

# KAB 2006 Award Winners

## 2006 KAB Distinguished Service Award

**Harriet Lange**, President, Kansas Association of Broadcasters, Topeka



The KAB's highest award is presented to KAB President Harriet Lange for her contributions to the KAB and to the broadcast industry. She began her service at KAB in August, 1982. As KAB president, it is her responsibility to implement all KAB programs, including government relations and lobbying, seminars and the annual convention, Alternative Broadcast Inspection Program, the NCSA program, and broadcaster participation in the Kansas AMBER Alert program.

Under Harriet's stewardship, KAB has seen some successes in the legislative arena, not only in the area of defeating legislation which would have been harmful to broadcasters, but also in the area of passing legislation beneficial to broadcasters.

National and state recognition have come KAB's way during Harriet's tenure. In 1985, President Reagan awarded KAB the Presidential Citation for Public Sector Initiatives for KAB's efforts to educate Kansans about the hazards of alcohol and drug abuse. In 1986, American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) presented KAB its Gold Circle Award for Communication Excellence, for the KAB video "Careers in Broadcasting". The Kansas Society of Association Executives (KSAE) recognized the KAB's adoption effort for children in foster care with the KSAE Community Service Award in 1997. This was followed in 1998 by ASAE awarding KAB one of eight national Summit Awards for KAB's adoption initiative. Recognition of KAB's adoption and foster care initiative culminated in 1998 at a White House ceremony with the President and First Lady in attendance as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services presented the KAB one of seven "Adoption Excellence Awards".

Harriet serves on the Board of Directors and as treasurer of the Kansas Sunshine Coalition for Open Government, and she is a member of the State EAS Committee and the Attorney General's Amber Alert Task Force. She served on the Emergency Weather Captioning Task Force of the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Harriet was the 1991 president of KSAE and 1992 president of the National Alliance of State Broadcast Associations. She is a 1985 graduate of Leadership Kansas and earned her CAE (certified association executive) designation that same year from ASAE. In 1992, the radio/television faculty at the University of Kansas presented Harriet the Grover Cobb Award for Broadcasting Service. She was named Association Executive of the Year in 1998 by KSAE and she was appointed by then Governor Bill Graves in 1998 to serve on his Grant Advisory Committee for Substance Abuse Prevention. KAB inducted Harriet into the Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 2003.

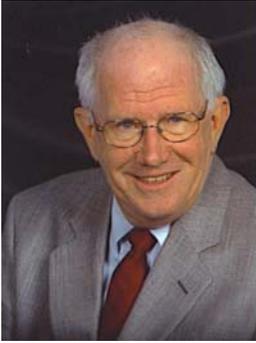
Harriet was raised in Linn, KS. She attended Kansas State University and graduated from Washburn University in 1970 with a B.A. degree in economics. She went to work for the Kansas Department of Economic Development (now Department of Commerce), working first in research, then in industrial development, and finally as director of travel and tourism from 1977 to 1980. From 1980 to 1982, Harriet was director of sales for a Lawrence hotel. She was a charter member of Kansas Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK) and received TIAK's Individual Achievement Award in 1980.

Harriet is married to Mike Nowak who teaches at Jardine Middle School in Topeka. When Mike isn't teaching and Harriet takes a break from the KAB, they enjoy traveling to locations near and far. Mike and Harriet are especially happy with the arrival of their granddaughter, Chloe LiRun Nowak and grandnephew Ryan Karl Lange. Mike's son Jason and Jason's wife, Kinon, brought Chloe home from China in June, 2005, and Ryan was born in July of 2005 to Harriet's nephew Sean and his wife, Jen.

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## 2006 Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame

### Bob Davis, Sportscaster, Lawrence



Kansas Sportscaster Bob Davis is in his 23<sup>rd</sup> year with the Jayhawk Radio Network as the play-by-play voice for KU men's basketball and football. He began with the network in 1984, teaming with Max Falkenstien for 22 years. He has broadcast four Bowl games for KU football and six Final Fours and KU's 1988 NCAA basketball national championship. Bob also hosts the weekly radio call-in program, *Hawk Talk*, featuring the Jayhawk football and basketball coaches. During the 2000-01 basketball season, Bob was named to Dick Vitale's "Sweet 16" – his list of the top 16 college basketball broadcasters in the nation.

Bob is in his tenth year as the play-by-play announcer for Kansas City Royals television, teaming with Paul Splitterff, and working also with Fred White, Denny Matthews and Brian McRae.

Prior to arriving at KU, Bob spent 16 years broadcasting Fort Hays State University sports, Hays High School and Thomas More Prep football, basketball and baseball games. Bob broadcast Fort Hays State's first NAIA national championship in 1984, as well as their third place finish in 1983. He also broadcast Wichita Aeros Triple A Baseball for KWCH TV and filled in several times in 1983 for John Rooney on Missouri University basketball broadcasts. Prior to his KU appointment, Bob broadcast KU basketball filling in for either Tom Hedrick on the KU Network or Max Falkenstien on his KU broadcast.

