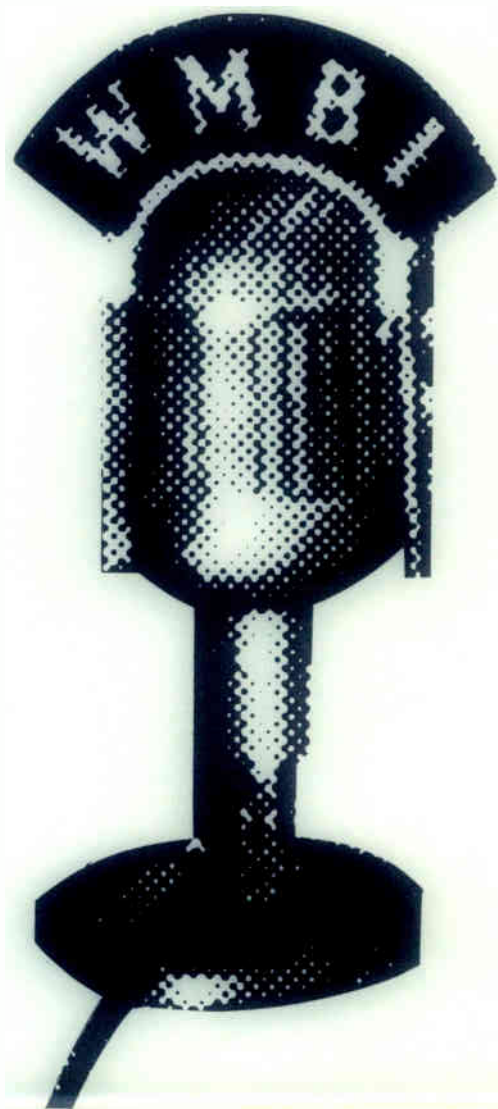


**WMBI**

**50**

**YEARS OF TRANSMITTING *HIS* POWER AND GLORY**

**WMBI**



# INTRODUCTION

Listen.  
Listen to His power and  
glory.

This is the sound of WMBI . . . a sound which has remained unchanged since the inception of this Moody Bible Institute radio station in 1926. Oh, yes, there have been alterations in programming style and many technical improvements since those early days . . . but it is the PURPOSE of WMBI which has brilliantly stood the test of time throughout these 50 years.

*“WMBI — Dedicated wholly to the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”* You’ll find this inscription on our transmitter cornerstone. You’ll also find this spirit exemplified in the lives of countless workers who have each shared a part in the history of this radio outreach. And, most importantly, you’ll find the results of this dedication forever etched into the changed lives of listeners throughout Chicago and around the world.

This year, in 1976, we ask you to join us in being an important part of WMBI’s 50th anniversary. As the United States celebrates its bicentennial, WMBI joins in remembering the pioneer spirit of its own men and women of vision who also felt the wisdom of God guiding them.

In this commemorative booklet, we’d like to reminisce with you about the early days when visionaries such as Henry Coleman Crowell launched a bold, new way to reach people with the message of Christ — on radio, from Moody Bible Institute.

We’ll also examine the work of WMBI today, and share something of the exciting impact of its ministry in a changing, diverse world.

So, come with us as we tell the story of WMBI . . . and listen . . . listen to the sound of His power and glory.

"We have found that there is a great antidote to the spiritual 'blahs', and that is to turn on your station."

**"As a result of listening to the program last Saturday night my 11-year-old son received Christ as his Saviour."**

"I may be one of the few college professors who attends 'chapel' each day. Since my work is some distance from my home, I have a long commute. Via car radio, WMBI music and messages set the stage for facing each new day's challenges and opportunities. Again, as I return home, the miles click by as I listen to your programming until sundown. Thanks for your ministry."

"Before I became a Christian, I never knew that Chicago had a radio station proclaiming the gospel of Christ every day. I was pitifully ignorant of the concept of 'salvation through faith.' "

"I am not a Christian . . . I have, however, listened to your programs on WMBI . . . I have been enormously impressed by the simplicity, directness, and astonishing honesty with which you share your faith on the air . . . it has exercised a powerful influence on me."

"From your nightly programs to the various teaching programs which are available on your station, we have noticed a high degree of professionalism."

