

# Call for Entries 2024

SOUND  
BITES  
2024

Entries Due:

**AUGUST 2, 2024**

[RockOurAwards.com](http://RockOurAwards.com)

*Celebrating 70 Years!*



Dear member,

Another year and another Sound Bites Awards contest kickoff! 2024 marks the 13th awards contest for Massachusetts radio and television stations and it also marks the 70th anniversary of the Massachusetts Broadcasters Association.



As you'll notice, the pages of this year's Call for Entries look back at more than 100 years of Massachusetts broadcasting history. From the experimental station 1XE, later known as WGI in 1917, through to the creation of NBC 10 Boston, many Massachusetts broadcasting "firsts" and major milestones are covered here. A special thank you to Mass. Broadcasters Hall of Famer Donna Halper for her help in piecing this puzzle together!

While we tried to uncover as much as we could (it's surprisingly hard to track some of this stuff down) there are surely things we've missed. Please share any significant milestones from your station and we'll continue to expand our timeline as we approach Sound Bites on November 21 in Framingham.

Meanwhile, I hope you've been bookmarking, saving, and noting your best work over these last 12 months as we prepare to award the latest batch of Sound Bites Awards. You may notice a few shifting categories, and one new category for television in finding the best regular newscast of the year. There are another couple of categories which may be dropped in future years due to lack of participation. Please share any categories you'd like to see in the future as we want to offer categories you care about!

Finally, THANK YOU for continuing to do what you do best, and what sets broadcasters apart from the competition – focusing on local. As newspapers and digital outlets continue to struggle and "big tech" looms large over everything we do, local radio and television broadcasters remain connected to our communities.

Best of luck with this year's awards!

-Jordan

## Broadcasting Milestones

# 1920s

**1917: American Radio and Research Corporation (AMRAD) begins experimental broadcasts at Medford-based radio station 1XE (later known as WGI).**

*Shepard Department Store, the original home of WNAC (now WRKO).*



**September 19, 1921: WBZ Radio, located at the Westinghouse plant in Springfield, makes its first broadcast from the Eastern States Exposition.**

**July 31, 1922: WNAC signs on from the Shepard Department Store in downtown Boston; today, the station is still on the air, using the call letters WRKO.**



*Maude Gray, Prima Donna of the Aborn Musical Comedy Co., performing at WBZ radio in Springfield, Massachusetts (1922)*



**September 29, 1924: WEEI makes its debut. WEEI's first program manager "Big Brother Bob" Emery would go on to a long career in radio and later on TV.**

*"Big Brother Bob" Emery shortly before joining the new WEEI.*

# Call for Entries

ENTRIES AND FILES DUE: AUGUST 2, 2024 [RockOurAwards.com](http://RockOurAwards.com)

At the MBA's annual Sound Bites event on November 21 we'll recognize the best that Massachusetts has to offer in radio and TV broadcasting with the Sound Bites Awards!

## Criteria and Guidelines

Any over-the-air radio or television property eligible for full membership in the MBA can submit.

1. All entries must be produced and aired by the entering station/cluster between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024.
2. Maximum entry length is 15 minutes. Longer entries must be edited down.
3. Video entries must use a link from Youtube, Vimeo or other video hosting site that allows for downloading of videos.
4. Avoid special characters in file names. No apostrophes or #!
5. Stations must have the rights to all music, sound effects, and video used in submissions.
6. Categories receiving fewer than three entries will not be judged and entry fees refunded.

## How to Enter

Head to [RockOurAwards.com](http://RockOurAwards.com) to upload all of your Sound Bites entries. To reset your password email [Jordan Walton](mailto:jordan@massbroadcasters.org).

## Questions?

Email Jordan Walton ([jordan@massbroadcasters.org](mailto:jordan@massbroadcasters.org)) or call the MBA office at 800-471-1875.

## Entry Cost

MBA members - \$25/entry

Non-Members - \$40/entry

Entries can be paid on RockOurAwards.com after you have completed entering. (The MBA will invoice any unpaid entries after August 2.)

Unpaid entries will not be eligible for an award.

