A Collection of Original News Stories

An Honors Project (ID 499)

By

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(Staff Advisor)

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Muncie, Indiana

November, 1979
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TO: JACK E. MCQUATE
FROM: JEFF GAST

SUBJECT: HONORS PROJECT (ID 499)

February 15, 1979

I submit to you for approval a proposal for my honors project.

At the end of Autumn Quarter 1979, I wish to complete a collection, or "scrapbook" if you will, of all original stories written for WBST Radio during Spring and Autumn Quarters 1979. Also included in the collection will be some background information.

I have worked at WBST for about two years in the capacities of board operator, occasional host for The Only Show in Town radio program, news editor, and "in-house newsman;" however, my experience in field reporting has been rather limited.

Scheduling changes for Spring Quarter should allow me several large blocks of time to devote to such news gathering. By using this time and limiting other activities at WBST, I would like to put myself at the mercy of the assignments editor by working at least one beat and a number of general assignments. Although unfamiliar with sports and public affairs, I feel that those departments deserve some consideration as well.

I am hoping to receive a summer internship; however, interns are already being awarded eight hours' credit, so I would prefer not to include work done under that program in the honors project.

I have recognized the need for gaining experience in field
reporting, but up to now have been limited by time and trans­
portation. For the time being, those two obstacles appear to
have been moved aside somewhat. Perhaps I can now explore some
previously untouched areas of my radio spectrum.
My honors project has benefited me in that I have explored previously untouched areas in my radio spectrum. Since I began my story collection, I've gained experience in news gathering, discovered a few tricks along the way, cried a little, and learned a lot.

My attitude has also changed. I'm not nearly as apprehensive about leaving the newsroom behind as I once was. I still dislike chasing fire engines, but I have come to enjoy street reporting almost as much as staying at the radio station. Outside, you're your own boss as you go into the community. Inside, you remain in one place, susceptible to the whims and orders of others.

I used to wonder what was so exciting about street reporting. Now I occasionally wonder what it would be like to work for a station in that capacity.

My collection contains 64 stories, not including a revised planning commission story and a promotional piece for The Only Show in Town. 23 were meeting stories. Routine police and fire calls accounted for 16. Seven were election night stories filed from various city locations. Phone calls to news sources, "fire engine chasings," and other miscellaneous information amounted to five stories each. Three stories were written from news releases.

November was the "busiest" month with 18 stories. May, September, and October each had 11. April followed with eight, and March had five.

My stories are arranged in chronological order. Before most of them, I have written a short narrative explaining how the story was written, relating an incident surrounding it, analyzing the subject it covers, or making a humorous comment or two about it (all in fun, of course).

As there is rarely a script that is devoid of inserts, deletions, and just plain markouts, all the stories in my collection have been retyped. However, they merely have been cleaned up a bit and are still presented word for word.

Each story begins with a five-line "slug." (In my experience, "slug" has been used interchangeably to designate both the first line of the heading and the entire heading itself.) An example of a slug is shown below.

DELAWARE COUNTY-HUNTING E-M-S ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

ICL/Jeff 3ast
GAST
3-8-79 4:00 p.m.
(Carted)
The first line tells what the story is about—that is, at least most of the time. The second line identifies the source. Every story in my collection is a local story, or "LOL." In addition, sometimes I gathered the information with an assist from another source, such as a police dispatcher. The third line identifies the writer. The fourth line indicates the date and time the story was written. In normal practice, the fifth line indicates the cart number if the story has been recorded. For my purposes here, it will designate whether the story was carted or not. The symbol "---" means the story was intended to be delivered live on each newscast.

In closing my introduction, I hope that this collection of local stories will offer readers at least a partial record of the events taking place in Muncie during 1979. In turn, I hope that this record will stand as a favorable example of the quantity and quality of work performed at WBST.
The bread and butter of my field reporting honors project was the meeting coverage of several city and county organizations. During Spring Quarter, I attended the monthly meetings of the Delaware County-Huncie EMS Advisory Board, the Regional EMS Planning Commission, and the CETA Advisory Board. During Fall Quarter, I watched over the proceedings of the Huncie Park Board and the Delaware-Huncie Metropolitan Planning Commission. In addition, I began covering the weekly meetings of the Delaware County Commissioners a few weeks into the Fall Quarter.

Meeting coverage was noteworthy in several respects. The organizations conducted business using a variety of procedures. Each was composed of different people with different concerns. Furthermore, in each quarter, I covered two groups whose concerns were related; therefore, I saw issues passed from one group to another, chewed up, spit out, and sometimes sent back to the first group for reaction. (I think they call that "government in action.")

The first story I covered was a meeting of the Delaware County-Huncie EMS Advisory Board. This organization held its meetings in the mayor's chambers at 2 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Usually County Council President Carl Gresh would sit down, open up his briefcase before him, count down the clock, and commence the meeting on time. Under Gresh's leadership, the board's meetings never lasted more than 45 minutes.
The Delaware County-Muncie E-M-S Advisory Board today took steps to alleviate an ambulance shortage. About two weeks ago, a unit was tipped over in an accident and damaged to the tune of 11-thousand dollars. However, Civil Defense Director Marshall Sipe says only the "box" part of the vehicle needs to be rebuilt. Comparing the cost of that repair job with the cost of a new unit, the board chose to fix the old unit up. The board also wants to lease a replacement while repairs are being made and found out they could do so for 600 dollars a month. County Council President Carl Gresh told WBST that a substitute could be in service in thirty days after necessary paperwork is completed. In other E-M-S news, Care-A-Van Ambulance Service is back into the business of making emergency runs. County Health Department Officer Jeff Hole reinspected Care-A-Van the first of this month and found it back to 100 per cent compliance. And some Daleville residents want to raise money to purchase a unit for that community. They'll be holding a general information meeting on March 21st, 7:30 at the Daleville High School. And on a final note, when you get your new phonebook, E-M-S numbers will be listed on the inside of the front cover for the first time.
FIRE AT ROOSEVELT SCHOOL