Bob started his broadcast career in 1968 at KAYS Radio and TV, doing a board shift, a noon TV show, running the camera for the 6:00 pm newscast, and doing the sports on the 10:00 pm newscast. He also assisted with home games at Fort Hays State and local high school sports broadcasts. Bob became KAYS sports director and play-by-play announcer when Keith Cummings left during the 1968 football season.

Bob joined 980 KMBZ, Kansas City, in 1985, as morning sports anchor, working with Ray Dunaway and Noel Heckerson. He hosted weekly call-in shows with Royals managers, Dick Howser, Billy Gardner and John Wathan. Also during his time at KMBZ Bob hosted pre- and post-game shows with Paul Splitterff.

The National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association has named Bob the Kansas Sportscaster of the Year a total of ten times. In 1991 KAB presented Bob the Hod Humiston Award for Contributions to Sports Broadcasting. Kansas State High School Activities Association recognized him with the Oscar Stauffer Sports Broadcasting Award in 1975 and 1978 for his high school broadcasts. Bob has chaired KAB's Sports Seminar on a couple of occasions and he has judged the Kansas Scholastic Press Association Sports Writing Competition. He has lectured numerous times at university broadcasting and journalism classes.

Bob attended Topeka West High School and graduated from Washburn University in 1966. He is married to Linda Michaelis and they have a son, Steven.

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## 2006 Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame

### Noel Heckerson, Mission (Retired, KMBZ Radio)



After 43 years as a broadcaster and 23 years as lead anchor of KMBZ's Kansas City's Morning News, Newscaster Noel Heckerson retired from radio in December, 2005.

Noel got his start on the air covering the 1963 Kennedy assassination for then KMBC Radio (later to become NewsRadio 980 KMBZ). From the president's assassination to the Hyatt Hotel collapse through the tragedy of September 11, 2001 and beyond, Noel kept Kansas City informed on the latest breaking news. Over the years, Noel worked with some of the legends of Kansas broadcasting including Ray Dunaway, Bob Davis, Don Fortune and Rush Limbaugh, who said about Noel, "I remember getting up every morning and going to work at another radio station, and I'm listening to Heckerson do the news...the epitome of professionalism and big time! It was just big time..."

Noel was born in Chicago but he considers himself a "Kansan". His parents, who met in Frankfort KS, moved from Chicago to Kansas City in 1949, where Noel attended elementary school and Central Junior and Senior High. After entering junior college, the broadcast bug bit Noel and he gave "everything he had to break into radio". He went to work at KMBC Radio in 1962 and went on the air after the 1963 Kennedy assassination doing man on the street interviews. He worked around the clock and left some spec tapes for management that were good enough to land him an on-air job.

During his career, Noel's talent and distinctive voice took him to WIP AM in Philadelphia and KLAC in Los Angeles. He returned to Kansas City in 1974 as news director at KMBZ. During 1980 and 1981 he worked for KBMA TV and KCMO Radio, returning to KMBZ as news director in 1982. He later became co-host/anchor of the morning program "Kansas City's Morning News", the last 14 years with co-anchor Ellen Schenk.

Noel and wife, Mary, have been married for 45 years. They have four children, all of whom attended Shawnee Mission North – Kellie, Dale, Lynn and Mark; and four grandchildren – Hannah, Kale, Colton and Sierra.

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## 2006 Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame

### Jim Hollis, Topeka (Retired, WIBW TV)



Jim Hollis is a broadcast name familiar to Topekans and northeast Kansans. He served as news director/anchor at WIBW TV/AM/FM from 1979 to 1993. From 1993 to 1997, Jim was information director for WIBW TV. He started at the stations in 1969 as assistant news director/anchor. He retired from WIBW TV in 1997. During his tenure at WIBW Jim won the National Headliner Award for two consecutive years (in 1974 and 1975) from the Atlantic City Press Club. He also was a first place winner in the KAB Awards in the editorial category in 1996.

Jim was born in Neodesha, KS. He attended Kansas State University and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Humanities in 1957. He attended Oklahoma University News Photography School in Norman and did graduate work in English Literature at Pittsburg State University in 1964-65.

While a student at K-State, Jim was a part time news anchor/disc jockey at KMAN in Manhattan. He also worked at KIND Radio in Independence as a news anchor/disc jockey during the summer of 1956.

Upon graduation from K-State in 1957, Jim entered the U.S. Army and did a two-year stint in communications with an artillery battery.

