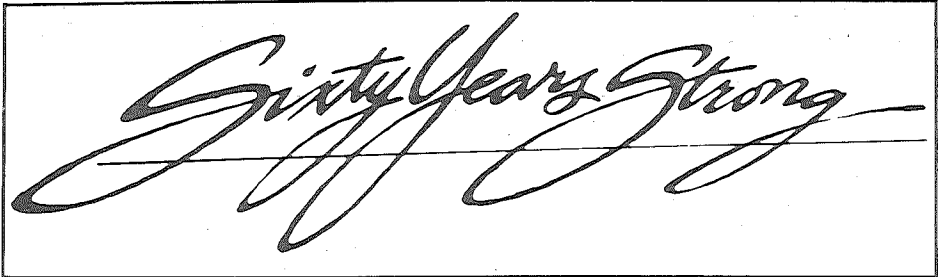


Adult / Contemporary

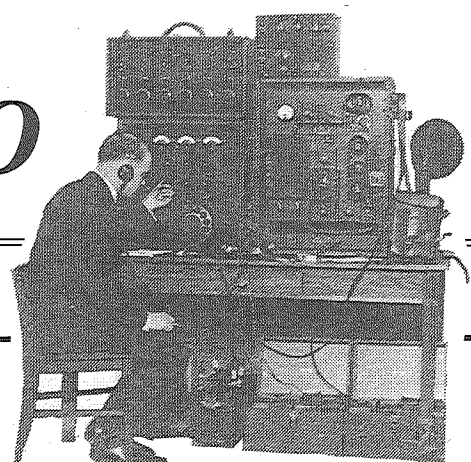


RON RODRIGUES



60TH ANNIVERSARY

Tapping The Strength Of WCCO



This is not a story about a legendary radio station. Rather, it's a story about an integral part of the Minnesota lifestyle which has endured and prospered for 60 years. Yes, I know lots of stations claim they are "lifestyle"-oriented — but I'm sure it was WCCO/Minneapolis that *invented* the term. This outlet appeals to tradition-rich midwesterners by maintaining many of its traditional services, while keeping pace with the '80s.

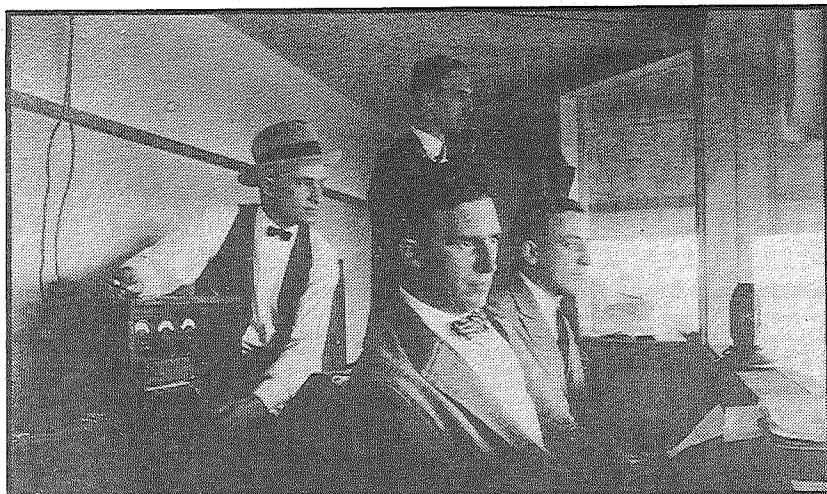
WCCO PD By Napier notes, "Because of our dominance over the years, PDs and station managers from all over the country make pilgrimages to Minneapolis to discover our 'secret' — to hear this format to end all formats. They hide away in hotel rooms with their tape recorders, and in a day or two they go home shaking their heads saying, 'You know, they're not that good' or 'They're breaking all the rules' or 'Well, they could never do that in our market.'

"And they're right. We are not superhuman, we're just as human as they are. WCCO radio is not the ultimate format, it isn't a format at all. What's so special about this station that's worth ten extra share points? Don't we have about the same ingredients the 8000 other radio stations in this country do? Yes, but the big thing is, as Mae West put it so succinctly, 'It's what you do with what you've got!'"

Several photos were taken from the book, "Sixty Years Strong, The Story Of One Of America's Great Radio Stations 1924-1984," by Larry Haeg Jr. Copyright WCCO Radio.