After finishing off the Noon News one Friday, Jack McQuate phoned from downtown to inform me of a fire at Roosevelt School. I responded by going out in the rain and running a half mile in the opposite direction—to get to the car.
I arrived at the scene and came away with a story that I sent to Channel 6, WIBC, WOWO, and the Associated Press. (Don't tell Jack, but when it came over the wire, my story was as long as his story on the indictment of Sanitary District President Arnold Blevins, which broke that same afternoon. In all fairness, the state legislature was in session at the time. To make room for all of the legislative news, AP was condensing all other stories down to about five lines apiece.

Fire Lieutenant Glen Scroggins was beginning his investigation in the school's basement while I was there. I regret that I didn't attempt to go down and ask him to speculate on a cause for the fire. Do you think that would have been too early or out of place?
Students at Muncie's Roosevelt School are getting a little vacation this afternoon after fire was discovered at the school shortly after noon. A teacher and a secretary discovered the blaze in a restroom after the teacher smelled smoke. Students were evacuated and Muncie firemen were called at 12:10. The restroom received heavy fire damage and the rest of the building received some smoke damage. Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education John Wean told WBST that school should resume Monday, but he couldn't be certain until an estimate of the damage is made. No one was injured in the fire; Muncie fire officials are investigating the blaze to determine the cause.
Another organization I covered during Spring Quarter was the Regional EMS Planning Commission. Whereas the EMS Advisory Board concerned itself with the ambulance service's current situation, the commission was supposed to plan for future programs and activities, such as Advanced Life Support. With some of its members employed in the medical profession, the planning commission's meetings conveyed a different atmosphere than that of the advisory board.

In reality, while I attended its meetings, the commission was suffering from low moral and a lack of communication with the advisory board. I was a summer intern in Fort Wayne when the two EMS groups finally held their joint meeting, and I never did cover another commission meeting; hence, I don't know if the once-ailing Regional EMS Planning Commission has regained its strength or not.
Communication and the value of input were the main topics discussed at last night's meeting of the Regional E-M-S Planning Commission. After noting an apparent lack of communication between the planning commission and the E-M-S Advisory Board, commission members questioned how much the board values the commission's input. In the end, it was decided to call for a joint meeting of the two E-M-S groups. As President Bill Spolyar put it, the purpose of the meeting would be to find out what the advisory board sees as the commission's function, what the commission sees as its own function, and whether or not the two groups agree. That meeting may be held on April 30th. The communication problem stems from an incident involving Care-A-Van Ambulance Service. Shortly after Care-A-Van was restricted from making emergency runs, Ball Hospital used the service to transport an infant. Care-A-Van has since been recertified, but Spolyar wished aloud that the commission be notified when such restrictions are made in the future. Don Sanders put that wish into the form of a motion, and the commission passed it. On a brighter note, Acting E-M-S Director Rick Schlegal told the commission that the number of people on his staff is beginning to return to MORE
normal. Schlegal said the regular staff has about 32 people. It had dropped as low as 13 when the CETA program encountered financial trouble, but is now back up to 25.
RANDOLPH COUNTY FATAL

The police calls on the morning of March 21, resulted in the following fatality story that I sent to AP and Channel 6.
A one vehicle accident three miles north of Farmland at 7:25 lastnight killed one man and injured another. Dead is 24-year-old David A. Thornbro of route one, Farmland, who was the driver of the vehicle. A passenger, 17-year-old Bruce A. Benge (benji) of route one, Ridgeville, suffered abrasions and lacerations and was treated and released at Ball Hospital. According to state police, Thornbro was headed north on Randolph County road 800 west at 85 to 90 miles per hour. His pickup truck then left the road, struck a tree, and rolled over. It came to rest facing the opposite direction. Thornbro was thrown from the pickup and was pronounced dead at the scene by the Randolph County coroner.
THOSE GOOD OL' INDIANA SPRING FOGS

Nothing like starting off the Seven O'clock News with the weather and school closings! This story is a combination of the first day of spring, a weather service advisory, and several weather-related school closings. You may not agree, but I think that local weather and school information, when it's important, is one of the most useful services a local radio station can broadcast to its listeners.
THOSE GOOD OL' INDIANA SPRING FOGS
LCL/AP weather advisory & Gast
GAST
3-21-79 6:45 a.m.
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Good morning! It's the first day of spring in Muncie and a foggy first day at that. The weather service says fog remains quite patchy over the Hoosier State with visibilities of one mile or less reported at Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and Evansville. Here in Delaware County, at least three schools are going to start classes late this morning. Delaware Community Schools and Salem Community Schools are both delayed one hour this morning, while Liberty-Perry Schools will have a two-hour delay with no morning kindergarten. Once again, Delaware Community and Salem Community Schools, both delayed one hour; Liberty-Perry Schools delayed two hours with no morning kindergarten.
CETA ADVISORY BOARD TRYING TO AVOID MORE BAD PUBLICITY

What detrimental comments can be made about the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act that haven't already been said before?

