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South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

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South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

**Founded at South Dakota
State University in 1971
and maintained by the
Department of Journalism
and Mass Communication**

**The portrait of each honored
broadcaster is displayed in
the KESD-TV/FM studio in
Pugsley Hall on the South
Dakota State University
Campus in Brookings**

S.D. Room

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South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

The South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame honors South Dakota's distinguished broadcasters. The South Dakota Broadcasters Association conducts a nomination and selection process each year to determine the honored broadcaster. All radio and television stations in the state are eligible to participate in the selection process. Broadcast Hall of Fame portraits are displayed at the KESD-TV and FM studio in Pugsley Hall on the South Dakota State University campus in Brookings. The recognition of South Dakota's distinguished broadcasters was begun in 1971 as a part of the annual Broadcasters Day at SDSU. Broadcasters Day and the Hall of Fame were sponsored jointly by KESD-TV and FM and the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at SDSU until 1985 when the Department assumed sole sponsorship. Verl Thomson, former Executive Director of the SDBA, has written the sketches of the Hall of Fame honorees.



South Dakota Room

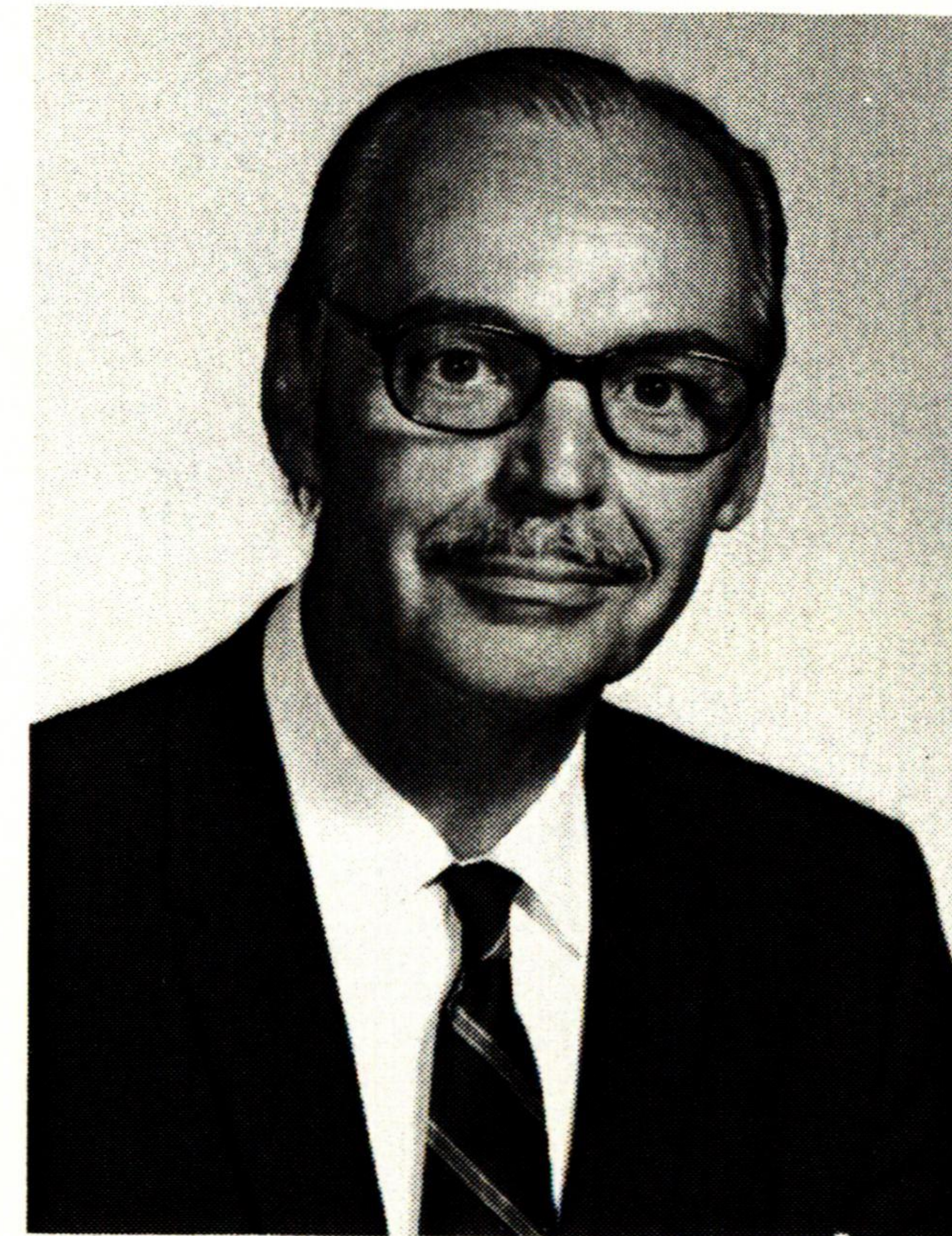
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South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1971



Verl Thomson
KISD

Verl Thomson is a native of Sioux Falls who started in radio as an experimenter while still in high school in 1922. He was president of the first radio club in Sioux Falls; assisted the first broadcast station in that city, WFAT, in 1924; was announcer and program director for KSOO and KELO; and was a staff announcer for NBC in Chicago. Thomson put KISD on the air in Sioux Falls in 1948, and is believed to be the first in the nation to have taped all voices except for news. This was the beginning of automation. He sold KISD in 1966. He was executive director of the South Dakota Broadcasters Association from 1967 to 1987.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1973



