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*54th Annual
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GEORGE MARTI |

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Renaissance Austin Hotel*



Broadcaster of the Year

Meredith Beal

Lasting Value Broadcasting Group

TAB's 2007 Broadcaster of the Year is an advocate for localism and believes that radio stations can and should be forces for good in the communities they serve.

Meredith Beal is the president and CEO of Lasting Value Broadcasting Group.

He purchased KCLW-AM Hamilton, KTXJ (now KCOX) Jasper and KWYX (now KTXJ-FM) Jasper in 2000 and has since increased local programming, added local news and created new public affairs programs.

Beal grew up in Los Angeles but his father is a native of Marshall – so Beal spent a good amount of time in the Lone Star State.

He attended college at the University of Houston, majored in journalism and eventually moved to California for a job as a reporter for the Los Angeles Times.

Later he was editor of the *Rhythm and Blues Report* and other publications.

When Motown Records founder Barry Gordy sold the company in the late '80s, Beal consulted on the transition.

He eventually joined the company as Director of Marketing – developing budgets, marketing campaigns and working with artists. Beal also purchased 40 computers for the company (which happened to be 40 more than Motown had before!)

A longtime musician, Beal has played on and produced numerous records – everything from Gambian music to a children's album about a character called Thursty the Elephant.

Beal eventually made his way back to Central Texas, where he worked as global Webmaster for Dell Computer until 2001.

His website received Dell's Intranet Award for Excellence, for Best of Class Design and Usability and his team was known for pioneering in personalization and self-service web applications.

As a Buddhist Beal strives to be optimistic and calm, despite the fact that he usually has 68 irons in the fire.

On a daily basis, he is likely to be attending a TAB Board Meeting in Austin, producing a CD of harmonica instrumentals, teaching a Web development class at Huston-Tillotson University and heading to Hamilton to meet with community leaders.



Broadcaster of the Year

Meredith Beal

Lasting Value Broadcasting Group

Beal says his goals have always been to build businesses and serve the community.

He saw a need for more service, less sensation, and more localization in news.

So, in 1999 he sold some Dell stock and formed Lasting Value Broadcasting.

Hamilton's only local radio station was at risk of being lost when Lasting Value purchased it in 2000.

Key community leaders knew that if KCLW shut down, it would be a devastating blow to the area's economic growth, as well as a loss of their most vital communication link.

They worried new owners would change the station's format and eliminate local involvement.

Beal made a point to meet with the community, attend local meetings, events and service groups to show he truly wanted the station to remain an integral part of the area.

He engaged the school system and worked with the superintendent to create a flow of information about what's going on in the schools.

Beal also has offered the station as an educational tool to give students exposure to the media.

In appreciation, the Hamilton Independent School District passed resolutions placing the name Meredith Beal on the statewide Media Honor Roll in 2005 and 2006 for exemplary reporting on the community's public schools.

In 2006, the station held "KCLW Fire Fest" and raised more than \$30,000 for area fire departments that were drained by winter wildfires.

The station's new public affairs program – "What Do You Think" – is one of the most popular and features in-depth interviews with candidates for local and statewide political office. "Shout Out From Iraq" is a weekly program featuring call-ins from soldiers deployed in Iraq.

The station's annual open house allows listeners, advertisers and the business community to gather at "their station."

Beal joined the TAB Board of Directors in 2006 and has been active in lobbying efforts.

He truly believes in giving a voice to local citizens, allowing them to use the airwaves to talk about issues pertinent to the community.

Beal continues to travel the world, spreading his message of global citizenship and dialog as the best means to create a peaceful society.

As a broadcaster, he advocates localism and community focus while maintaining a global perspective.

Pioneer of the Year

Lady Bird Johnson

Claudia Alta "Lady Bird" Johnson was a refined, soft spoken Southern lady who blazed her own trail in the competitive, and then male-dominated world of broadcasting.

At the same time she raised two daughters and served our nation through a turbulent era of both social and technological growth.

Lady Bird Johnson's purchase of KTBC-AM Austin was approved by the FCC in February 1943.

In an age when two-career families were rare, she became a broadcast station owner, working full time in Austin, while her husband served in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Austin was a relatively small city in 1943, with only two stations: KTBC and KNOW.

Having no broadcasting experience, Lady Bird set out to learn what she needed to know about the radio business, including advertising sales, promotions, transmission equipment, regulations, programming and management.

Glamorous, it was not. KTBC was losing \$600 per month.

The broadcast signal was a weak 250 watts.

KTBC had no network affiliation and limited broadcasting hours. The station's offices were physically dirty.