During Spring Quarter, I covered the monthly meetings of the CETA Advisory Board. This organization must have used a platoon of workers just to prepare the mound of reports it presented at every meeting. CETA officials seemed to spend about half of their time actually administering the CETA program; most of the remaining time was devoted to staying out of hot water.

In contrast, except for the glut of excess paper passed out at its meetings, the CETA Advisory Board conducted itself quietly and efficiently. If it could rid itself of problems and controversy, CETA has the potential of becoming at least an acceptable government program.
Most of what the CECA Advisory Board discussed Thursday afternoon centered around the board's appeals system. Prior to this year, the entire board had listened to appeals. However, at the beginning of the year, a committee was formed to handle the appeals process. Now the board would like to streamline things even further by replacing the committee with a hearing officer. At the same time, the board wants to clear up any legal questions connected with appeals, especially in view of the publicity surrounding a recent dispute involving the board, five dismissed employees, and the Muncie Star. In other action, a projects workshop will be held at the Muncie Area Careers Center next Wednesday from nine to 11 a.m. The workshop is for any agencies interested in the CETA program. Dick Clydence presented a report on the Youth Employment Training Program, which is set up in several area high schools to help disadvantaged youth become more viable and employable. The CLTA program is beginning to gear up for summer: up to 500 people may be employed this year with about 360 working at any one time. And on the first anniversary of the Muncie Reading Academy, Jean Vanderburg, its director, presented each person with a proposal for a series of workshops—and a piece of birthday cake.
Every now and then, you have to do a "gutbuster" story. Basically, something big has happened, such as a blizzard or strike. Your job is to call up "everybody in town" and find out how they're being affected.

In my collection, I have only one story that could be qualified a gutbuster. The teamsters went on strike this spring, and I was assigned to find out how the strike was affecting Muncie's industries.

As a prelude to the real thing, I made a few calls and put together a five-line story for the 2:30 newscast.

After completing the whole story, I phoned in what I knew to AP, which was preparing a statewide roundup on the strike's effects. When their story ran--non-credited--my information had been condensed down to the following sentence:

"In Muncie, the effects of the strike have been minimal for Chevrolet and Westinghouse."
QUICKIE STORY ON LOCAL TEAMSTERS' STRIKE EFFECT

LCL/Jeff Gast

GAST

4-6-79  2:30 p.m.

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Muncie-area industries have yet to be seriously affected by the teamsters' strike. Auto plants are continuing to operate on a normal basis for the time being; however, some spot shortages of parts may show up by next week. And the Marsh supermarket chain is presently unaffected, thanks to full warehouses.
Muncie-area industries have yet to be seriously affected by the teamsters' strike. Delco-Remy is continuing to operate on its normal schedule for the foreseeable future, although Public Relations Director Charles Hardy says the company can't look too far into the future. Delco uses both trucks and rail transportation with more rail being used at the present time due to the strike. In addition, some Delco products are shipped by truck carriers not affected by the strike.

Chevrolet Personnel Director George Albrecht says his plant remains on full production, although the future is expected to bring a deterioration in Chevy's transportation system. Warner Gear officials issued a notice this morning concerning the strike. The plant will continue to operate to the fullest extent possible, although some spot shortages are expected that could eventually cause major disruptions. Vice President of Manufacturing Ken Stonbraker says no layoffs are expected through the first of next week; however, at that time the situation may have to be reevaluated. Warner Gear also transports a number of products by private carrier. The teamsters' strike has had a somewhat minimal effect on Westinghouse, mainly shortages of some small, incidental parts.
However, Public Relations Director Jack Herman told WBST that if the strike goes on much longer, there could be some major supply problems. Westinghouse ships out much of its finished products by rail. Finally, Marsh Supermarkets in Yorktown doesn't expect any shortages for at least a week. Personnel Director Dave Redden says full warehouses have helped to keep up the supply.
I was at the station for some now-forgotten reason when Andy Zehner called my attention to a scanner report of a fire at the Bethel Home for Boys. (I had done a five-part feature on the facility one year earlier.)

I arrived, got together a story, and went to a farmhouse to call the station. Unfortunately, the Metropolitan Opera hadn't delayed the Five O'clock News quite long enough for my story to make it on the air.

Three observations in connection with the story: the person left in charge of Bethel Home that weekend was something less than a born leader; if there had been a major fire, it could have burned away unmolested behind locked doors (for which no one had a master key); and, despite assurances to the contrary, residents in that part of Delaware County were really scared of Bethel Home's presence. The elderly woman at the farmhouse hadn't seen me coming until I was standing at the door she was looking out of, and I unintentionally frightened her. In talking with her (and soothing her and apologizing), I got the impression that her fears would have been echoed by others in the area. Then again, if I had had a Bethel, a Wayne State, or a Pendleton near me, I probably would have felt the same too.
Fire in a power box at the Bethel Home for Boys posed a problem for firefighters yesterday afternoon. The blaze had been burning for a while when a resident discovered sparks coming from a ceiling in the Administration Building. Two Yorktown units and the Gaston emergency unit arrived on the scene about 4:45. However, neither firefighters nor persons in charge at the home were able to find a way to get to the power box to put the fire out. At the outset, the person who had found the sparks also led firefighters to the power box, where the blaze was easily extinguished. There was no damage other than the box itself; however, smoke had to be cleared from the building.
As a rule, I try not to make subjective comments in my newswriting; however, every once in a while, something occurs which deserves an exception. I once wrote a wrap for a McQuate story that pointed to a low public turnout at a meeting discussing changes to be made to Wheeling Avenue. My introduction declared that, given the turnout, there would be little opposition to the proposed changes.