Joe Henkin
KSOO

Joe Henkin took over KSOO in Sioux Falls in 1927 when the station operated with a power of 100 watts. It was the city's only radio station until 1937 when he began a sister station, KELO, in order to give the city full-time service. KSOO was daytime only, KELO was sold in 1946, and KSOO went to a full-time operation later. Joe Henkin came from Madison, SD, where he was managing director of the Lake Madison Chautauqua Association. He had been previously active in the operation of a large ranch in western South Dakota and of farms in the Madison area. He died in 1945.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1974



Chan Gurney
WNAX

Chan Gurney began in broadcasting with a friend who had a radio parts store in 1921. When the crude apparatus cost more than they could afford, they silenced the station they had gotten licensed, WNAX, at Yankton. The license lay there until 1927 when Chan Gurney convinced his father, who owned Gurney Nursery Company, to buy his friend's interest and put WNAX to full-time use in selling seeds and nursery stock. The station became very successful in over-the-air selling. In 1932, Gurney left WNAX and went into private business and became a U.S. Senator from South Dakota.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1975



Morton Henkin
KSOO

In 1945, Mort, as he was known, took over his father's radio stations, KSOO and KELO in Sioux Falls. He had worked at the stations since his graduation from the USD School of Law in 1936. He changed KSOO from daytime-only to full-time, and sold KELO. He obtained a TV license for Channel 13, and an FM station, now KPAT, in 1959. He sold the TV station in 1972. He served on the National Association of Broadcasters Radio Code Board, was chairman of the Sioux Falls Operational Area Industry Advisory Committee of the FCC and was president of SDBA. Henkin died in 1974.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1976

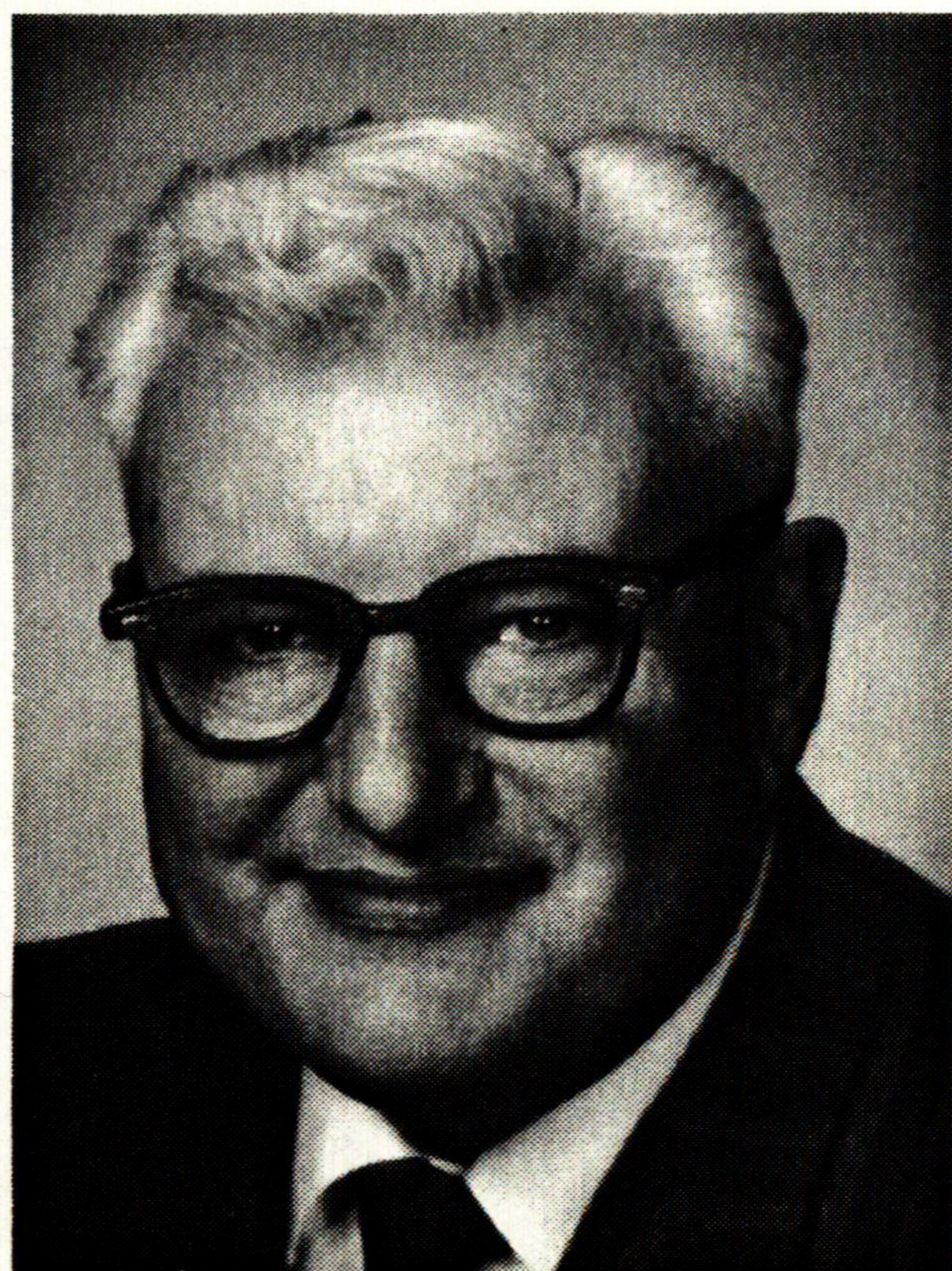


Helen Duhamel
KOTA

Helen Duhamel was owner of Duhamel Trading Post in Rapid City when she bought an interest in KOBH radio in 1943. In 1945, it became KOTA. She took over the operation in 1954 and, in 1955, put KOTA-TV on the air. She added KDUH-TV at Hay Spring, Nebraska, and later KHSD-TV at Lead. In order to bring live network TV to the area, she installed the world's longest privately owned microwave system. Her work brought the stations the McCall's "Golden Mike Award" and the Alfred P. Sloan Radio-Television Award for Distinguished Public Service. In 1961, she was the first woman elected president of SDBA.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1977