**"WMBI is a daily blessing for me and a most wonderful God-given substitute for the soap operas on TV."**

"Depression is a condition in which I, too, often find myself. Were it not for God's wonderful love and the timely words of comfort and encouragement I have received from your programs, *Music for Quiet Thoughts*, *Morning Clock*, and others . . . I know I would have been a most miserable and desolate soul."

## LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

“A young lady at my place of business whose work is of such a nature that she can listen to a transistor radio while she works, accidentally found WMBI. She was saved through its ministry.”

**“Just want you to know how much I appreciate WMBI . . . Even non-Christian people speak about the top level of music that comes from your station.”**

“It is so refreshing and relaxing to leave all of the blare and discouragement of other stations and the outside pulls of the world to the quiet and refreshment of a Christian radio station.”

“How many times have I had doubts, fears, resentments — and turned on WMBI, only to have doubts, fears, and resentments find the victory in Jesus Christ?”

**“I was a Buddhist and your Nightwatch program spoke out to me — a lonely, depressed person searching for meaning and fulfillment in life. One day I accidentally turned to WMBI and heard your program. When I got saved, my life changed from one of mere existence to one of purpose and meaning.”**

“Thank you again for your loving outreach to the Chicago area. You remain a constant inspiration to me. WMBI was very instrumental in leading me to Christ.”

“We would listen to the radio at night before we were saved and pass your station and listen for a couple of minutes and we would say to each other, ‘What is that doing on. We don’t need that.’ But now since we have been saved, everything has changed and we look back at our lives and realize that we were searching for Jesus Christ all along. We couldn’t think of a life without Jesus now. Thank you for your station.”

**“I have just become a Christian . . . and now, I’m in tune with WMBI.”**

“I have been listening to WMBI for 25 years. It is like an old and trusted friend.”



# EARLY PROGRAMMING

The story of WMBI begins as a simple, yet exciting lesson in faith. The year is 1923. In a quiet Institute office, H. C. Crowell, A. F. Gaylord and A. G. Olson kneel in prayer. Together they pour out their hearts in petition for a radio station from which Moody Bible Institute may broadcast the message of salvation to a growing audience of radio listeners. To put it simply, they had a vision . . . and God did the rest.

In 1925 radio time was purchased from an existing station; however, the Institute was still committed to having a station of its own. So committed, in fact, that with a pledge of \$2600 from friends, a 500 watt transmitter was purchased and erected in a tiny penthouse atop the Women's Building on north LaSalle Street. The first floor reception room of the Men's Dormitory was converted into a studio . . . all this being done in an act of faith, for the Institute knew that there was no frequency available over which the applied-for station could broadcast.

For six months the Institute waited and prayed. Then, in a sudden shifting of channels, an unused spot on the dial opened up, and the Institute thankfully claimed it for its new station, WMBI. On the evening of July 28, 1926, the gospel message went out from WMBI for the first time . . . His power and glory, never changing, never failing.

WMBI's first studio





WMPI staff in late 1920's

Left to right:

*Front row:* H. C. Crowell, L. H. Greer, Edna Gray Johnson, William King, Howard A. Hermanson, Wendell E. Lovless

*2nd row:* Arvilla Kirchhofer Garner, Dr. H. Framer Smith "Uncle" John Meredith, Dr. Gustave Edwards, Solomon Birnbaum, Dr. Clarence H. Benson, Mildred Erickson Zimmerman

*3rd row:* Edna Stephenson Kuhnle, A. P. Frye, John R. Reibe, Raymond Ohman, Nella Casement, Margaret Taylor  
*Back row:* Adele Selness, Tom Gimer, Elmer Paulson, Dr. Harold Lundquist, William Norton, Edward Jackson, Melvin Seguna, Dorothy DeYoung

In those early days the WMBI staff consisted of director Wendell P. Loveless and his secretary, Mr. Loveless interspersed his own announcer-pianist-vocalist-speaker schedule with musical numbers by students and with outside speakers. Somehow he managed to give listeners seventeen and a half hours of programs every week. Within the coming months and years, however, a more varied fare of programs began to emerge.