For a woman who built a reputation beautifying Texas' highways, the unsightly appearance was the last straw.

"I spent one day myself with a bucket full of soap and rags and whatever suitable things there were, washing the windows, while some of [the employees] just stood around there with their mouths open thinking 'What kind of person have we got here?'"

Lady Bird moved the station to a new location and hired new management, all while putting accounts receivable in order and paying off debts as quickly as possible.

By July 1943, KTBC had FCC approval to double the station's power, change its frequency and broadcast around the clock.

In August, the station became Austin's CBS affiliate, and Lady Bird saw her first profit of \$18.

She began assembling what would become a very profitable station, learning each part of the business as needed. "I had to learn an awful lot about technical material. I learned it, got it down to some sense of understanding, and then promptly forgot it within a few months."

Always humble, she clearly understood how to run a business.

By 1945, the station had increased its power to 5,000 watts and showed an after tax profit of nearly \$40,000.

In just two years, Lady Bird Johnson proved to be a formidable businesswoman.

Once asked if she ever felt she'd made a mistake in buying the station, she replied "No...I just felt like we had to push on."

Push on, she did.



Pioneer of the Year

Lady Bird Johnson

With two young children and a husband in the U.S. Senate, Lady Bird Johnson made a daring leap into the newest development in broadcasting: television.

She made the critical decision to build a VHF station rather than a less expensive UHF broadcasting facility, and the move gave KTBC a stronger signal and provided more coverage across central Texas.

KTBC-TV gave Austin its first television broadcast on Thanksgiving Day 1952, when it aired the University of Texas/Texas A&M football game.

Although a modest station with no film cameras for news coverage during much of the 1950s, KTBC-TV prospered enough for the Texas Broadcasting Company to expand outside of Austin, buying interests in radio and television stations in Waco, Bryan and Weslaco.

By 1959, the company was valued at more than \$2 million.

Lady Bird made yet another gamble when she broke into FM radio in 1960.

Few people had FM receivers at the time, but the merits of a signal free of interference were enough to convince Lady Bird that this was the future of radio.

Renamed KLBJ-FM in 1973, the station has been on the air longer than any other commercial FM station in Austin.

Stations bearing the KTBC call sign have brought Austin many memorable moments in history.

In 1944 KTBC-AM broadcast the details of the invasion of Europe on D-Day and brought Edward R. Murrow into Austin's living rooms.

KTBC-TV made its mark on television history with live coverage of the UT Tower sniper in 1966.

Many will never forget young reporter Neal Spelce crouched by the Red Rover news vehicle reporting an event that forever changed Austin.

Capable as she was of making smart business decisions, Lady Bird had the gift every successful executive has: a knack for recruiting high caliber people.

Nellie Connally, Ann Eastland and Louise Vine were among the mostly female wartime staff in the 1940s.

Lady Bird recruited strong and capable general managers including Harfield Weedon, Pat Adelman and J.C. Kellam.

Cactus Pryor developed and found a permanent home for his very special brand of Texas humor at KTBC. Ron Rogers, Ronnie Dugger and Ray Waddell all spent time at KTBC during her tenure.

Other famous KTBC alums include veteran news director Paul Bolton, Governor John Connally, Congressman Jake Pickle, television journalist Bill Moyers, CNN chief Tom Johnson, national sportscaster Vern Lundquist and TAB's longtime Executive Director Bonner McLane.

Lady Bird Johnson established a quality of service to the community which continues today.

She was honored in 1998 when TAB and the Texas Broadcast Education Foundation established a scholarship in her name for a UT-Austin broadcast student.

Lifetime Achievement

Ann Arnold

Texas Association of Broadcasters

Beverly Ann Watson was born April 6, 1945 in Jackson, Mississippi, the first daughter of Bill and Mildred Watson.

She spent her early years in Little Rock, where her interest in journalism was fostered by the publicity generated by the forced integration of Central High School in 1959.

Ann noticed a marked difference between the way the local and national media covered the events.

"I was always fascinated by the media and its ability to uncover the truth...how important that was," she would say later.

After moving to Fort Worth, journalism clearly became her passion. She started her junior high school newspaper, wrote for the L.D. Bell High School newspaper and moonlighted for community newspapers, covering evening city council and school board meetings.

In 1963 she went to Texas A&M Arlington, unable to get the needed scholarships to attend the more expensive University of Texas at Austin.

She transferred to UT in 1965 and worked three jobs to pay her way, including the Capitol bureau of the Dallas Times-Herald.