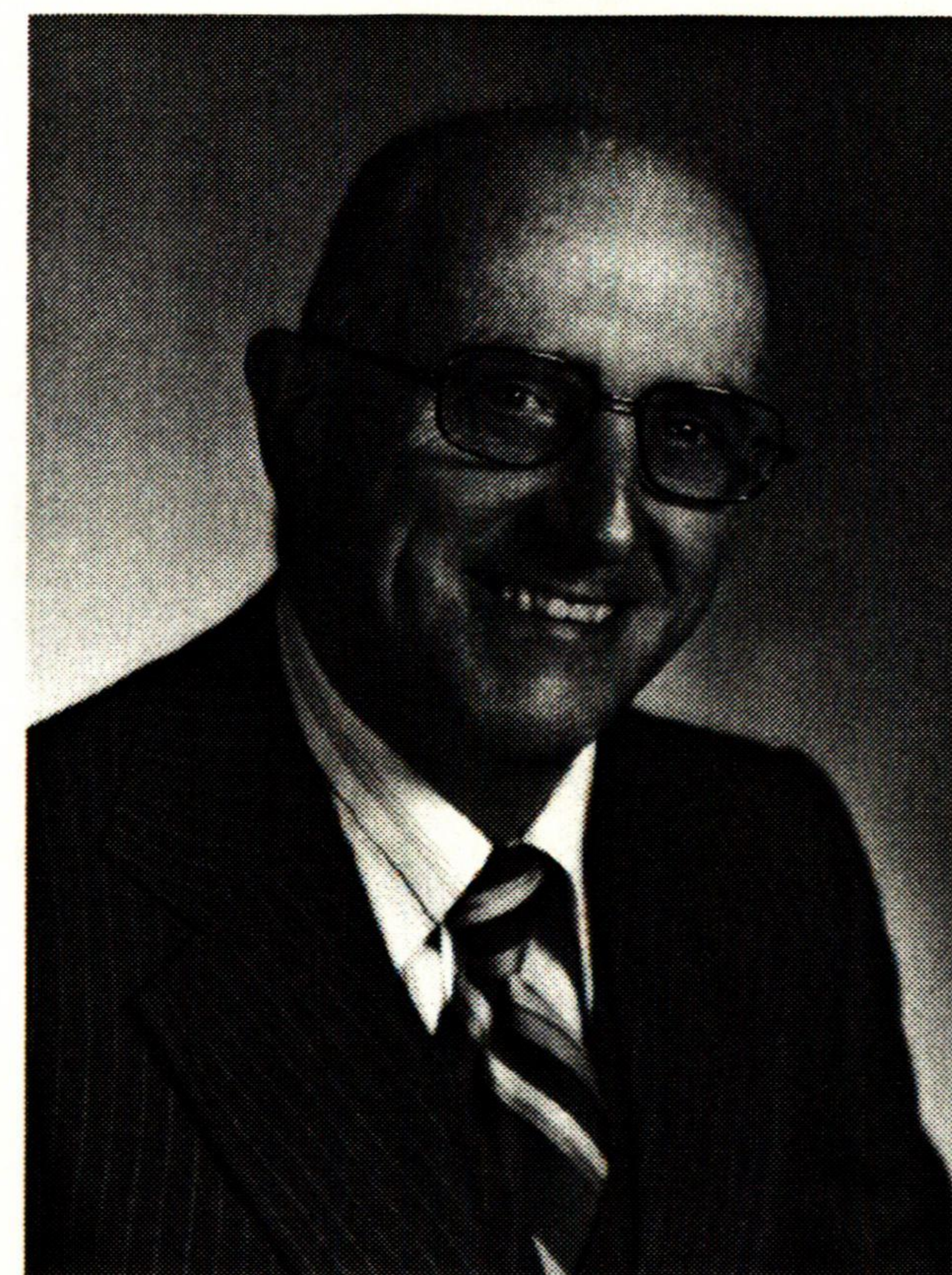


Ray Eppel
KORN

Ray Eppel, after a successful career as a musician, established a radio station at Mitchell in 1947. In 1948, he co-founded SDBA, and helped Tony Faye of KABR in Aberdeen become president. Eppel served as SDBA president in 1954 and 1955. In 1960, he put KORN-TV on the air in Mitchell and sold it in 1972. (This station is now KDLT-TV.) He sold his operation and retired in 1975. Eppel was nominated for the South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame in 1976 but declined the nomination. He accepted in 1977, and died that same year.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1978