**Award Categories listed on following pages.**

# 1920s-30s

**April 14, 1925: The first Boston Braves baseball game is broadcast on WBZ. Comedian, actor, and sports fan Joe E. Brown does the play-by-play. The Braves beat the New York Giants 5-4.**

**Early March 1934: The Yankee Network News Service makes its debut. The YNNS is the first to provide local news from all over New England. The network had 24 affiliates by 1947.**



**April 13, 1926: The first Boston Red Sox baseball game is broadcast on WNAC. Boston sportswriter Gus Rooney does the play-by-play, as the Sox lose to the Yankees 12-11.**

*Gus Rooney, first voice of the Boston Red Sox.*

*An ad for the Yankee Network showcasing each of the 24 affiliates by 1947.*



**July 24, 1939: W1XOJ goes on the air as greater Boston's first FM station; its transmitter is in Paxton. At the time, FM is still regarded as experimental, and not many people have the equipment needed to receive it.**

# Entry Categories

**Commercial Campaign** Series of spots written and produced by your station (no more than three) for a single, local client that have a common theme.

**Feature Story** Presentation of a single human interest story that is not closely tied to a recent news event.

**Spot News Story** Presentation of a single topic, event or issue of hard news.

**Public Service Announcement** Outline your station's most successful and/or creative public service announcement for an outside entity. Include the recorded PSAs written and produced at your station. *Optional—include information about the campaign and results garnered.*

# Radio & Television

**#WeAreBroadcasters** A unique event or program produced and promoted by your station that highlights your station's localism. Programs may be community oriented, charitable, a one-time occurrence or an annual event, etc.

**Air Personality** Clip or montage of a single on-air personality or show.

**Station Promotional Announcement** An on-air promotion of a station feature, contest, personality or program. The promo must be written, produced and aired on your station. Up to three promos for the same "subject" are allowed.

**Entries Due: AUGUST 2, 2024**  
**RockOurAwards.com**

## 1940s-50s



December 2, 1940: At Harvard, what will one day be known as WHRB begins its life as WHCN (Harvard Crimson Network), a closed-circuit radio station that was at first affiliated with the Harvard Crimson newspaper.

*WHRB's Bruce Morton '52 interviews freshman Henry Lorrin Lau '54.*

June 21, 1948: WNAC-TV (channel 7) becomes Boston's second TV station

*WNAC radio legend and MA Broadcasters Hall of Famer Gus Saunders was the first voice on the air on WNAC-TV. He served as both announcer and one of the station's first weathermen.*



March 29, 1941: The North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement affects 1,000 radio frequencies in seven countries. WBZ moves to its current home of 1030 from 990 on the AM dial.

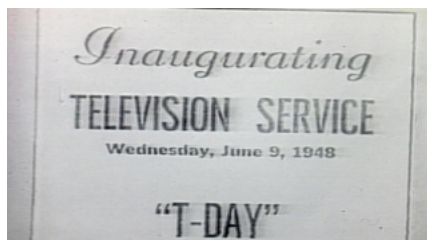
June 9, 1948: WBZ-TV (channel 4) makes its debut as Boston's first television station.



*Courtesy of Emerson College Archives and Special Collections.*

November 2, 1949: At Emerson College, WERS-FM goes on the air; it has 10 watts and is Boston's first non-commercial/educational FM station.

*A broadcast in 1949, the first year of WERS.*



*Title screen of "Premiere."*

June 25, 1951: WNAC-TV carries "Premiere," the first color television broadcast. WNAC is one of five CBS stations to air in color.



# Entry Categories

**Sports Feature** Presentation of a single sports topic; may be a local, regional or national sports story.

**Best Use of Digital Media** This award will be given to the station that makes the digital world work for them. Show us your best social media campaign, banner ad, viral video, website design, smart phone app or whatever digital asset came out after this was printed. *Files may include audio, video, screenshots, hyperlinks, etc.*

**Recurring Segment** This category highlights the best recurring segment or feature in a newscast or other locally produced program. Uploads should include at least two examples of the recurring segment.

# Radio & Television

**“Above and Beyond” Award** Nominate someone who has gone “above and beyond” the call of duty at your station in the past year. This can be anyone. Have a promotions pro that dug out a listener from a snowbank this winter? Or an on-air personality who tutors aspiring broadcasters after work? Fill out the form from [massbroadcasters.org](http://massbroadcasters.org) and upload to [RockOurAwards.com](http://RockOurAwards.com). *Please include a photo or video of the nominee.*

**Station of the Year** Outline your station’s overall efforts throughout the past year including information about localism, public service activities, awards and honors, creative listener and sales promotions, quality of production and programming. *Files should include audio or video. Optionally, stations may include pictures, screenshots, written summaries, URLs, etc.*

March 17, 1953: NBC affiliate WWLP-TV goes on the air in Springfield. One month before rival WHYN-TV (now WGGB).



