

WBAY 70: Commitment to the community

BY KRIS LEONHARDT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Part VII and final part of our series on WBAY's history

The 1960s also brought about color television at WBAY and the station's growth continued to take off.

In the early 1970s, Jerry Burke came to WBAY from FM radio, when FM was fairly new, and worked as news director.

He was contacted by two different television stations to come work for them on the same day.

After interviewing with both stations, he selected WBAY.

"I chose Channel 2 because it was the station I grew up with," Burke recalled.

The station soon realized that it needed to increase the stories coming out of the Fox Valley area, where they had a large viewership, and the Fox Valley Bureau was created.



In the early days of television news, reporters did what they called a turnaround. One reporter would run the camera for the other reporter and then they would swap places for the other person's story. **WBAY photo**

"Tim Ryan started the ball rolling," Burke added. "Our first day was Halloween in 1977, and we had a bureau office in Oshkosh."

We moved twice in Oshkosh, and then we moved the bureau to Appleton in 1990. The bureau is still running to this day. I was in

charge of the bureau from 1977 until I retired. "The ratings went through the roof for Channel 2," Burke said and other

stations soon followed.

But that was a different time, Burke said.

"Back when I started, reporters, we all did what they called a turnaround. I would go out and somebody would shoot my story, then I would take the camera and shoot that person's story. And that's the way we did business for a long time.

"But after a while, we realized we had to have just a photographer staff and just reporters.

"A lot of the reporters now shoot their own stuff. And the camera size, cameras have gotten much smaller."

Burke's career with WBAY spanned nearly 34 years, from 1973-2007, a longevity seen often throughout the station's history, according to current WBAY Vice President/General Manager Steve Lavin.

"When I became GM nine years ago, I was sales manager. So I was here for 10 years as a sales manager. So I knew

people in the building.

"I took the first five, six weeks of just scheduling one-on-one meetings with people, current employees, every one of them. I think there were 95 at the time, and I learned the pride that the people in news had for working for WBAY. It was just incredible.

"You know, nine years later, some of them retired, some of them moved on, but the longevity and the passion that they had.

"We have a commitment to our community.

"When they turn the TV on every night they expect to be informed, and over the last several years in TV, it hasn't been really easy because there's some perspective that we're a liberal. We get lumped into the national stuff and that's not the case... We could not be slanted one way or the other, because we would lose half our viewership.

"We take a lot of pride in being down in the middle."

Bay Link Manufacturing program students recognized

FOR THE PRESS TIMES

GREEN BAY – The Green Bay Area Public School District and West High School recently recognized 11 students in the Bay Link Manufacturing program who will graduate with college credits and have completed or will complete their CNC certification.

The students received a certificate of achievement during a ceremony at West High School on April 20.

Recipients

- Hector Aguilar Acosta, Preble High School
- Reyniel Folwarski, Preble High School
- Zachary Frasch, Preble High School
- Daniel Gleason, West High School

- Jackson Hunt, West High School
- Brian Lopez-Lopez, Preble High School
- Calob Micolichek, West High School
- John Moravetz, West High School
- Joshua Schultz, Preble High School
- Jacob Webber, Southwest High School
- Isaac Wery, West High School

Bay Link Manufacturing is a student-managed manufacturing business with the capacity to complete projects for companies in the areas of industrial welding, machine fabrication and metals.

Students learn real-world employment skills and how to manufacture products efficiently, accurately and at a competitive cost.

For more information, visit gbaps.org/baylinkmanufacturing.



Bay Link Manufacturing program students receive certificates of achievement during a ceremony at West High School on April 20. **GBAPS photo**

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