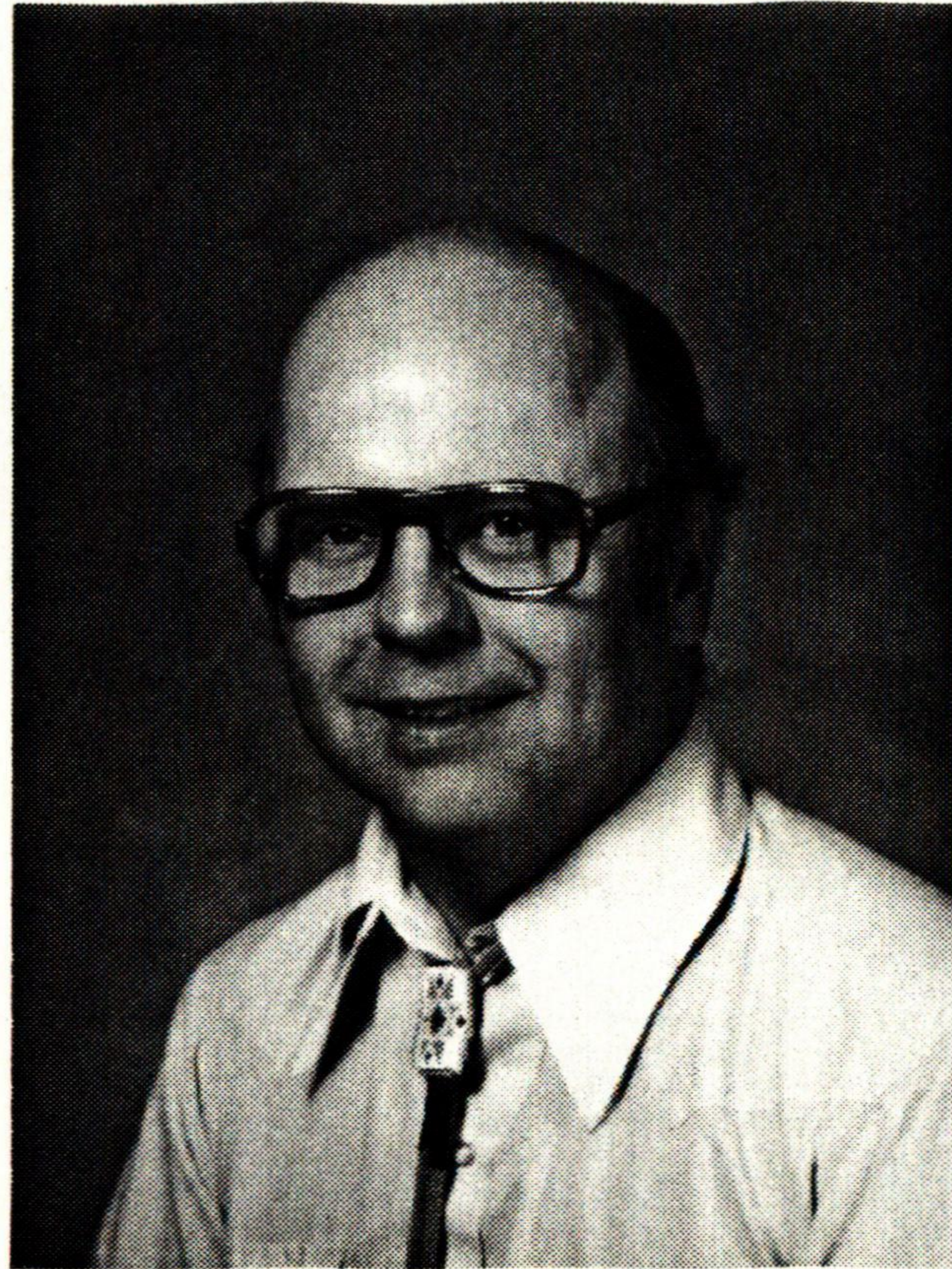


Ross Case
KWAT

Ross Case came into radio in 1948 at KWAT in Watertown as a salesman and announcer, and was soon doing the station's sports. He was named station manager in 1952. He was well known for talk shows he hosted on the station, and chaired the first High School Broadcasting Career Day in 1968. He was president of SDBA in 1958 and was active in NAB, serving in several capacities. During his years at KWAT, the station increased power, moved to new studios and added KWAT-FM (now KIXX-FM). In 1973, he built and operated the Watertown Midland Cable TV Company.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1979