Another exception was my second meeting of the Regional EMS Planning Commission. Sometimes it seemed that the commission's goal was the establishment of a record for meeting length without substantial content. This night they didn't have anything to talk about, but they talked about it anyway. Marshall Sipe was also in attendance. The opening lines of my story mildly reflected the meeting's length as well as its ambiguous agenda.
The future of Delaware County's Emergency Medical Service was a good name for what was discussed at last night's meeting of the Regional E-M-S Planning Commission. The commission spent nearly ninety minutes talking about the entire makeup of the county's E-M-S system, including training standards, paid workers, volunteers, and ambulances—as they pertain to the county service and services in Albany, Eaton, and Gaston. Daleville residents are forming a fund-raising committee to buy a unit of their own. Except for Eaton, all E-M-S units in the county are presently owned by Center Township. That includes one wrecked unit which the service plans to rebuild. At the same time, four bids have been received for the purchase of a new ambulance. The planning commission would like to establish an advanced training program involving Ball Hospital and Ball State; then members discussed setting up the program as a CETA project. And a final topic of the night was a confirmation of the joint meeting between the commission and the E-M-S Advisory Board. That get-together will take place on April 30th to discuss the roles and functions of each group.
CETA WORKSHOP JUST BEFORE THE FLOOD

On the occasion of my first Ball State parking ticket, I attended a CETA Projects Workshop. It was there I discovered that Deputy Director Judy Wirick was a resident of my hometown!

About that parking ticket--I had parked my car on the east side of the English Building so I could make a quick getaway to the workshop. I wish that WBST could coerce the proper authorities to reserve a space or two for general use by radio station personnel. It's a handicap to come back from a hot story and have to park fifteen minutes away from the station, especially if time is short.

The Projects Workshop was also the occasion of a very watery thunderstorm. With that ticket fresh in my mind, the fifteen-minute walk from the parking lot to the station nearly became a fifteen-minute swim!
While thundery skies divided the attention of those present, a CETA Projects Workshop was held this morning at the Muncie Area Career Center. Attending the meeting were representatives from organizations desiring to bid for CETA projects. Deputy Director Judy Wirick discussed what information was needed on the Requests for Projects. Those requests have to be in to the CETA office no later than four o'clock April 20th. At that time, the Delaware-Blackford CETA Consortium will rate the applications and decide where projects will be awarded. Wirick said the consortium spends from one-and-one-half to two hours on each application. Finally and by law, all projects must be approved for funding by the County Commissioners. Bidders will be notified of approval or disapproval by May 1st. CETA officials are hoping that the projects will create about two-hundred temporary jobs.
EMS EMPLOYEES TO GET NEW DUDS

My second EMS Advisory Board meeting was highlighted by my misspelling and mispronunciation of the new EMS director's name. Don't blame me--I just reported what had been said at the meeting. I had no idea it had been said incorrectly!
Emergency Medical Service employees are going to be getting a new look. At this afternoon's Delaware County-Muncie E-M-S Advisory Board meeting, Acting E-M-S Director Rick Schlegal received approval to purchase new uniforms. That action was more or less a formality; clothing money is already included in the budget. The white uniforms currently in use are hard to clean and wearing out. They'll be replaced by light brown shirts and dark brown pants. Schlegal was also complimented for his service as acting director. On April 19, newly appointed Director Robert Vandeever (van DLL ver) will take over. The board will be meeting with the Regional E-M-S Planning Commission; however, the suggested meeting date of April 30th may have to be moved back until after the elections. Jeff Hole from the County Health Department inspected E-M-S vehicles and found them in compliance. However, a unit leased from Care-A-Van failed to pass inspection and was returned to Care-A-Van. To equalize mileage, board members are considering trading Center Township ambulances with outlying county units. On April 28, the service will begin training reserve county police officers in a beginning effort to improve health service on a first line basis. But what the E-M-S is really looking at
is regional training for Advanced Life Support. To do that, it has to find a way to buy the equipment personnel would be trained on.
HOUSE FIRE IN ANDERSON

Once in a while, the morning calls produce the ultimate—a story out of Anderson.
A house fire in Anderson at 1:37 this morning caused 25-hundred dollars' damage. Firemen were called to the Roy Blair residence at 1425 Dewey Street to put out a blaze in the living room of the one-story, frame house. The fire caused 15-hundred dollars' damage to the building and one-thousand dollars' to its contents. Four units responded to the call; they were on the scene for twenty minutes. Fire officials say arson may have been the cause.
M A Y S T O R I E S

CETA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING NOT HELD BECAUSE OF COMPLAINT HEARING

Thanks to WBST and my honors project, I have now been in court.
I went to cover the CETA Advisory Board meeting, but dis­covered it had been postponed because of a hearing. Never hav­ing been in court before, I stopped by to see what was going on. Returning to the station, I gleaned some information from the Muncie Star, added a few flourishes of my own, and came up with something of a story.
CETA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING NOT HELD BECAUSE OF COMPLAINT HEARING

LCL/Muncie Star info & Gast info

GAST

5-3-79 4:45 p.m.

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Normally the first Thursday of the month brings us a report on the CETA Advisory Board. However, this afternoon's meeting was postponed until next Thursday, because of a hearing. Proceedings are continuing on the complaint of four former CETA employees who were laid off with hundreds of other workers last August. They've charged that local administrators mismanaged the program and ran out of money, causing the layoffs. Some of the CETA officials who would have been at the advisory board meeting--had it been held--were attending the hearing instead.
I hadn't mentioned anything about including TOSIT promos in my collection. However, both remote control and The Only Show in Town had just been restored to WESI. I had been waiting a long time to get that album on the air, so what the heck.