Ann won a 1966 Headliners award for a Dallas Times-Herald series on LSD use and also worked on the Daily Texan.

She graduated UT with a B.A. in Journalism in 1968 and joined UPI's Capitol bureau under David Anderson, now a professor at the UT School of Law.

That year she married her high school sweetheart, Reg Arnold, and worked at UPI while he finished law school. The couple's first son, Bill, was born Jan. 14, 1972.

Never one to slow down, Ann was hanging sheetrock at home the day before Bill was born and a few weeks later jumped back into reporting on the gubernatorial election that featured a primary runoff between Frances "Sissy" Farenthold and Dolph Briscoe.

The Texas Capitol was rocked by a series of scandals in the 1970s, and Ann reported on everything from nepotism to a state legislator who used state postage stamps to buy a new pickup truck.

She joined the Fort Worth Star-Telegram in 1980, despite the fact that Star-Telegram reporters turned her down for a college scholarship because she was a woman and they feared she wouldn't pursue a journalism career after graduation.

While reporting on Gov.-Elect Mark White's plans for his administration in 1982, he asked her to be his press secretary.

"I had never thought about leaving journalism," she recalls and agreed on the condition the Administration be as open as possible with the public. She was the first female press secretary to a Texas Governor.

Gov. White's administration brought MCC and the high tech industry to Texas, but the biggest accomplishment was passing education reform in a special session in 1984.

The economy crashed in 1986, jeopardizing the hard-won education reforms and crucial state services. Gov. White persuaded the Legislature to hike taxes in a bid to keep Texas' future economic standing bright.

It worked, but cost White re-election.

Serving as press secretary was hectic, made even more so by the birth of second son, Jon, in 1985.

It was common to see months-old Jon crawling around the Governor's Mansion and Press Office before he could walk.



Lifetime Achievement

Ann Arnold

Texas Association of Broadcasters

After White left office, Ann decided to check with doctors about nagging health problems.

She soon faced the biggest challenge of her life. Doctors diagnosed her with leukemia and said she had six months to two years to live.

Ann rejected that death sentence, joined an experimental treatment program at UT's M. D. Anderson and now has lived a remarkable 20 years with the disease.

She would not even stay home to feel sorry for herself.

In January 1987, lawmakers were desperate for new revenue and some were eyeing an Ad Tax to help fill state coffers.

When TAB's long-time Executive Director Bonner McLane died suddenly, the organization tapped Ann to take the reins.

Ann quickly realized that broadcasters – despite their strong community leadership – were unaccustomed to personally lobbying their lawmakers.

And TAB could not afford the kind of high-dollar lobbying campaign typical of major public policy fights.

With her legendary power of persuasion and tireless dedication, she mobilized legions of Texas broadcasters from across the state into grassroots lobbying warriors.

The Ad Tax was defeated, the first of many major wins.

TAB bested the state's major phone companies in the early 1990s over legislation allowing them to enter the video business.

That defeat persuaded the phone companies to enter six weeks of negotiations with broadcasters and eventually led to the first state law creating must-carry/retransmission consent rights for television and radio stations.

It set the stage for the cable industry to finally start paying stations for their programming.

Ann focused on shaping state tax policy to ensure broadcasters benefit from the same kind of tax exemptions that other industries do.

She positioned TAB as a primary defender of Texas' Open Government laws. Scores of seemingly innocuous bills that could have hurt stations were amended or scuttled at her behest.

Texas broadcasters stepped up to the federal playing field, too, as Ann fought new EEO rules hastily adopted and applied retroactively by the FCC.

She helped engineer the defeat of free airtime for political candidates and preserve the tax deductibility of businesses' advertising costs.

She is broadcasters' fiercest advocate for enhancing the Emergency Alert System and has laid the groundwork for the media industry's ongoing efforts to pass a Free Flow of Information Act in Texas.

Always looking to the future, Ann also undertook a massive effort to strengthen the association, increasing membership 50 percent, creating the Non-Commercial Sustaining Announcement program that is now TAB's main source of revenue, expanding services for stations and recruiting top professional staff.

In 1999, TAB constructed a permanent home blocks from the State Capitol that now hosts industry events and meetings with lawmakers.

She also grew the Texas Broadcast Education Foundation's endowment and organized successful fundraisers to create scholarships honoring Lady Bird Johnson, Wendell Mayes, Vann Kennedy and Tom Reiff.

For the past 20 years, Ann's vision, fearlessness and tenacity have allowed TAB to flourish and prosper.

Her accomplishments and continuing leadership will help Texas broadcasters achieve even more to ensure the industry's continued vitality.