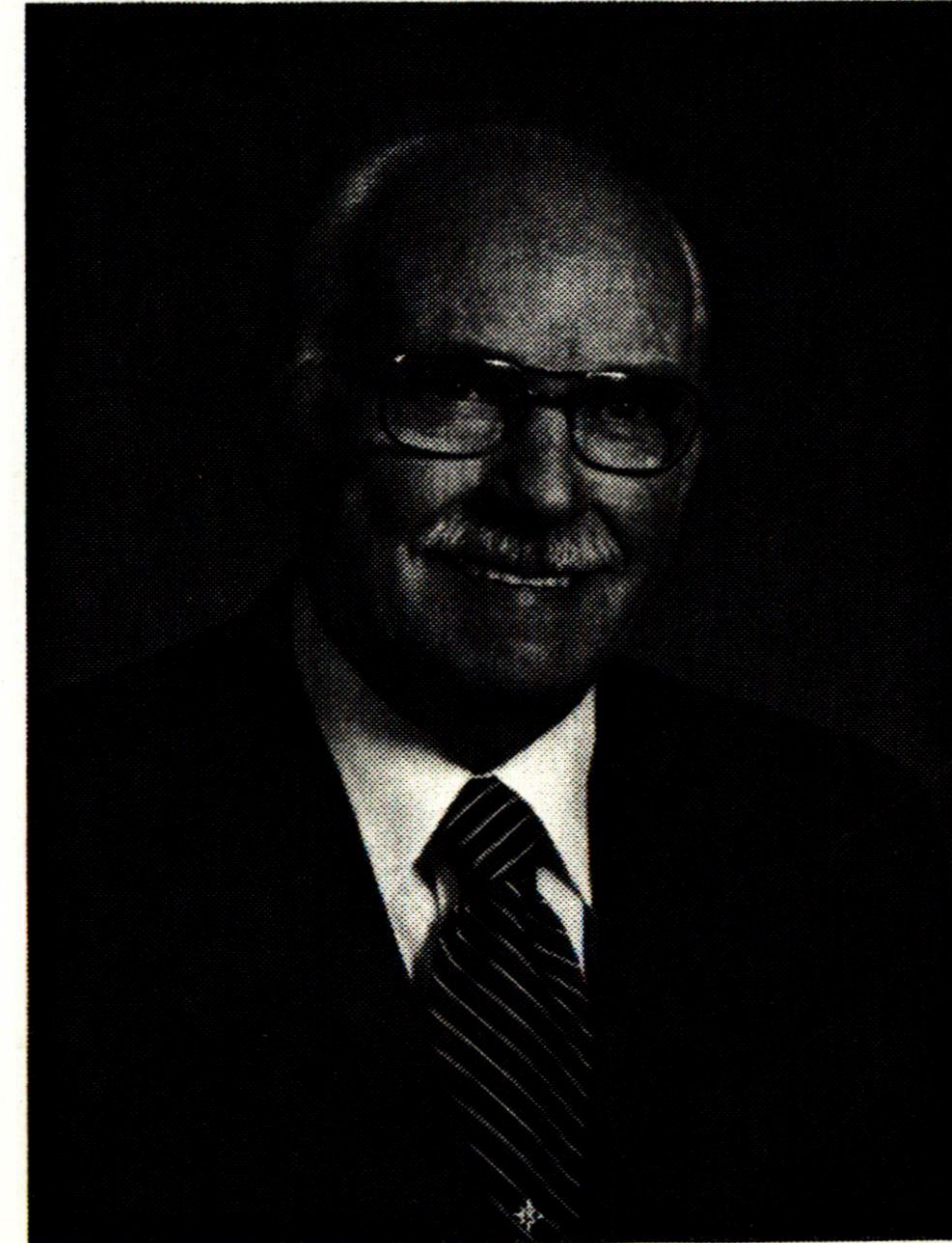


Q.P. Coleman
KOLY

"Q.P.", as everyone knew him by, came into broadcasting in 1956. His father owned the Mobridge Tribune and KOLY, at Mobridge. "Q.P." became news director of KOLY then became a partner in the full operation of the station. He added a radio station at Oakes, North Dakota, for a number of years, and also added KOLY-FM to the operation. He had completed plans for a cable system in Mobridge when he died in 1978. "Q.P." served as president of SDBA in 1967, and received the SDBA "Broadcaster of the Year" award in 1976. He was active in church and civic affairs.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1980