Events happened rapidly in those first, formative years. An exploding radio industry and the newly-formed Federal Radio Commission were to provide Institute officials some challenging times indeed, as well as a number of trips to Washington. "Service to the public . . . for the moral and spiritual welfare of our fellowmen" were the well-chosen words H. C. Crowell gave to the radio commission in 1927.

Although its broadcasting frequency was to change several times in coming years, WMBI had gained the highest respect from its regulators, and won its place in the annals of radio history.

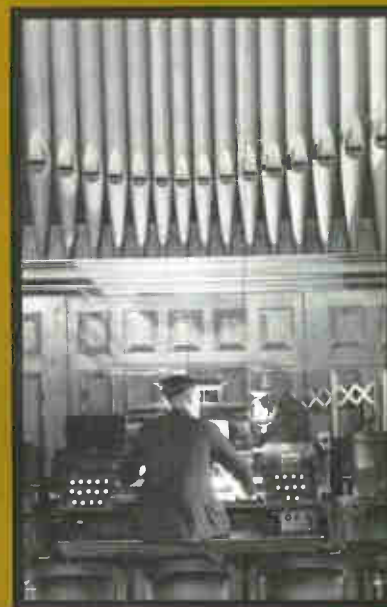
1  
Henry Coleman Crowell reviewing a radio address. A. P. Frye at the control board

2  
View of WMBI's twin towers atop the Women's Building on LaSalle Street, and the Men's Dormitory on Institute Place

3  
Wendell P. Loveless at the auditorium organ



WorldRadioHistory





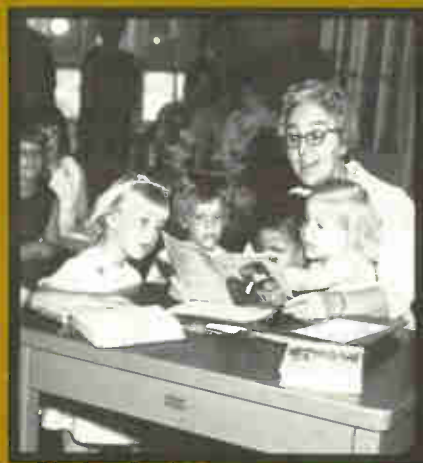
Pioneering in radio education, Moody Bible Institute was the first school in the United States to offer classes in Bible instruction for credit over the air. The *KYB (Know Your Bible) Club*, almost as old as WMBI, gained popularity through the years under the leadership of Aunt Theresa Worman. KYB Club rallies throughout Chicago and live

studio broadcasts drew thousands of visitors, and were used by God as instruments to proclaim His life-changing power. Invalids and others confined to their homes were introduced to the encouragement and

inspiration of the *Shut-in Hour*. Other popular programs — the *Missionary Hour*, the *Home Hour*, *International Sunday School Lesson* and broadcasts of sacred music — also went on the air. Radio friends learned to listen for “Uncle John,” for “Uncle Phil,” for the *Radio Street Meetings from Institute Place*, and for the smoothly blended voices of the *Announcers Trio*.



1 Cast and small friends of *The Morning Glory Club*



2 Mrs. Frances Youngren, director of *The Home Hour*

3 Aunt Theresa Worman reading a story on the *KYB Club*

4 Home Bible study class listening to *Radio School of the Bible*, taught by Mrs. Iris Ikeler McCord in the late 1920's



On January 20, 1928, another milestone was reached. That evening marked the dedication broadcast of a powerful new 5,000 watt transmitter located in Addison, Illinois. Although WMBI would have to share its limited broadcast time with other stations until 1941, this new, more powerful voice enabled the Institute to increase its broadcasting to thirty-six hours a week.

In those early days of the crystal set, broadcasts were heard over amazing distances, as revealed by the *Midnight Hour* program. Letters were received from such remote points as New Zealand, over 9,000 miles from Chicago. A growing mail response was to give birth to Moody Bible

Institute's first "Letter Week" in 1929, resulting in 5,375 letters received in two weeks' time from 44 states and several provinces of Canada. His power and glory was being heard!

In 1930 the Institute invited its friends to the first WMBI Radio Rally and guided tour. More than 4,000 guests registered, and fifty testified to being saved through WMBI's ministry. And, before the rally closed, another visitor came to Christ!