The Doughboy Country Journal. At table: Gordon Eaton and Larry Haeg. Standing: Willie Peterson (at piano), Mary Davies, Tony Grise, Irv Wickner, Bidy Bastien, unidentified accordionist, Frankie Roberts, Ernie Garvin, Burt Hanson, Hal Garvin, and Dick Link. (Minnesota Historical Society)



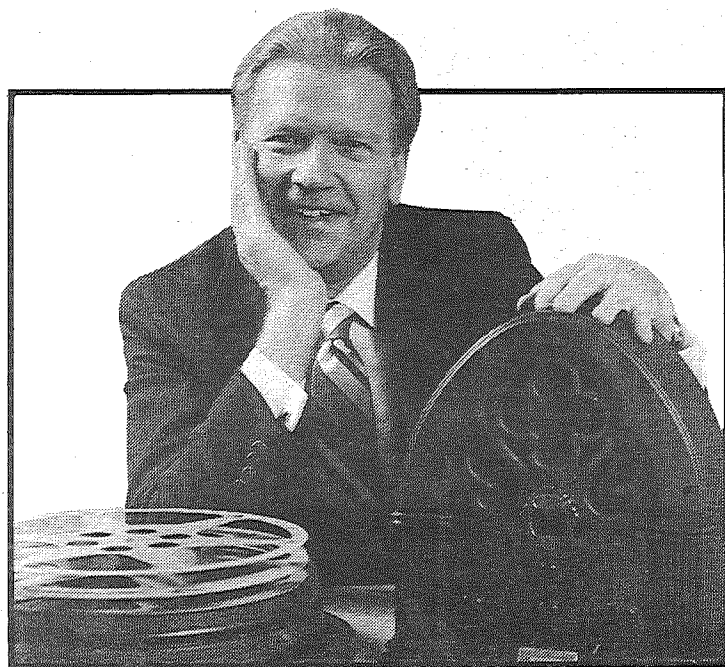
WCCO broadcast of a 1924 University of Minnesota football contest from Memorial Stadium. (Minneapolis Journal)

1924 A Star Is Born

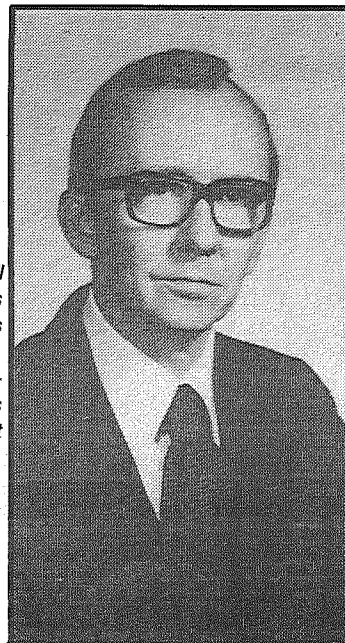
Americans invest more than \$350 million in radio receivers. The Washburn Crosby Company takes over a bankrupt station to use it as a marketing tool against its chief rival, the Pillsbury Company. Thus, WCCO is born on October 2. Later in the decade, new CBS owner William Paley purchases a one-third share in WCCO.

1930s First With Personality

With more than three-quarters of its broadcast day originating from CBS in New York, WCCO management seeks ways to apply more local programming. The station developed what was perhaps the first full staff of radio personalities.



Left: Weekend personality Bill Diehl next to radio 15 years younger than the station it's tuned to. Right, PD By Napier. "You've got to care. Just saying you care on your bus cards and in your TV spots doesn't get it for very long."



WCCO

8:00 p.m. **YOUR HIT PARADE**
Top tunes of the week with Earl Sostre, Jim Ed Brown and Mark Wrayton. Lucy Sling Operettes.

10:00 p.m. **CEDRIC ADAMS**
Cedric Adams presents the latest world-wide news. Sponsored by Coca Cola.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING

5:00—Mystery Serenade	7:15—Country Music
5:30—Eye Witness News	7:45—Toll
5:35—News	10:00—Cedric Adams News
5:45—World Today News	10:15—Championship Game
5:55—Late Tonight News	10:30—State High School
6:00—Mayor of the Town	11:00—Basketball Tournament
6:30—Bank to the Year	11:15—Gene Eymon Orct.
7:00—Eye Witness News	11:30—Perry Martin's Orct.
7:30—Inner Sanctum	12:00—News
8:00—H2 Parade	12:05—Night Owl
8:45—Red Eye Policy	

Minneapolis Tribune, April 6, 1944.

The Strength Of WCCO

1940s Going Local

Riding a crest of locally-originated programming from its 700-seat auditorium, WCCO cranks out dozens of daily programs. Among them: vaudeville acts, the Red River Valley Gang, Jack Malerich and his orchestra, game shows, the "Saturday Night Radio Party," "Stairway to Stardom," and others.

