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The team registration happens on the second page, after you pay your registration fee. Just go to the pull-down menu and look for *Barbara's Buddies*. If you can't walk with me, then please do consider making a donation of any amount to help low-income women -- and some men, too -- with breast cancer.

If you would like to get others to sponsor you, download a pledge form from the website, or I can mail one to you if you send me your mailing address. Let me know if you have any questions and I look forward to seeing you August 17th for a walk around Lake Merritt and a fun morning. Please encourage some of your friends and family to join my team and walk with us!!

Silver Circle Profile: Dave McElhatton



GOLD & SILVER CIRCLE PROFILES

by Kevin Wing



Some 20 years ago, I had an opportunity to lunch with the one and only **Dave McElhatton**. It was for a project I was working on at the time. Back then, McElhatton was approaching his 20th year as lead anchor at San Francisco's KPIX, and I was working on the morning show across the Bay at KTVU in Oakland.

The project had nothing to do with KPIX or KTVU, but it had everything to do with McElhatton, who had been a presence on Bay Area airwaves - radio and television - since 1951. It was not only an honor and a joy to meet him, but, for me, it was an afternoon of education for me. It was an opportunity to speak with a newsman who had seen it all, who had done it all.



A four-hour lunch interview at Scott's Seafood and Grill at Jack London Square goes way back now, but I remember the day fondly (and yes, I certainly didn't mind spending four hours at lunch with "Mac", learning all about him, and the business, from one of the best in the business).

This month, as a tribute to our "Past, Present and Future" theme at the 42nd Northern California Area Emmy Awards in San Francisco June 15, I thought it would be fitting to feature McElhatton, who anchored at KPIX from 1975 to 2000, becoming a true Bay Area television icon in every sense of the word. "Mac", as most of his friends and colleagues called him, was 81 when he died in 2010.

Inducted into the Silver Circle of the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in 1988, the Emmy Award-winning McElhatton received the Governors Award two years later, the highest honor the Chapter can bestow.

Born David William McElhatton on Dec. 8, 1928, and raised in Oakland, he attended the city's Fremont High School. Later, he

graduated, in 1951, from what was then called San Francisco State College. Two weeks after graduation, he went to work for KCBS radio in San Francisco at the tender age of 22. McElhatton eventually went on to host a popular all-night radio show there, titled *Music 'Till Dawn*. By the 1960s, the future KPIX anchor was hosting McElhatton In The Morning on KCBS, a mix of news and comedy with sidekick, **Homer "Friendly Clyde" Welch**.



Shortly after, McElhatton began hosting *Viewpoint*, a radio program unique to the San Francisco Bay Area, because it was the area's first call-in radio show. His phenomenal success at KCBS led him to become news director of the station. As news director, he helped change the station's design to an all-news format, which remains to this day.

While working at KCBS, McElhatton began to dabble in television, becoming host of KTVU's *TV Bingo*, a daytime show at the station's Jack London Square studios.



By the mid-1970s, KPIX was looking to change its *Eyewitness News* anchor lineup in an effort to challenge cross-town rival and Bay Area ratings champ, KGO-TV. The latter's *News Scene*, with anchors **Fred Van Amburg** and **Jerry Jensen**, was very popular with viewers throughout the 1970s since that station's news format brought the duo together as a team in 1969.

In 1975, McElhatton made the full-time leap to television when KPIX hired him to anchor *Eyewitness News*. Unlike Van Amburg and Jensen and anchors at the other competing stations, McElhatton lacked formidable TV news anchoring experience, even though he was a seasoned Bay Area news veteran. It didn't matter; the station still brought him aboard, and their decision would eventually pay great dividends as viewer habits began to change.

In the late 1970s, McElhatton was on the air for many of the Bay Area's most high-profile news events, including the Patty Hearst kidnapping, the Jonestown massacre in 1978, the assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk that same year, and the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989.

In 1980, McElhatton was paired on the anchor desk with **Wendy Tokuda**. Along with meteorologist **Joel Bartlett** and sportscaster **Wayne Walker**, the KPIX news team began to soar in the ratings, achieving what was then thought impossible - usurping KGO-TV from the top of the ratings for the first time since the late 1960s. Throughout most of the 1980s, the McElhatton-Tokuda team was No. 1 with Bay Area viewers. McElhatton continued to stay atop the ratings years later when he anchored with **Kate Kelly**.

After 25 years at KPIX, McElhatton, in 2000, decided it was time to retire. And, he did so, quietly, on his last night on the air in November of that year.

At the time, McElhatton said, "It's been a wonderful 50 years doing what I always wanted to do - work in broadcasting."

In his last years, McElhatton left the Bay Area and had been spending time living in Rancho Mirage, near Palm Springs.

I never had the opportunity to work with "Mac", but I always admired him and his work ethic from the view at other competing stations I had worked for during that time. I'm so glad

I had the opportunity to meet him and get to know him. He was a born storyteller, and during his 50 years in Bay Area broadcasting, he did it with class.

Soundbites



Soundbites is a new Q&A-style feature introducing you to the people of the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Each month, *Off Camera* editor **Kevin Wing** features a one-on-one interview with a broadcast professional working on-air or behind-the-scenes. If you would like us to consider someone for a future *Soundbites* column, please drop a line to us at the email address below.

This month, we chat it up with multi-award-winning Bay Area consumer editor, **Tom Vacar**, of KTVU Channel 2 in Oakland.

Where did you grow up?

In Salem, Ohio, an industrial town of 12,000, halfway between Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

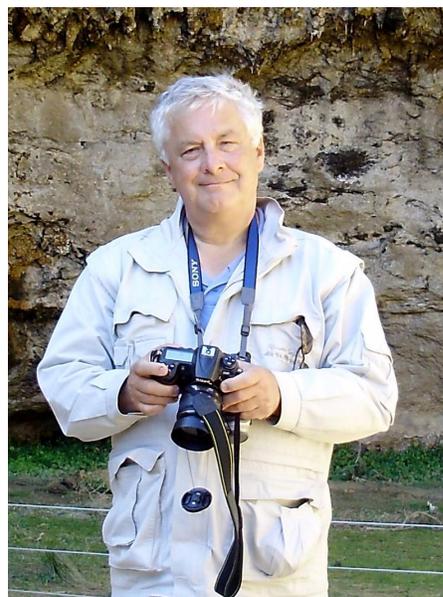
Do you have siblings? If so, are you the oldest? Youngest? Middle?

I have one older brother.

When did you first realize, and at what age, that you wanted to work in television news? I guess I was in my mid-20's, and I knew a very funny guy who was a reporter who seemed to love his job. I was just finished with night law school and was practicing contract and consumer law. I really didn't like many aspects of it, so I looked to journalism.

Who has inspired you in your career? As a person?

I was one of the first wave of "Nader's Raiders", and though Ralph Nader was looking out for the interests of all those not imbued with great wealth, fame or power, I, like many Baby Boomers, was inspired by the likes of the **Rev. Martin Luther King**, the **Kennedy** brothers, the astronauts and the U.S. space program and great movements like the Civil Rights struggle.



Before KTVU, where did you work before?

WJW in Cleveland (1978-79 as a freelancer) - KGO TV, AM & FM from 1979 to 1985 - KCBS TV & KNX Radio from 1985 to 88, KTTV & KNX Radio from 1988 to 1991, and KTVU 1991 to present.

As a journalist, every day at work is different from the one before it. Can you describe