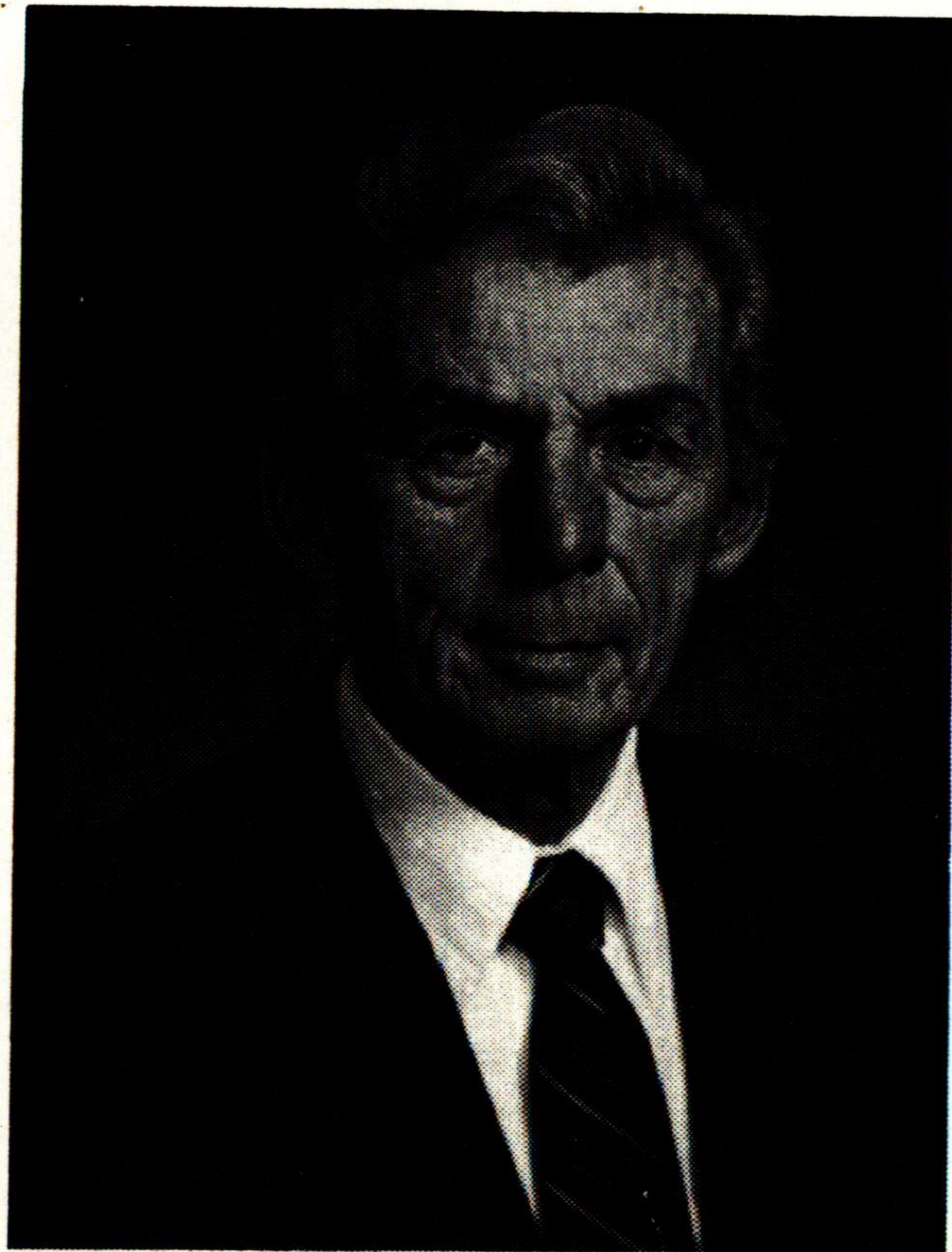


Al Clark
KWYR

Al Clark came to Rapid City to perform as a professional musician in 1945, and was never to leave the state again. He married and opened a music store in Belle Fourche. After appearing on local radio programs across the state and in North Dakota, he decided to go into the broadcast business. He bought KWYR in Winner in 1958 and, for the next 22 years, he built the operation into a successful venture. Along the way he added a 100,000 watt FM station. In 1965, Clark served as president of SDBA and housed the convention that year in Winner. He was named in 1965 as Employer of the Year for employment of the handicapped.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1983

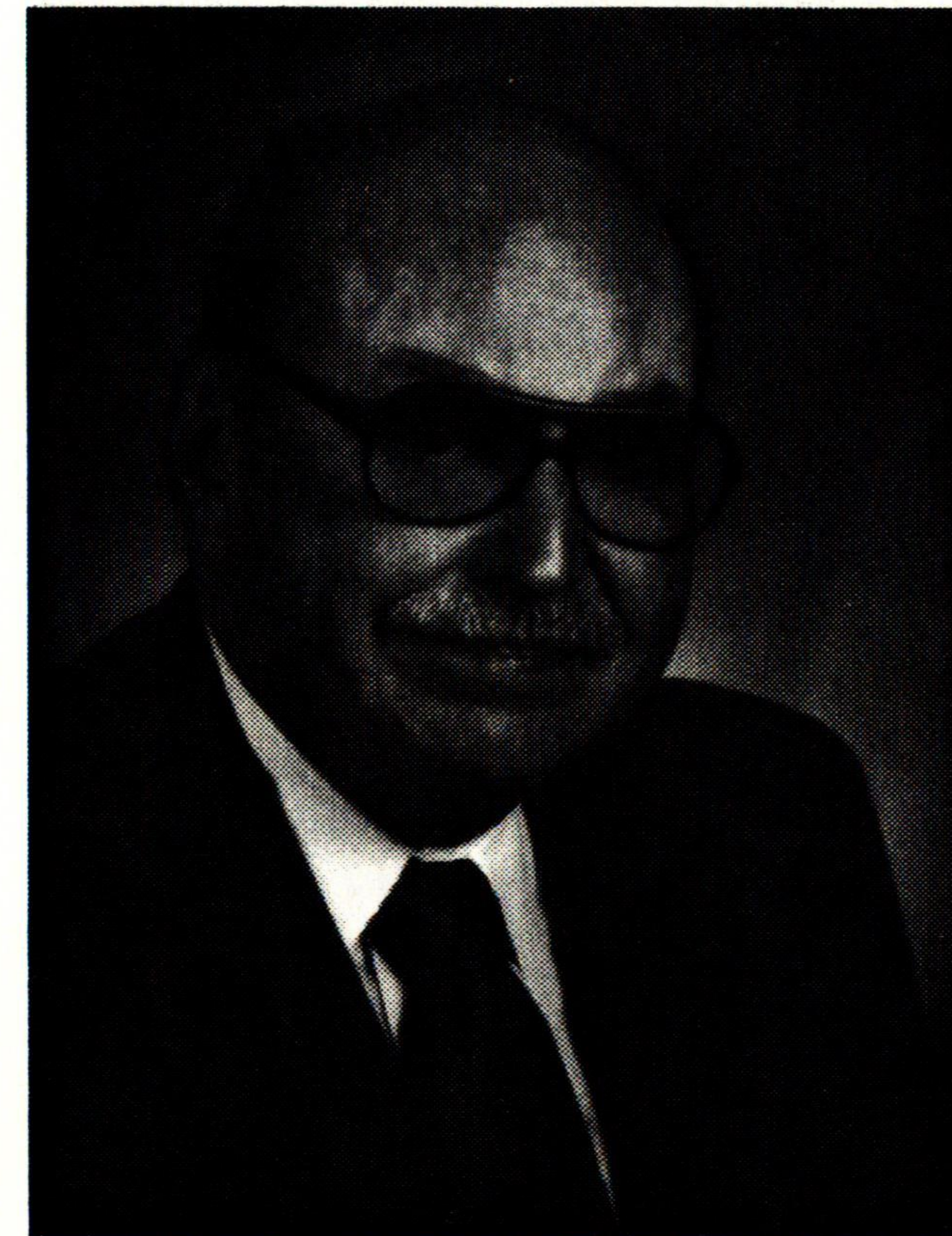


Jim Molohon
KELO

Jim Molohon signed on with KELO in 1956 after a career in theatre management in Sioux Falls and Minnesota. He became promotion manager for the KELO-land operation and put together the community efforts to bring KPLO-TV to central South Dakota. That accomplished, he was named as manager of KELO-AM. Molohon thus began 25 years as manager of the radio operation of KELO-land. After assuming the AM direction, he took on the FM stations at Sioux Falls and Watertown. While he never read a newscast or raised the output to an antenna, he has left his imprint in the service of broadcasting in South Dakota.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1984



Joseph L. Floyd
KELO

Joseph L. Floyd is the father of in-state network broadcasting; he has been instrumental in expanding both television and radio in South Dakota. His Sioux Falls station KELO-FM was the first to set up an FM network to feed state basketball tournaments. His television in-state expansion started with KDLO-TV in 1955 that brought a signal to Aberdeen, Huron and Watertown. He added KPLO-TV in the center of the state and then Rapid City. Among the many awards he treasures is the 1976 University of South Dakota School of Business "Special Merit Award for Distinguished Service."