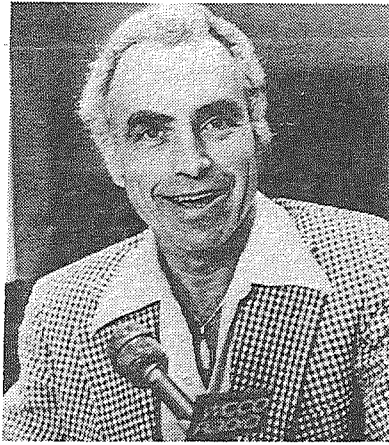
1950s Fighting Top 40

In an unlikely counter-programming move, WCCO decides to institute a cash giveaway after Todd Storz announces he will switch crosstown WDGY to Top 40. Storz plans to give away \$105,000 after announcing clues on-air. WCCO bounces back with \$250,000 of its own, available to listeners who could identify the station's code word. Storz responds by airing WCCO's code words on WDGY. WCCO changes to code phrases such as 'Tune Now To WCCO Radio' or 'WCCO is tops.' WDGY swallows hard as its DJs read those phrases on the air, but soon calls an end to the cash war. Although not able to knock WCCO from its perch, Storz brings WDGY to second in the Twin Cities.

In 1954, CBS gives up its interest in WCCO to local newspapers. Toward the end of the decade, the station claims its listenership with a 55.8 overall share and a 73 share in morning drive. The station's standard-bearers, (Charlie) Boone & (Roger) Erickson, begin their morning show.

1960s Twins/Vikings Combo

The Minnesota Twins arrive in 1961, providing WCCO with its first foray into professional major league sports. Football follows later that year, with the Minnesota Vikings invading the Met. By 1962, the station is claiming a 68.1 audience share, twice as high as all its competitors combined.



Top row (l-r): Vikings broadcasters Tim Moreland and Stu Voight; afternoon man Steve Cannon. Center row: Early afternoon personalities Ruth Koscielak and Tim Russell; retired GM Phil Lewis with former Minnesotan and CBS Chairman Of The Board Thomas Wyman. Said Wyman, "People ask me what I miss most about Minnesota, and I say it's the school closings." Bottom: Roger Erickson chats with old friend and seeker of high office Walter Mondale.



Top row (l-r): morning personalities Charlie Boone and Roger Erickson now celebrating 25 years together at WCCO. GM Clayt Kaufman; University of Minnesota Gophers broadcaster Ray Christensen. Bottom row: Twins broadcasters Joe Angel and Herb Carneal; midday personality Howard Viken; sports reporter Sid Hartman.

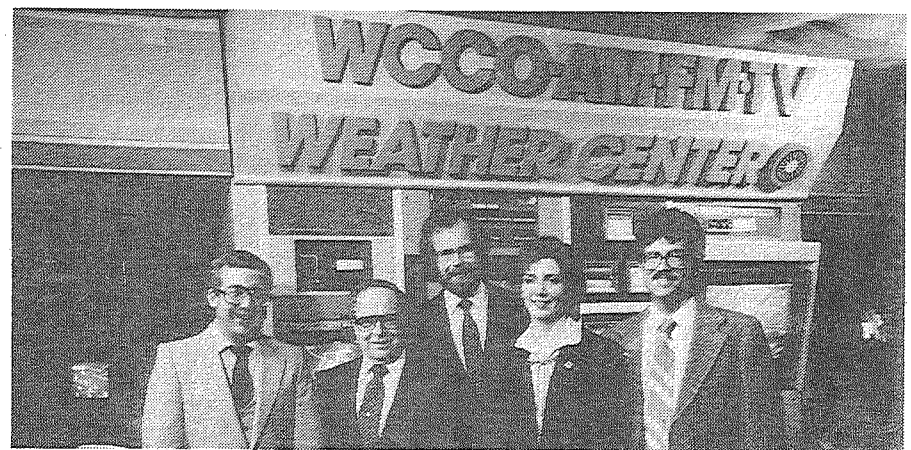


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1970s Staying Traditional

Threatened by specialized radio and alternative entertainment formats, WCCO is undaunted and maintains its mass appeal programming. Afternoon man Steve Cannon begins in 1971. The St. Paul Dispatch & Pioneer Press Associate Editor wrote, "I'd call it 'The World's Great Backfence Chat.' We think of it simply as a 'Big City Small Town' station."

1980s Still On Top



Concentrating on its community-service aspects, WCCO upgrades its news department to include a fully-equipped weather center, staffed 24 hours by four fulltime meteorologists. Although not enjoying the gargantuan ratings muscle it flexed 20 years prior, WCCO is still the top major market station in the country with a 20.9 share. Said by Napier, "Oh, how we love those marvelous Minnesota blizzards! The best blizzard we ever had came smack in the middle of an Arbitron sweep. 25 inches of snow, a 35 share! Or was it the other way around?"