Through the years of the great depression, WMBI supporters encouraged each other with hope and incentive during hard times. As commercial and educational stations alike were meeting with financial disaster, WMBI showed strength in the midst of crisis, having a good financial base, excellent equipment and an adequate staff to carry on its work. In the 1930's a demand developed for Christian radio stations around the United

1  
Personnel heard on *The Shut-in Hour* including Robert Parsons and John Peterson

2  
WMBI transmitter building located in Addison, Illinois

3  
The *Couriers for Christ* with pianist Gil Mead



WorldRadioHistory



States and in foreign lands. WMBI was used as a model and inspiration for many of these stations, some of which were staffed by visionary alumni of Moody Bible Institute.

Following years were to bring on new studios, new faces and new programs! By January, 1939, the three top floors of twelve-story Crowell

Hall were completed for WMBI. With five modern studios, visitors' galleries, control rooms, a reception lobby and staff offices, WMBI had become a showplace for up-to-the-minute broadcasting methods. As studio space increased, so did the opportunities for new programming ideas and

talented personnel. It would be impossible to even begin to list the many dedicated and gifted workers whose very lives were given to God's work at WMBI. Certainly names such as Robert Parsons and George Beverly Shea are easily recognized; yet, there are countless musicians, soloists, announcers, speakers, engineers and staff workers who have each played an equally important role in shaping this radio ministry. Through their unselfish work, God's power and glory was being proclaimed . . . and hearts were being met.



1  
Musicians Bill Pearce and Dick Anthony, heard on *Keep Praising* and many other musical programs of past years

2  
Members of the *Miracles and Melodies* program

3  
Former WMBI staff soloist, George Beverly Shea



Even through the war years, programs poured forth from WMBI's radio studios, and from other sources as well — such as Winona Lake Bible Conferences and live Founder's Week broadcasts. In addition to having various church leaders come to its studios, WMBI had been going to different churches to broadcast Sunday morning services since its earliest days. The vital link between WMBI and area churches has played an immense part in the growth of this radio outreach down through the years. A bond of unity and purpose was begun between the leaders of churches and WMBI in time past, and continues to this day.

Bold new opportunities for WMBI were opened as the station began full daytime operation in mid-1941, and the possibilities for ministry were increased even further as a new FM station was launched by the Institute in

late 1943 — expanding broadcast hours well beyond WMBI's sunrise to sunset limitations. This new FM venture, to become as WDLM and later WMBI-FM, continued to broadcast for nearly ten years before ceasing its useful, though relatively small-audience, programming.



1  
"Sailor Sam" as portrayed by former WMBI station manager, Charles Christensen

2  
Donald Hustad directing the WMBI Ensemble

3  
Former radio pastor, Robert J. Little

To meet the appeals of religious stations around the country for quality programs, *Moody Presents* was given its start, and now enjoys nationwide distribution. Other familiar titles formed in those early days included *Listening Post*, *Sailor Sam*, *Ranger Bill*, *Morning Clock*, *Sundays at Seven*, *Men of Praise* and the oldest continuously-aired drama in the history of radio, *Stories of Great Christians*.

Do you remember the *Morning Glory Club* with Wendell Loveless? How about the *Young People's Hour*? . . . or *On Wings of Song*? Many of WMBI's older programs have changed titles, but not necessarily purpose. Whether it be drama, music, educational or an instructional broadcast, each professionally produced program is designed to meet the needs of WMBI's diverse audience.

WMBI has grown from the days of crude studios and lone carbon microphones, through the age of large 16-inch breakable recording discs, into the era of recording tape with sophisticated editing equipment and sound improvements . . . but the most important sound of all is the one that is woven throughout the abundant history of WMBI . . . the sound of His power and glory.

1  
Drama cast of *Stories of Great Christians*

2  
Before the days of tape recording, programs were made on large 16-inch discs such as this one

3  
Frances Nordland, hostess of *Woman to Woman*



# MILESTONES

## 1926

### July 28

WMBI begins broadcasting on a wavelength of 288.3 meters, pioneering as an educational and religious station

### September 19

Miss Edna Johnson organized the *KYB Club*

### September 21

*Radio School of the Bible* originates

### October 1

Wendell P. Loveless transfers from the Extension Department to Radio, as program director and chief announcer.