## 1950s - 60s

May 2, 1955: WGBH-TV channel 2 goes on the air.



*Discovery, Life of a Tree, 1957 with host and producer Mary Lela Grimes Sherburne.*

March 13, 1967: WNAC Radio changes its call letters to WRKO and adopts a Top-40-format.



*The Beach Boys in 1967 with WRKO's Joel Cash and crew*

October 15, 1954: The Massachusetts Broadcasters Association with George H. Jaspert, president and General Manager of WCCM-FM, serving as its first President (Chairman).

### Whisnand Named to Presidency Of Massachusetts Broadcasters

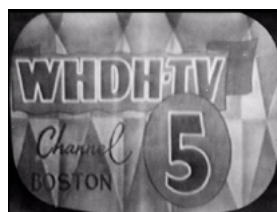
Roy V. Whisnand, vice president of Plough Broadcasting Corp. and general manager of WCOP Boston, was elected president of the Massachusetts Broadcasters' Assn. at its annual meeting Oct. 29 in Boston.

Named to serve with Mr. Whisnand were Bill Swartley, Westinghouse Broadcasting Co. vice president for WBZ-AM-TV Boston, MBA vice president; George Jaspert, WCCM Laurence, re-elected treasurer, and Larry Reilly, WTXL West Springfield, secretary.

Elected directors: John Hurley, manager, WNEB Worcester; Dick Adams, WKOX Framingham; Tom Gorman, manager, WEEI Boston; George Steffy, Yankee Network vice president for WNAC-AM-TV Boston, and Woody Tarlow, immediate past president of MBA and manager of WHIL Medford.

*A write-up on the 1957 board elections of the MBA, naming Roy Whisnand president.*

November 26, 1957: WHDH-TV channel 5 goes on the air.



*An early “sign on/sign off” screen from the original WHDH-TV.*

March 15, 1968: WBCN-FM, which at one time played classical music (the call letters stood for “Boston Concert Network”), begins its migration to an album rock format. It will become a dominant album rocker and remain on the air for four decades.



*WBCN staff - 1969*

# Entry Categories

## Newscast **\*NEW\***

Recognizes the best regularly-scheduled newscast within the entry window. Criteria includes all aspects of the newscast (i.e. – news, weather & sports), presentation of facts, thoroughness, production values, interest of stories presented and overall impact of the news and delivery. Newscasts should be edited down to fit the 15 minute time limit while also keeping all aspects of the newscast in the entry. *No more than two newscasts (with different anchor teams) per station.*

**Investigative Reporting** A single news story or series, which was the result of the journalistic and investigative efforts of the station's personnel. The station must have initiated the investigation. Criteria are significance, resourcefulness, fairness, thoroughness of coverage, and exclusivity.

**ENTRIES DUE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 2024**

## 1970s-80s

March 19, 1972: WHDH-TV, channel 5, loses its license; new ownership immediately changes the call letters to WCVB-TV.

*Publicity photo of anchor team Chet Curtis, Jack Hynes, and Natalie Jacobsen.*



January 1, 1979: WXKS-FM (Kiss 108) makes its debut, playing disco, dance music, and rhythmic top-40.

*Kiss logo 1979*



February 12, 1985: Live and local music video television station "V66" launched with a particular focus on local talent large and small.

*V66 Founder John Garabedian (left) with artist Kenny Loggins.*

# TV Only

**Meteorologist** Recognizes a meteorologist with regularly scheduled weather broadcasts. Criteria include clear presentation of facts, thoroughness, delivery/communication skills and effective use of available technology. Entry can be comprised of up to three different weather segments OR up to two weather segments plus a weather/environment-related feature story or interview.

**Sportscaster** Recognizes a sportscaster with regularly scheduled sports segment in a news program. Criteria includes clear presentation of facts, thoroughness, delivery/communication skills and interest of stories presented. Entry can be comprised of up to three different sportscasts OR up to two sports segments plus a sports-related feature story or interview.

**Photographer** Recognizes an individual whose work is executed behind the camera. A compilation clip of 3-5 events showing applicants best work. Judges to consider creativity, continuity and technical production. If necessary, include a narrative in PDF form explaining the clip(s).

January 18, 1987: NewsCorp. renames newly purchased WXNE-TV to WFXT-TV. The station has been a FOX affiliate since the network's primetime expansion in April of '87.

*The cast of The Tracy Ullman Show, FOX network's second primetime show after Married With Children.*



1987: WTAG-AM and WSRS-FM come under the same ownership as Knight Quality Group purchases the AM signal.



