



### ***Buffalo Broadcaster Lee Zimmerman passes away***

We have received notice that long time Buffalo Broadcaster Lee Zimmerman has passed away this week. A memorial service was held Monday March 30, at the [Lombardo Funeral Home at Linwood and Ferry in Buffalo, NY 6:30 pm](#).

Lee was a colorful character, and no one could better express his life than Lee himself. In a recent e-mail to Buffalo Broadcasters President Dave Gillen, Lee wrote:

By coincidence, I ran into someone (my age) at a friend's Garden Walk backyard sit-down-and-have-some-wine tent who remembered, not just the radio station, but the commercials of WYSL-FM (pre-stereo/preWPHD)! He was into the revolutionary progressive station when it was a concept that demanded commercials also work within the genius of that idea. So yeah, I was Creative Dir there in the 60's and 70's when Santella was also with the station. Those commercials, all created by me, but some written by me, some written by Randy Hock, some by Anita Meyer, are all in my boxes. They were absolutely revolutionary! From there I went to WBEN in 1971 when it was about to become a brand new technological entity. It was the most advanced facility in the country for many years.

Most exciting years of my career!

Yeah, I feel like a forgotten quantity, but what the hell. I worked with J Klabunde on the seven-year WBEN Studio Project, recreated WBLK into a genuinely black and white unity station, shot myself in the foot thinking I was so smart I could take over WUWU when the owners were fighting (remember when Bob Allen siezed the transmitter???)

Reading Ed Tucholka's son's slight request, "Please don't forget my father" in your newsletter a few months ago had me writing endlessly in my journal about him. A tribute. Tears in my eyes (I'm a sucker for my own poetry, I guess). Then I wrote about Clint - things no one else knew because Clint and I became very good friends.

Since I don't keep journal entries anymore (used to destroy them every few years; now I shred them daily) those tributes are gone. This morning, after having read your kind recollection of my own role in radio, I sat on my porch and, as usual, wrote in my journal. This time I made a pledge to myself to never destroy what I think would have been exceptionally well received by anyone looking for insights on Ed or Clint. I always say, "I never worked a day in my life; it was pure joy"

when I think of my decades in the business.

Yeah, David, I'm old. I was still in high school when I joined WNIA as Mike Melody. I had to walk home every night from Genesee Street to the Ken-Bailey area where I lived at 12:30. Dedicated kid of 17.

You know how it goes, DG... the business breeds friends and enemies like crazy. I made a lot of the former and a few of the latter, but these dynamics change. People you think are plotting against you turn out to be your best ally. And over the past 18 years I have soooo mellowed (no choice). There isn't an incident, whether at WNIA, WADV, WWOL, WYSL, WBEN, WBLK, WUWU or WYRK, that doesn't deliver a small dose of salt with gigantic doses of great memories. And the salt adds flavor and wisdom and perspective. Radio was, and will always be, in my DNA.

Facing death really sets priorities into their appropriate "useful" "not useful" categories.

Some day, a long time from now, those tapes will be listened to.

Stations and commercials and ideas I created will be recalled. Friendly scuffles and enchantingly good times may even be reminisced.

"He was an odd one," they'll say. "What was his name again? Mike? Lee?"

Oh, never mind. It's my cell. Gotta go..."

LZ