## 1927

### February 1-5

First broadcast of a Founder's Week conference, bringing a wide response from listeners

### March 12

Special test program from 1 to 3 a.m., bringing letters and wires from almost every state in the union, including six from California. WMBI was then only 500 watts!

### June 15

WMBI begins operating at 1140 kc dividing time with Chicago radio station WJAZ

## 1928

### January 20

Dedication broadcast of a new 5,000 watt transmitter at Addison, Illinois

### October 7

WMBI assigned a new frequency of 1080 kc, sharing limited time with WCBD in Zion, Illinois

## 1929

First Letter Week is held to encourage listeners to comment on WMBI programming

## 1939

First course in radio broadcasting is added to the Moody Bible Institute curriculum

### January 8

First broadcast from new tower studios in Crowell Hall

## 1941

### March 4

FCC grants permission for construction of an FM station

### March 29

WMBI changes frequencies from 1080 to the present 1110 kc, still dividing time locally with WCBD for several months

### July 6

Full daytime operation begins, and continues to this day



## 1943

### October 1

Moody Bible Institute begins operating the first non-commercial religious FM station in the country, W75C

### November 1

FM station is dedicated as WDLM, named in honor of Dwight L. Moody, founder of MBI. Changed later to WMBI-FM, which broadcasts until December 18, 1952

## 1950

Tapes are put into use, making editing of programs possible, and greatly improving sound

## 1958

### November 23

WCRF begins FM operation in Cleveland, Ohio

## 1960

### April 3

WDLM, East Moline, Illinois, goes on the air

### July 25

WMBI-FM is reactivated, having received a non-commercial educational license for 90.1

## 1964

### May 26

WMBI wins the 16th annual Alfred P. Sloan Radio-TV award at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City

## 1965

### July 28

WMBI-FM puts into operation a new transmitter boosting its FM power to 100,000 watts

## 1972

### October 9

WMBI-FM begins broadcasting many of its programs in stereo

## 1973

### July 1

MBI's voice in the south, WMBW, begins FM operation in Chattanooga, Tennessee

### July 28

WMBI's newly remodeled stereo studios are dedicated

## 1974

### January 1

WMBI-FM begins operating 24 hours a day

### January 5

WMBI begins weekly Spanish programming

### July 1

KMBI AM-FM, Spokane, Washington, go on the air as Moody's newest owned and operated stations

## 1976

### July 28

WMBI celebrates 50 years of transmitting His power and glory



# PROGRAMMING TODAY

The story of WMBI today is the story of not one radio station, but two . . . WMBI and WMBI-FM. On July 24, 1960, the FM voice of Moody Bible Institute was reactivated and placed on a frequency of 90.1 megacycles. With maximum power of 100,000 watts being granted in mid-1965, WMBI-FM is today one of the most powerful stations in Chicago, and broadcasts on a 24-hour basis in stereo. Simulcasting much of the time during daylight hours with its older, sister station, WMBI-FM continues to transmit God's power and glory throughout the night to a completely different audience, providing a counseling and enriching ministry that has worked miracles in the lives of many.

WMBI's 50 year success has encouraged the simultaneous development of a worldwide Institute outreach through broadcasting. Since 1958, Moody Bible Institute has expanded its number of owned and operated radio stations to seven. Beginning with WCRF in Cleveland, Ohio, God has clearly led in the growth of opportunities

for broadcasting as His people have prayed and given of themselves to see these ministries started. Through the Lord's direction, WDLM in East Moline, Illinois; WMBW in Chattanooga, Tennessee; and KMBI AM and FM in Spokane, Washington have each become realities . . . and it doesn't stop there!



