

PINE CITY

LOCAL RADIO STATION PART OF SCENE FOR QUARTER OF CENTURY

Sixty years ago, the June 29 issue of the Pine Poker carried the following "Believe it or Not" item.

"Harry Weggoner has installed a radio machine and claims he is getting concerts from all over the world.

He was telling Cleaver about the wonderful piano solo he heard the other night but only to be heartlessly told by Cleaver that he probably just heard one of his neighbors playing."

Needless to say, radio in Pine City has come a long way since then and W.C.M.P., the local station has been serving the area for a quarter of a century.

Aside from entertainment, radio provides a valuable community service through public information programming.

Bob Schuller, Dewey Campbell, Joe Hunter and Rich Power first conceived the idea of a radio station to serve this area in 1957.

"No one figured a radio station in Pine City, population 1700, could make it," Schuller, who was with a Forest Lake station at that time, said.

"We knew it would be a challenge and we would have to work hard to get advertising customers," Schuller said.

Dolan Chevrolet was the first sponsor to buy advertising time on W.C.M.P. according to Schuller. Leonard Machart followed suit with an ad for the First National Bank and then Hoyt Haycock from Pine City Drug and Cavallin Ford jumped on the bandwagon.

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The Pine City mill, the Fair Store, Ed Edin's hardware, and a host of other businesses in the area soon become regular advertisers and W.C.M.P. was here to stay.

Lyle Nelson, Mitch Dupre, Larry Severson and Hank Mellum were part of the early staff.

Schuller recalled the day Jane Robbins called him to inquire about buying the station. The deal was set, the sale made and the Robbins' became the new owners. Under their management W.C.M.P. continued to grow and prosper.

On January 29, 1979, Robbins' extended their broadcasting capability to include F.M. programming.

"Basically the AM and FM stations offer two entirely different program formats," Jane Robbins said. "Our FM station is on the air to midnight and has the option of 24 hour broadcasting. Music on the FM station is all "country" while the AM station provides a variety,".

The station call letters identify the area covered, Wisconsin, Cambridge, Mora and Pine City and county.

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