

Below is a letter from Verne Hill, WBFJ, explaining the impact George had on him and the radio community.

***“Drive a little slower and be a little late....
I’d rather be a little late, than the late George Lee”***

I still remember that now famous sign off from longtime broadcaster, actor and all around ‘Good Guy’, George Lee. The dynamic local radio personality with that animated baritone voice who entertained thousands over the air waves.

But as a kid growing up in the Midway community, I truly thought that George Lee was talking to me – just me. That’s what they call radio ‘magic’.

I first dialed into the magic of AM (along with George Lee) back in the 1970s on my trusty Radio Shack transistor radio. That thing was literally ‘glued’ to my ear. A constant companion to an only child in search of escape. My gateway to a much bigger world. Radio was indeed theatrics of the mind. And George Lee was king of his make-believe domain.

Just mention the name – George Lee – and almost everyone that lived in this area back in the 1970s and 80s had a story. A George Lee story.

Here’s just one of mind...

I first met the great George Lee back in 1990 when I was fresh out of college. I was employed at a local small-time ad agency and George had stopped by to voice a spot. One day that baritone voice belted from that hallway.

I immediately recognized that voice – it had to be...

We were introduced. I uttered that first thing that came to my mind.

“I remember listening to you when I was THIS high.” (lowering my hand to my waist).

Never one to miss a punchline, George chuckled, “Thank you, I think?!”.

That providential meeting was the start of a true friendship. I not only knew George Lee the radio guy, but I truly got to KNOW the real man. A man who loved trains, loved life, loved to laugh – and make others laugh. George was opinionated. He was confident. Yet also vulnerable at times. Yes, George was actually human. I truly admired the bigger-than-life radio personality. And I loved getting a glimpse of the mere mortal.

Unknowingly, George became my mentor. I have been blessed to ‘do’ local radio for over 20 years in the Triad. I LOVE what I do. It’s not a job, but a passion. Because of George sharing his talent so many years ago. That passion of doing radio with excellence and dreaming bigger was infectious! I caught that broadcasting bug and there is no cure.

It was an honor to call George Lee my friend.

Jesse Thorn, host of ‘Bullseye’ suggests that “all great radio hosts have a signature sign off...” George Lee will be remembered for a great sign-off. And so much more.

-Verne Hill, WBFJ Morning Show

News/ Public Affairs Director

*Lover of all things radio...

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