Control Room of Studio "B"

Earl Kesselhuth watching the powerful WMBI transmitters

WMBI's present Studio "A"



1  
Host Brandt Gustavson joins MBI president, Dr. George Sweeting each week for *Moody Presents*

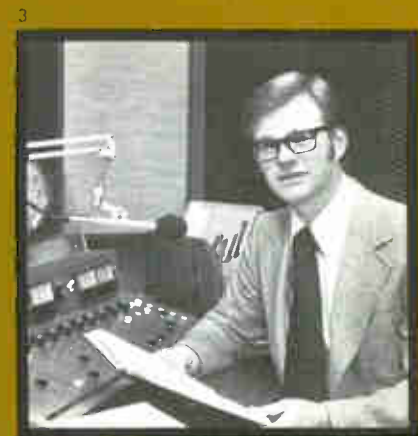
2  
A popular after-church activity is the *Sunday Nite Sing*

3  
*Nightwatch* host, Chuck Wagner

More than 260 radio stations and cable television outlets around the world now carry Moody-produced programming to listeners far beyond our Chicago boundaries. In recent years, visionary Institute personnel have sensed the need for quality, Bible-based radio programs to be distributed on a mass basis, further proclaiming His power and glory. A Department of Broadcasting was structured

to oversee the entire global radio outreach. A division of this area, Radio Program Marketing Services, now provides broadcasters with Christ-centered programming of the highest professional quality. Through the aid of computerized schedules, this facet of Moody radio is one of the most fascinating and rewarding ministries which God has allowed us to use.

Respected by the general radio community, WMBI is professionally staffed with skilled radio communications specialists — announcers, technicians, creative writers, dramatic actors, musicians and singers. Its equipment represents the latest in radio technology — all made possible by the gifts of dedicated friends.



WMBI's programming in 1976 is a far cry from what was heard in 1926; yet, its purpose has never faltered. Some programs originating in those pioneer days of radio may have a familiar ring today. For instance, *The Question Box* (1928) is today's *Dial the Pastor*, or the *Musical Request Program* (1927) is the forerunner of

the popular *Telephone Requests*. Through the years, WMBI has strived to meet the many needs of Chicago's melting pot society. As early as 1930, the station was broadcasting foreign language programming, and today is seeing tremendous results through its Spanish language segments.

In meeting the requirements of our broadcasting license, WMBI airs a diversity of program types throughout each day. Many are directly related to Bible study; some sophisticated to the point of attaining college credit through scriptural radio courses. Others may be less formal, and offer informative talk, or simply high quality



1  
Chief engineer Bob Caithamer shows the remote controls of WMBI's powerful transmitter to Radio Pastor Donald Cole



2  
*Morning Clock* host, Bob Murfin



3  
Staff instrumentalist John Innes

Christian music and classical selections. Still others may be of direct benefit as a public service, focusing needed attention of the Christian community upon positive aspects of work and organizations around us.

Perhaps the most fascinating fact about WMBI today is that since its beginning 50 years ago, it has never sold one second of radio time. All of the needs of this complex broadcasting operation are met on a day-to-day basis by the gifts of interested friends. Since that first gift of faith of \$2600 for a 500 watt transmitter, God's people continue to prayerfully support this great radio work.

Yes, it all began with three men praying for a radio ministry. And this year, WMBI celebrates its 50th anniversary. Did you catch the sound? . . . the sound of His power and glory? It's the same today as it was in 1926 . . . and when you stop to think about it, we're only just beginning.



1  
WMBI's Neve Stereo Console in  
Studio "B" Control

2  
News reporter Beth Krusich "on the air"

3  
Jim Shedd, host of *Conozcamonos*,  
one of WMBI's Spanish language  
programs [WorldRadioHistory](#)



# WMBI ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF



1  
Departmental management team  
Left to right:

Seated: Donald Cole, Robert Niff,  
Robert Carlsamer

Standing: Jerry Rice, Tom Sommerville,  
Jim Wick

2  
Left to right, Phyllis Ray, receptionist;  
Mildred Swanson, music librarian;  
Sharon Carter, WMBI secretary

3  
Program personalities and announcers  
Left to right:

Seated: Miron Canaday, Chuck Wagner,  
Eric Kirchner

Standing: Wayne Shepherd, Victor  
Beattie, Susan Levin, Ruth Dinwiddie,  
Jim Warren, Warren Wetherbee



1  
*Left to right:* Stan Ferris, public affairs coordinator; Walter Carlson, news director



2  
 Engineering staff  
*Left to right:*  
*Seated:* Ron Kinzie, Ken Alspaugh  
*Standing:* Henry Voss, Dennis McGrath, Carl Haffinger



3  
 Production staff  
*Left to right:*  
*Seated:* David McCallister, John Hiebert, Nancy Sommerville  
*Standing:* Jim Shedd, Merla Hammack, Michael Kellogg, Paul Nicolette, Beverly Israel



Dr. George Sweeting  
president

“The story of WMBI is truly a continuing miracle. Who would have thought back in 1926 that this ‘new phenomenon’ of radio would in time reach into the hearts and lives of thousands of listeners and acquaint them with the Saviour. Today, 50 years later, our purpose remains exactly the same as it was during that first broadcast — to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to men and women, boys and girls.