Actually, the promo was a harbinger of an unknown thing to come—my summer internship in WOWO's promotion department.
**Promo for The Only Show in Town (Cooper Brothers Album)**

Done 5-6-79; played during the following week
(Show was on 5-11-79)

Total time: 1:08
(Carted)

**MX: Cooper Brothers' "Away From You"**

(Eight-second MX intro, then under the following:)

Hello, this is Jeff Gast. Hope you can join me Friday night on The Only Show in Town. I'll be presenting an album by the Cooper Brothers. They're a Canadian group who sound like a cross between the Eagles and Bob Seeger, with a little Billy Joel thrown in. That'll be coming your way at 1:05 Friday night or Saturday morning, whichever way you look at it, with The Only Show in Town, of course, getting underway at midnight. The Cooper Brothers and The Only Show in Town, here on WBST.

(MX comes up, stays up until the end of the "bridge," then fades.)
FIRST PHONE-IN ON ELECTION NIGHT

Election night duties saw me covering two Republican contenders: Ron Charlton and primary winner Alan Wilson. Seeing that both were holed up in different parts of town, I saw myself doing a lot of driving on election night.

To get to Charlton, I had to go to a bar on Wheeling Avenue. (That was exciting in itself.) It paid off, as I got a good interview with the candidate. I wrote up a story and called it in while sitting in my car. (It occurred to me the other day that they ought to do away with those kind of phone booths. People are liable to run their cars and waste energy while talking on the phone.)

When I typed up the copy to be included in this collection a few weeks ago, I called directory assistance to find out how to spell Charlton's last name. He had an unlisted number, but I thought the operator could at least give me his name's spelling. Wrong again: unlisted means unlisted! And she almost told me off telling me so.
Republican Ron Charlton hopes he can walk between John Jackson and Alan Wilson and get enough votes for his party's nomination. I talked to Charlton at about seven this evening. It's been a long day for him. He was up at five o'clock this morning and spent the day checking on precincts and making one last trip around the campaign trail. Charlton considers the Republican nomination harder to get than the mayor's office itself—that is, if he can pull away with the nomination, the race in the fall will be more or less wrapped up. He feels he has had the support from business friends; he feels that his was the only campaign that got out and talked to the people. And he praised his organization for a good effort. He said, "If we lose tonight, it won't be from not trying."
SECOND CALL-IN ON ELECTION NIGHT

I had a winner in covering Alan Wilson. After arriving at his headquarters (Pete Drumm's office), I sized up the situation and phoned in a scene-setter.
SECOND CALL-IN ON ELECTION NIGHT

LCL/Jeff Gast

GAST

5-8-79  7:39 p.m.

(Carted)

Well-wishers in Alan Wilson's headquarters are huddled around an underpowered radio, listening to the first election returns. Wilson feels he's in pretty good shape. He hopes to draw strength from the northwest precincts, but he is a little worried about Precinct 49, which is John Jackson's home precinct. Looking towards fall, Wilson says the Republicans will have to make peace then as vigorously as they are waging war now, especially if Jim Carey wins the Democratic nomination. In fact, Carey is already leading Wilson—they say his sunburn is redder than the Republican's sunburn.
THIRD CALL-IN ON ELECTION NIGHT--INTERVIEW WITH WILSON

As words of congratulations replaced anxiety at Wilson headquarters, I interviewed Republican nominee Alan Wilson. Six months later I was to repeat myself by interviewing Mayor-elect Alan Wilson.

This was also my first attempt at using "alligator clips." To send a tape recording over the phone, I had to disassemble the mouthpiece, attach the clips, and play the tape. This experience and the one that followed both went well.
I'm talking with Alan Wilson and you look kind of nervous, but it's a "happy" nervous. Uh, how's the situation looking?

"Well, it looks pretty good right now. We have a thirty precinct total in. Uh, that indicates that I'm about 600 votes ahead of my nearest opponent. And unless there's some real catastrophe develops, in, in one of the remaining, few remaining precincts, I think we will, we'll win."

Uh, does that mean you're getting ready for a trip to Republican headquarters?

"Yes, we're gonna go over there about 6:30, thereabouts, and--uh--see the people over there."

Okay, what, looking ahead to next fall, how are things looking so far?

"Well, the Democrats, as I understand it, are still in a kind of a state of confusion. I don't know who the nominee is gonna be--um--whoever it is, I think--uh--we can, beat him next fall, and we're gonna do our best to return the Republicans to city hall here in Muncie next fall."

Okay, thank you. That was Alan Wilson, candidate for Republican nomination for mayor.
I followed Alan Wilson to Republican headquarters, where I recorded his victory speech and used the clips to send it back to WBST.

I did have a tag on the end of the speech, but either it wasn't recorded or was cut off in the editing process back at the station. It went as follows:

"One down and one to go. Republican mayoral candidate Alan Wilson is looking towards November."