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1985

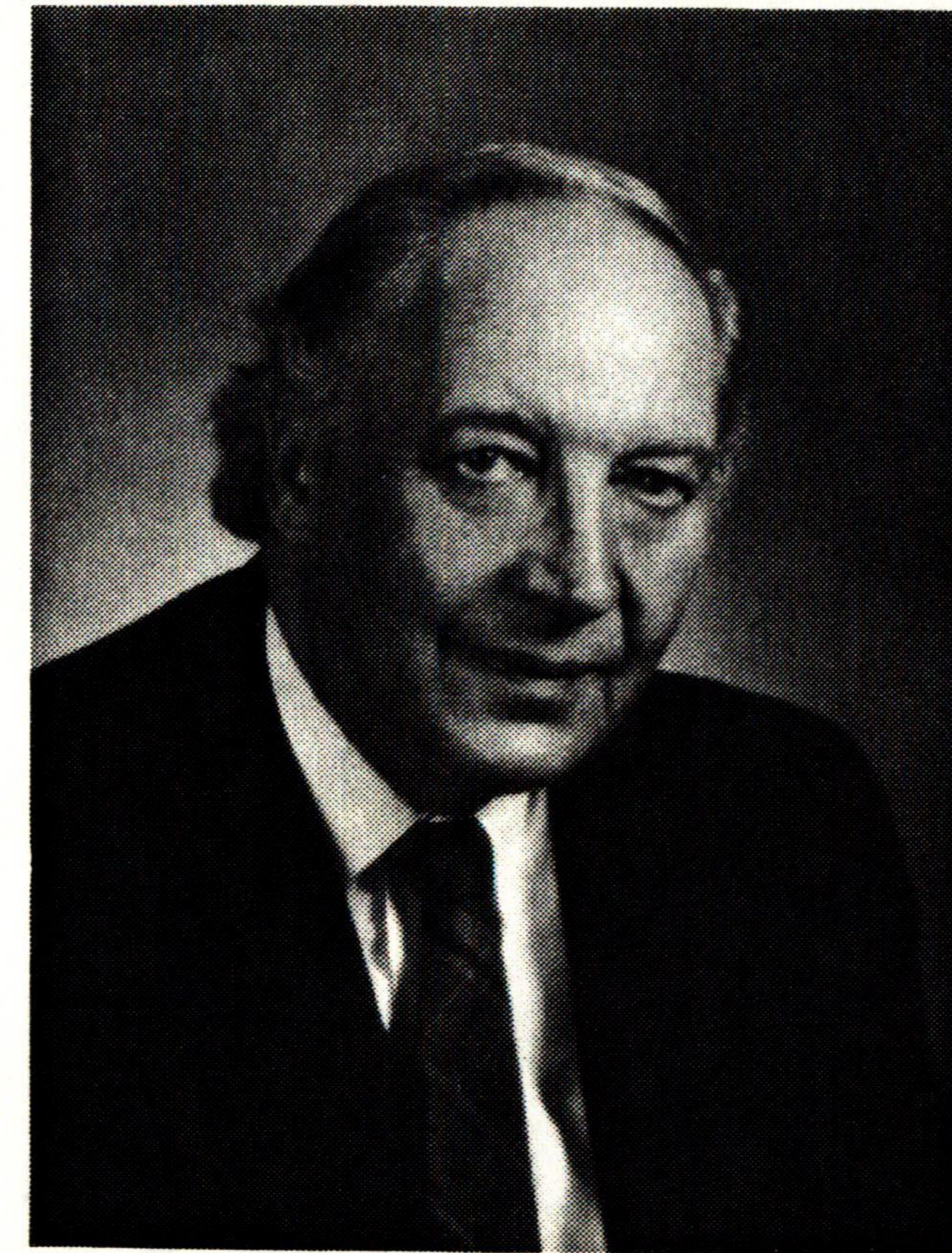


George B. German
WNAX

For forty years WNAX in Yankton carried the voice of George B. German, or just "George B." He sang and talked his way into the homes of farmers and ranchers -- and most anybody else that favored those interests and cowboy songs. His interviews were a regular feature of "RFD with George B." Few people in the state have become as well known. Just the first name and initial were all the identification he needed. He is now curator of the Dakota Territorial Museum at Westside Park in Yankton. German is currently busy with a book of cowboy songs compiled from over the entire state.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1986



Evans Nord
KELO

Evans Nord has spent his entire professional career in broadcasting, with the exception of four war years in the U.S. Navy. Nord began in 1939 as a program director and announcer for KELO radio in Sioux Falls. After the war, he was program director, sales manager, then general manager in 1950. When KELO radio was sold in 1952, Nord stayed on as general manager. Nord was influential in bringing television to South Dakota. Since 1975, Nord has been president of the KELO-land Stations Division of Midcontinent Broadcasting Co. A charter member of SDBA, he was president in 1954.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1987