We congratulate WMBI upon 50 years of unwavering service. It’s thrilling to look back, and just as exciting to anticipate what the Lord has for us in the days ahead. May God continue to graciously bless this far-reaching arm of Moody Bible Institute.”

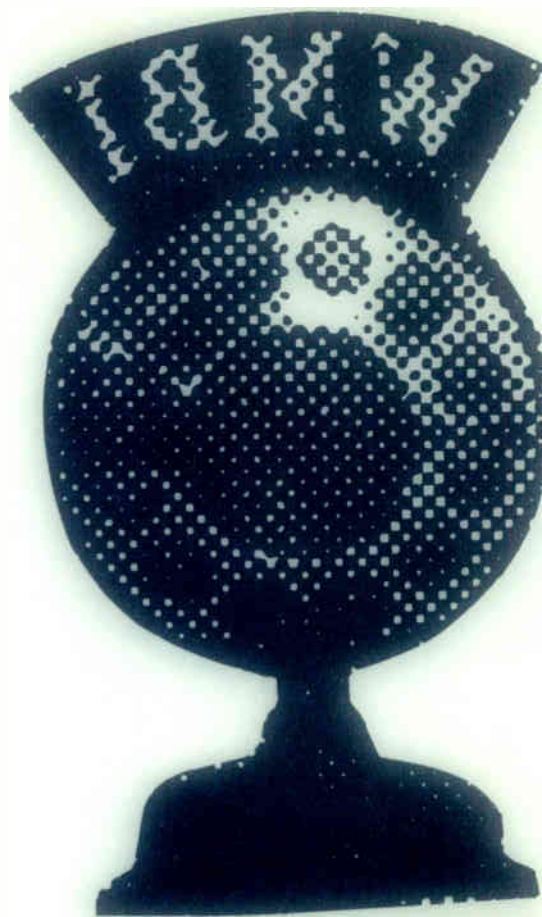
*George Sweeting*

<sup>1</sup>  
Brandt Gustavson  
vice-president/development

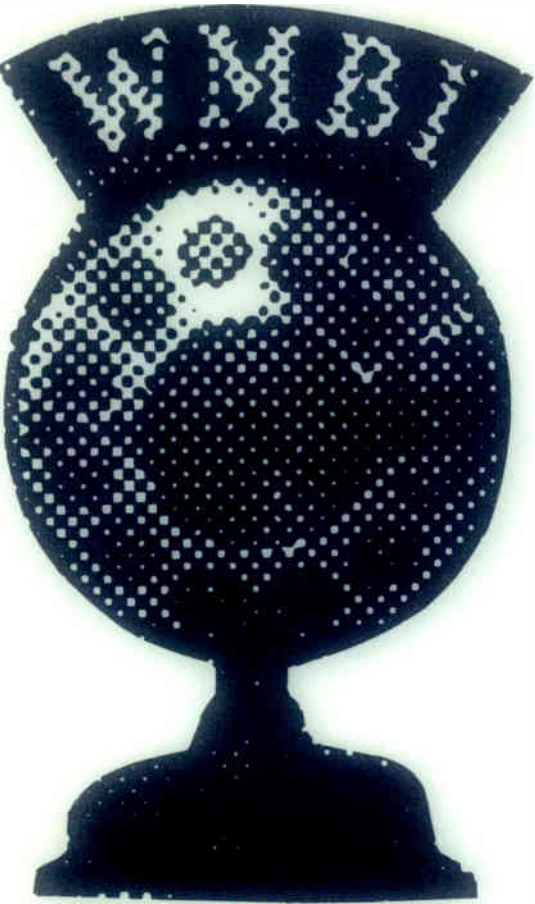
<sup>2</sup>  
Robert Neff  
director of broadcasting



**MWBI**



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**WMBI**



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