I drove back to the bar to check up on Ron Charlton, but he had evidently seen the voting on the wall and was nowhere to be found.
"I know--uh--I haven't had a chance to make a speech like this before. Zit feels good. We've had a awfully hard campaign, and the only reason we won, was because we had an awful lot of real good people working for me. I don't claim this victory at all; it's a victory of about a hundred people who helped--a good many of 'em are in here, in this room tonight. Now, we've had a very hard fought campaign--John Jackson and Becky Schultz, and Ron Charlton and Paul Stout all ran good campaigns. It was a clean campaign, but, I, I wouldn't want to be in any one that was any harder fought, because they did the advertising, they did the door-to-door, they did the things that we did, and they're very capable people, and I'll tell you right now, I'm gonna make every effort to get every one of those people, and every one of the workers that they had, on our side this fall. (Applause.) Now, I'll say this: the Republican party has never been split like the Democrats always are. I don't thing they're split now, and we're gonna go to this campaign as unified I
think we've been in years. The Democrats aren't, and I'll tell you this: I think we're gonna have Republicans in city hall next January the first. (Applause.) One more thing--I've been saying this for two months now: I can't do it alone, I can't win alone, I can't run the city alone. I've said I'm gonna put people to work, and we're gonna start this week putting people to work. We're gonna start asking for ideas about how we're gonna win this campaign, and then we're gonna put 'em into effect. Every person in this room can contribute something to the campaign, and there are hundreds who aren't in this room that we're gonna call on, and I think we can do it, so I'm asking for your support. Let's go get 'em in November." (Applause.)
CREVISTON STEEL CORP. PLANT FIRE AND TRANSFORMER FIRE

Nothing like doing the Seven O'clock News the morning after the election! The morning calls, along with a tip from Jack McQuate, produced the following story.
It was a busy night in Cowan, as firefighters battled a blaze at the Creviston Steel Corporation. They were called at 2:37 this morning to the plant, which is owned by Max Creviston and is located several blocks off the main street in Cowan. The building is largely made of steel, except for some wooden rafters and insulation in the roof. The fire started in the paint room and spread to the roofing material. The state fire marshall will be called today to assist in the investigation; according to fire officials, a device like a Molotov cocktail was found on the floor of the building. Creviston Steel has been having some labor troubles, as workers have been on strike against the firm, but reportedly are not picketing the plant. A train on the railroad track that runs by the plant had to be halted to keep it from running through firehoses. Five units responded to the alarm; they were on the scene for two hours. On another note, a transformer at 2600 Tacoma Street, directly behind Gibson's skating rink, caught fire late last evening. A woman saw sparks and at first thought that a tree was on fire. The fire dispatcher sent a truck out to investigate at 11:23 p.m., and just as it arrived, the lights went out. Some residents in the Indian Village area were affected by the
blackout, but not the adjacent Number Four Fire Station. According to I & M, power has been back on now for several hours.
EMS ADVISORY BOARD DOESN'T BOTHER TO TURN OFF BALLGAME

With the elections out of the way, political efforts returned to meetings. At my third EMS Advisory Board "meeting," I correctly spelled out Robert Vandeevender's name--they still didn't pronounce it right--and took note that Mayor Cunningham's TV set had been borrowed from another city official. (The mayor has all of life's essentials in his office. I'm sure that when he speaks of an orderly transition from his administration to Wilson's, he's pleading for extra moving time!)
Due to a lack of a quorum, this afternoon's meeting of the Delaware County-Muncie Emergency Medical Service Advisory Board, became a short discussion instead. Newly installed E-M-S Director Robert Vandeevender (van DEE ven der) told the group that the new ambulance has been delivered; however, painting, equipment installation, and inspection are needed before the new unit can hit the road. The E-M-S director told WBST he wasn't sure when that would be. Vandeevender has also appointed Emergency Medical Technician Gary Bowden to be the ambulance service's second assistant training officer. Rick Schlegal was the first person to be appointed to such a position. And finally, efforts are underway to have Ball Memorial Hospital designated as a regional training center for emergency medical personnel.
CETA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING WAS ONE WEEK LATE

During the same afternoon that the EMS Advisory Board met, the CETA Advisory Board convened their postponed meeting. "Subdued atmosphere" was a nice way of saying that the boring meeting was a real sleep-inducer.
Of twenty-eight CETA projects submitted to the County Commissioners for funding, 23 have been approved. That will use up 550-thousand dollars of federal money, which isn't the full amount authorized for the program. If the extra money isn't used, it goes back to the Department of Labor. The 23 approved projects should employ about 160 people in Delaware and Blackford Counties. Despite an air-conditioned meeting room, the CETA Advisory Board met in a subdued atmosphere in a meeting that was one week late. Last week's meeting was postponed because of a hearing involving CETA. In other business, CETA's winter youth program will conclude on May 15, while the summer program won't start until the fourth of June. Officials report that youth interest in the CETA program is currently lagging.
LAST STORY OF THE SEASON?

On the Friday of Spring Quarter's Finals week, I drove in from home to visit the Placement Office and to pull records for that night's TOSIT. I had been at the station for a short while when the scanner reported a barn fire northwest of Muncie. I abandoned what I was doing and ran outside where smoke was already visible to the North. Driving to the scene, I got my story and returned to WBST 45 minutes later.

Three additional comments pertaining to the barn fire: the saving of the adjoining building was a credit to effective firefighting; I should have asked questions myself instead of writing down the answers to someone else's questions; finally, I dubbed the fire "Last Story of the Season?" Little did I know what was to transpire later that afternoon!
Firefighters from Hamilton Township, Muncie, and Gaston were called to a barn fire at 10:45 this morning. The building—located at Wheeling Avenue and county road 400 North—is owned by Carlton Cox. He was working outside when he heard a loud pop and saw smoke coming from the barn. According to Cox, the only contents being stored in the barn at the time were thirty gallons of paint and some chaff. Firefighters arrived in time to save an adjoining building were some livestock were being kept. Muncie Firechief Bing Crosby and Deputy Chief Tom Herbert were also on the scene. No damage estimate was available as of this morning. Smoke from the blaze could be seen for several miles.
GENERAL ALARM FIRE INJURES THREE PERSONS

I finished pulling TOSIT records and left the station. Heading for the car, I saw a towering column of smoke to the Southeast. At first I thought there couldn't have been a major fire, for I hadn't heard any sirens; however, the more I looked at it, the more I decided that the black smoke was more than just a trash fire.