Martin Busch
SDPTV

Martin Busch was named director of KUSD at the University of South Dakota in 1960 and added a low power TV station in 1961. Busch pushed for a statewide educational TV network and wrote the language for the legislative bill that in 1965 became enabling law to form the SDETV Board. He was appointed the Board Executive Director in 1967. In the next ten years SDETV became a network of 8 stations. When he retired in 1984, he, the Board and staff had raised federal and community dollars to develop the state public radio network. He retired as a professor at USD in 1985 and is living in Rapid City.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1988

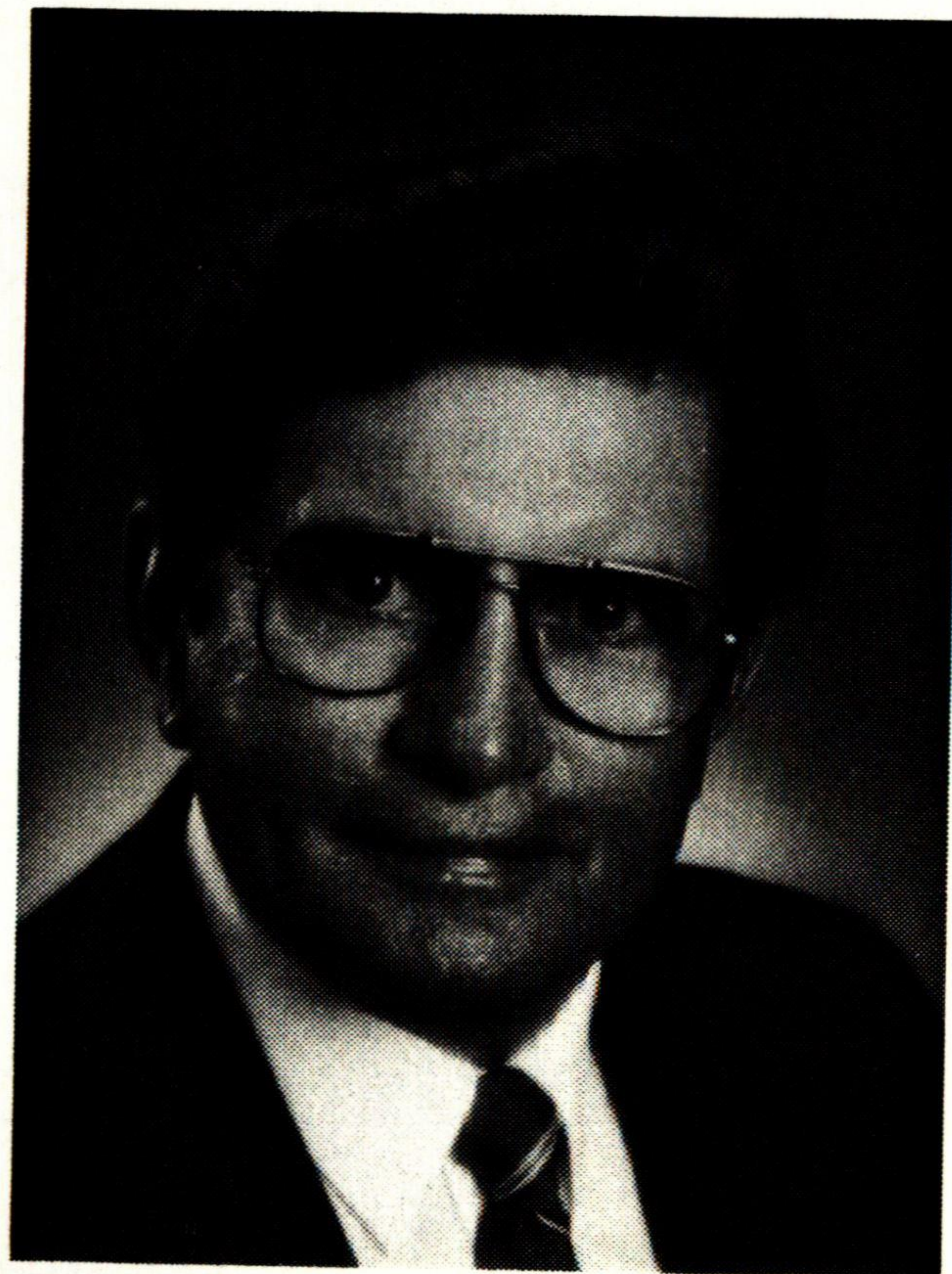


Jackie Lofgren
KELO

Jacquelyn "Jackie" Lofgren, a Sioux Falls native, is known across the state as Ms. Public Service. Lofgren worked at the Argus Leader a short time before joining KELO-TV as an account executive in 1953. In 1979 she was appointed Public Service Director for the KELO-land stations. Her passion was helping others. She worked closely with numerous local, state and national agencies; the list reads like a who's who. Lofgren received countless awards and commendations for outstanding public service. Her legacy, she cared about South Dakota and its people. She died in 1987.

South Dakota Broadcast Hall of Fame

1988



Gene Taylor
KIMM

Gene Taylor began his 39 year broadcast career on the college campus as an announcer at KUSD and as an active member of the Radio Guild. After graduation, in 1950, Taylor joined KOTA as announcer, farm director, news reporter and salesman as well as the emcee for "Hoedown Jamboree" on television. In 1959, with four other broadcasters, he formed Black Hills Radio Inc., put KEZU on the air and bought KGFX a few years later. Taylor sold his interest in Black Hills Radio in 1966, then bought KIMM and put KGGG/FM on the air. He sold the stations in 1985 and retired in Rapid City.