*Knight Quality Stations President, philanthropist, and MA Broadcasters Hall of Famer Norman Knight*

# Entry Categories

**Individual Commercial** Single commercial written and produced by your station for a local client.

**On-air Contest** Highlight all the elements of your best on-air contest or giveaway. *Entries can include promo announcements, on-air jock/listener talk, news coverage, web and social content and any other related materials.*

**Excellence in Sound** Given to a station that uses "theater of the mind" to tell a story.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

**Entries and files must be submitted by Friday, August 2, 2024**

# Radio Only

**Sports Play-by-Play** Your station's best locally produced play-by-play coverage of a single sporting event. Network play-by-play (ESPN, Westwood One, etc.) is not allowed.

**Station Imaging** Entries may include sweepers, IDs, starters, drops, top of hours, splitters, show opens, power/custom/branded intros, and jingles. Entry can be a single item or a montage. Items in a montage can be thematic or varied in their core theme but should all be for the same station.

Imaging need not be voiced by station staff but concept, direction, copy, etc. should be generated in-house.

## 1990s-2000s

January 13, 1992: WBZ Radio, which had gradually been moving away from music, is beginning its changeover to all-news.

February 8, 1996: President Bill Clinton signs the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which would dramatically alter the ownership landscape for media in the U.S.

*President Bill Clinton digitally signing the 1996 Telecommunications Act.*



August 13, 2009: 98.5 The Sports Hub debuts, bringing sports-talk to the FM dial.



*Original (and current) afternoon drive duo Mike Felger and Tony Massarotti.*

September 2012: First MBA Sound Bites held in Worcester.



*WBZ-TV's Jack Williams accepts first-ever Broadcaster of the Year award at Sound Bites 2012.*

May 16, 2007: First Massachusetts Broadcasters Hall of Fame class inducted at Lombardo's in Randolph, MA.

*Legendary host of WBZ-TV's "Boomtown" Rex Trailer accepts induction into the inaugural class of the Massachusetts Broadcasters Hall of Fame.*



January 1, 2017: NBC-owned NBC 10 Boston goes on the air on WMFP and in January 2018 on its current home WBTS-CD.

June 12, 2009: Massachusetts television stations switch to full-time digital programming.

*"Converter box" coupon that allowed analog televisions to continue to work after the DTV transition.*



*Broadcast facilities housing NBC 10 Boston, Telemundo, along with NECN and NBC Sports Boston.*



# SOUND BITES 2024

## 2024?

Who will be the next legendary Massachusetts radio or television broadcaster to be honored as the Broadcaster of the Year?

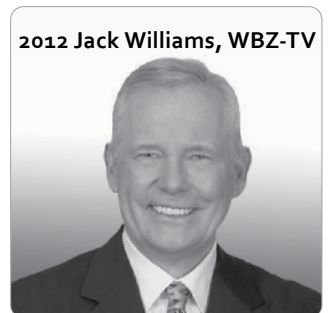
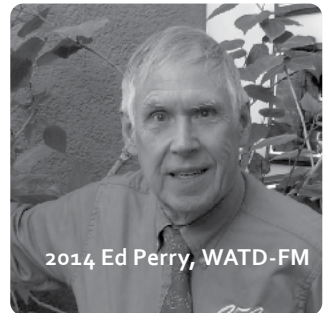
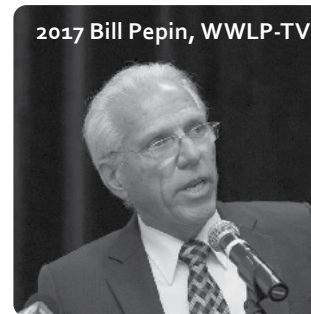
Find out at Sound Bites 2024 on November 21!

Each year the MBA recognizes one broadcaster who throughout his/her career has shown an outstanding commitment to broadcasting and their community in Massachusetts.

We rely, in part, on industry nominations to help guide our selection. The award can honor anyone in the industry that has spent their lives helping and providing live and local content via radio or television. If that broadcasting legend works in your building, nominate them now!

Submit your nomination by  
**Friday, August 2**

Download a nomination form at [massbroadcasters.org/call-for-entries](https://massbroadcasters.org/call-for-entries) and email by August 2 to: [jordan@massbroadcasters.org](mailto:jordan@massbroadcasters.org)



November 21, 2004: Sound Bites 2024 held in Framingham, celebrating our 70th anniversary!