I gave chase and ended up at an explosion and general alarm blaze that had injured three persons. Half of the WBST staff also stopped by. Jack McQuate, who managed to get into areas forbidden to other reporters, gathered most of the news. Linda Hoover questioned Glen Scroggins for more information. Upon returning to the station, I secured the names and conditions of the injured, then took all the information and wrote two versions of the story.

As my voice was recovering from a cold, Linda Hoover sent out the shorter "beeper" version to WIBC, WOWO, WGOM/WMRI, WCTW/WMDH, and wrote a third, 25-second version for Channel 21 in Fort Wayne. Despite my vocal cords, I wrote another slightly longer version, recorded it for WBST, and sent the information to Channel 6.

All in all, it was a group effort.

In the following "beeper" version, WIBC edited out the bottom two lines of the story. All other stations, I assume, carried the beeper as sent.
A general alarm fire at the Dar Machinery and Manufacturing Company on Muncie's south side injured three persons, one critically. Twelve units from Muncie and the surrounding area answered the call, which was turned in at about 1:30 Friday. Nellie J. Evans was taken to Ball Hospital, then transferred to the burns unit at Wishard Hospital in Indianapolis. She reportedly has second and third degree burns over about 75 percent of her body. According to Lieutenant Glenn Scroggins of the Muncie Fire Department, Evans' arms were in a safety harness, which slowed her escape. A Muncie man, Terry Smith, attempted to free her and was also injured. He was treated and released at Ball Hospital. A third person received a slight arm injury. According to Scroggins, the fire broke out in the spray paint area of the building.

About 15 people were in the building at the time of the blaze. The firm makes metal wire products.
Three persons were injured this afternoon, one critically, when a general alarm fire broke out on Muncie's south side. Twelve units from Muncie and the surrounding area answered the call at the Dar Machinery and Manufacturing Company at 1:35 p.m. Nellie J. Evans of route five, Box 435, Muncie, was taken to Ball Memorial Hospital with second and third degree burns over 70 to 80 per cent of her body. She has been transferred to the burns unit of Wishard Hospital in Indianapolis. According to Fire Lieutenant Glenn Scroggins of the Muncie Fire Department, Evans' arms were in a safety harness when the blaze broke out. The harness slowed her escape. Terry Smith of West 8th Street, Muncie, tried to get her out of the harness, and he was injured in the process. He was treated and released at Ball Hospital. A third person suffered a minor arm injury. According to Scroggins, the fire broke out in the spray paint area of the building. Approximately 17 to 18 people were in the building at the time of the fire. The company makes metal wire products.
I spent an interesting summer as an intern at WOWO Radio; however, most of my work was in the promotion department. I was most impressed with WOWO's community involvement. The station really knows how to reach its people and have fun doing it. (On returning to Ball State, I was intrigued to hear that WBSD's Discologue program was doing a little promotion of its own by doing an occasional broadcast from a remote site.)

Other than talking with Gary Proseth and Victor Locke over post-parade pizza, I got to spend only one day in the news department. I watched Linda Losch do a few newscasts during the morning, then accompanied Bill Fisher on his afternoon rounds. (Bill knew everybody in Fort Wayne, and everybody knew him.) I was surprised to discover that his duties weren't all that different from those I did as an abstractor during the preceding three summers.

Although my internship wasn't in news, I still learned quite a bit about radio. In addition to responsibilities in the promotion department, my position exposed me to sales and allowed me to observe the station's overall operations.
The first story I did upon returning to school in the fall was the update on the condition of the hospitalized Mayor Cunningham. When I called the hospital in the afternoon, Cunningham's condition had changed for the better, so I updated a Jack McQuate story by adding the new information and deleting some of the old.
Muncie Mayor Robert Cunningham is now listed in satisfactory condition at Ball Hospital. Cunningham entered the hospital on August 26 for tests after complaining of stomach pains. Last Thursday the mayor's gallbladder was removed and later that day he had what doctors called an extremely rare reaction to a medication. After developing an extremely high fever, Cunningham was taken to the hospital's intensive care unit where he remained until yesterday, when he was transferred to the special care unit. Today the mayor was moved to a room. While Mayor Cunningham recuperates, the city administration continues its day-to-day operation with routine matters being handled by Cunningham's senior appointee. According to Indiana law, City Controller Bill Elliott is next in line to the mayor. He says city hall is in good shape. He also told reporters this morning that he has talked to the mayor on the telephone; however, he hasn't taken any official business to him.
One of the organizations I covered during Fall Quarter was the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Planning Commission. Presided over by the stern, unsmiling Chairman A. E. Suro, the commission reflected his businesslike attitude. Meetings were conducted in a formal manner for the most part.

Those meetings also brought out the worst in both people and government. Rezoning requests were argued before the commission. If there was opposition to the request, it usually came from next door or doors if a neighborhood association got into the act. Love thy neighbor. An evening with the planning commission also brought out several complaints regarding inadequate city and county services. Mention was made of bad roads, snow removal, drainage, weed control, and police protection. The commission listened to the complaints and probably weighed them in their decisions, but otherwise let them pass.

It didn't take long to get the impression that commission President John W. Wray and the Reverend A. Claude Watkins were champions of the underdogs. The commission's only black member, Watkins was destined to become fed up with the consequences of being such a champion.
In their Thursday night meeting, members of the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission passed a number of zoning requests, including one from Muncie Mayor Robert Cunningham. The mayor has requested a change of zoning from R-4 Residence to B-V Variety Business Zone for his property in south Muncie. Sidney McClellan appeared before the commission for the mayor, who is recuperating from surgery in Ball Hospital. According to McClellan, the mayor's purposes for the rezoning are unclear; however, he speculated that Cunningham is planning to establish a grocery at the location. McClellan noted that the mayor's property was in a commercial area and that the proposed change would not be spot zoning. The commissioners agreed and passed the request. The commission turned down a request from William Ze Belle for a change of zoning from R-5 Residence to B-V Variety Business Zone for his property at 10-24 East Main Street. Ze Belle intends to park concession stand trailers on his property, and his attorney, Don Chiappetta, argued that the lot's small size prevented Ze Belle from using it for anything else. On the side of the opposition was Don Heady, president of the East Central Neighborhood Association. Heady claimed that the lot would be an eyesore to the area. Commission
members John W. Wray and the Reverend A. Claude Watkins noted that a zoning change would improve the area; however, they were the only members who voted in favor of Ze Belle when the roll was called. As with all commission action, the matter will come up next before the Muncie City Council. And in some other business, the commission passed a revised Thoroughfare Plan for the city of Muncie. The new plan is more detailed and specific than its predecessor.
Another fall assignment was the Muncie Park Board. Meeting every second Monday evening, this city organization's major concerns were Prairie Creek Reservoir and the Bicentennial Park.

Meetings were formal on paper but loose and fairly social in practice. I got the impression that the Park Board's members weren't really all that interested in having meetings, but showed up anyway and made the very best of the situations.
With little business to conduct, this evening's meeting of the Muncie Park Board lasted a little less than thirty minutes. Park Superintendent Gayle workman said that the basketball court at Prairie Creek had been paved and striped, and city parks had been mowed and trimmed for what he hoped would be the last time this year. The park board has a written agreement what calls for Steak N Shake to build two basketball courts at Jack's Park on Muncie's north side. A small misunderstanding between the two parties had developed when the board thought one of the courts was supposed to be a tennis court. However, another look at the agreement showed nothing in writing about a tennis court. Someone had brought up the idea at a previous meeting, but no action was ever taken to change the agreement with Steak N Shake. A still-hopeful workman told WBSD that a tennis court/basketball court combination would be cheaper to build than two basketball courts. In other business, bids for park equipment are about thirty days away from being advertised, and all summer park programs have been completed and the Prairie Creek beach is closed for the season.
ADJUSTMENT BOARD CUTS BUDGETS OF LIBRARY & SANITARY DISTRICT, AMONG OTHERS

Provided that I have sufficient time, I tend to enjoy carving actualities out of recorded interviews.

Acting upon a nudge from Jack McQuate, I came up with the following story. Jack had seen the original "slashing report" in the Muncie Star (in fact, the story's first sentence is a direct steal from the morning paper) and asked me to phone some of the affected agencies for comments.
ADJUSTMENT BOARD CUTS BUDGETS OF LIBRARY & SANITARY DISTRICT, AMONG OTHERS

LCL/Leon Jones, Dir. Muncie Public Library & Gast info

GAST

9-11-79 11:20 a.m.

(Two actualities on two carts with live wraparounds)

The Delaware County Tax Adjustment Board yesterday slashed the budgets of seven city and county agencies. The Muncie Public Library's revised budget was over 42-thousand dollars less than its proposed budget. Despite that big cut, Library Director Leon Jones doesn't really put the blame on the adjustment board...

"There is not much we can do about it, there's not much they could do about it. In fact, the Tax Adjustment Board, I thought, was very...very sympathetic."

He tells us how he's going to live with the new budget...

"I don't know. There, there are some--ah--adjustments that can be made, and--uh--I need to get together with the state people. Uh, we will of course appeal it--uh--and that it, was expected of course by the Tax Adjustment Board itself, but--uh--an appeal would be made. Uh, you see the, the Public Employees Retirement Fund was completely--a--eliminated by the action of the Tax Adjustment Board. Uh, this is--uh--something that is legally required, so we will"

MORE
have to make some adjustments to do that. The--uh--the main library--uh--budget, the operational budget--uh--will have to be--uh--reexamined and--uh, uh--it's too early right at the moment to make any further comment on that."

At the present time, Jones doesn't feel that any library services will be cut. The Muncie Sanitary District was another victim of the board's action. District Commissioner's President E. R. Elliott is still studying the budget cut and has no comment at this time.
FIRE HITS HOUSE IN ANDERSON

Another round of morning calls uncovered a house fire in Anderson.
FIRE HITS HOUSE IN ANDERSON

LOL/Morning fire call & Gast
GAST

9-12-79  7:45  a.m.

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Fire in Anderson overnight caused ten-thousand dollars' damage to the Joe Wiley residence at 1502 Well Street. Firefighters were called to the two-story house on Anderson's west side at 4:08 this morning. Four units were on the scene for about an hour; there were no injuries. Anderson fire officials say that the blaze is still under investigation, with arson being suspected.
CAR-BICYCLE ACCIDENT INJURES BOY

A Saturday evening's calls brought news of a car-bicycle accident. Unfortunately for WBST's listeners, I failed to mention that it had occurred about 4:00 that afternoon.