After his discharge from the Army, Jim went to work at KOAM TV, Pittsburg, as news anchor, director and producer. He also worked part time at KOAM Radio as a news anchor.

Jim represented eight Midwestern states on The Associated Press Board of Directors Broadcast Division from 1983 to 1988. During his tenure on the AP Board he was instrumental in standardizing the AP's state awards for news coverage, which allowed for national awards for news coverage. He was media coordinator for cameras in the courtroom for Kansas Third Judicial District from 1983 to 1985 and a member of the Journalism Advisory Council at Kansas State University from 1981 to 1988. Jim was a member of Associated News Broadcasters of Kansas and Radio-Television News Directors Association. From 1993 to 1997, Jim served as vice chairman of The Client Protection Fund of the Kansas Supreme Court. He was appointed by the Chief Justice to make decisions concerning who should receive funds for being wrongly represented by a Kansas attorney.

In his semi-retirement, Jim serves as an adjunct instructor in the Washburn University Mass Media Department and he and his wife, Carol, are volunteers for The Friends of the Topeka/Shawnee County Library, where he is on the board of directors. He also serves as secretary of the Topeka Opera Society and Concert Association.

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## 2006 Sonny Slater Award

**Dowe Quick, News Anchor, KOAM TV News, Pittsburg/Joplin**



Dowe Quick, KOAM TV, Pittsburg, is the 2006 recipient of KAB's Sonny Slater Award to recognize his many contributions and service to his station and community. Dowe has been with KOAM News, Pittsburg, for over two decades. He started at KOAM TV in October, 1980. He currently anchor's the station's weekday 5:00, 6:00 and 10:00 pm newscasts.

Over the years, Dowe has enjoyed recognition by his peers. He has won the Edward R. Murrow Award for Investigative Reporting, and numerous reporting awards from Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma broadcasting associations. In his pursuit of news stories, Dowe has traveled to a remote Alaskan island with National Guard troops, interviewed a death row inmate and witnessed the execution. He has spent a cold winter night on the streets with the homeless and he has recorded a sobering cross-burning ceremony at a national gathering of the Ku Klux Klan.

For the many years Dowe has been at KOAM, he has been "active in the community and southeast Kansas and he always has a positive message each broadcast". His many charitable and civic activities include participation in the Relay for Life in Pittsburg as Master of Ceremonies. He also assists with the annual fundraiser by the St. John's Regional Foundation in Joplin, MO. He frequently addresses civic and educational groups -- including students ranging from elementary school to universities. Dowe has moderated a number of debates on political and social issues and most recently he helped organize and moderated a debate on the teaching of evolution in Kansas public schools.

Dowe received degrees in both Journalism and in Broadcasting/film from Central Missouri State University. He and his wife, Kay, have three children and live in Pittsburg

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## 2006 Mike Oatman Award

**Danny Thomas, President and General Manager, KOAM TV, Pittsburg/Joplin**



KAB presents the 2006 Mike Oatman Award to Danny Thomas, president and general manager of KOAM TV, Pittsburg, to recognize outstanding achievement in broadcast sales, sales management, and mentoring others to sales success.

Danny started his sales career in 1977, while attending Missouri Southern State University. He joined United Furniture Sales, an 84-store furniture chain and became the youngest manager in the company's history. In his second year at United Furniture he was named their Manager of the Year. In 1979, Danny became the company's first corporate sales trainer and director of marketing, working from their corporate headquarters in Florida.

In 1981, Danny left retail and returned to his hometown of Joplin to work for KFSB AM Radio. Danny said, "I'd been buying advertising for many years, I thought it would be pretty easy to sell." It was at KFSB that Danny met his wife, Jana.

After being recruited to Springfield, MO by KWTO AM/FM, he again returned home this time to work for KODE TV. After several years there, Danny was recruited in 1988 to come to KOAM TV as general sales manager. In 1989 he was named one of the outstanding young men in America. In 1995 Danny was promoted to general manager when radio owner, Saga Communications, purchased KOAM, their first television station. In 1996, Danny was promoted to president. In 1997, Saga, which owns over 80 radio stations and several state radio networks, named Danny Saga Communications Manager of the Year, and in 2002 KOAM won Saga's Station of The Year.

Danny has served seven years on the board of the CBS Television Marketing Advisory Council and currently is chair elect. He served on the Board and as 2001 chair of the Kansas Association of Broadcasters. He currently serves on the A.C. Nielsen Customer Alliance Board of Directors representing CBS Affiliates in the 50+ markets and was just recently elected to the Governing Board of Directors of St. John's Regional Medical Center in Joplin. A little over three years ago Danny developed the launch for FOX-14 in the Joplin/Pittsburg Market for different owners but operated and marketed out of the KOAM facilities. FOX-14 has been one of the fastest growing FOX launches in the network's history.

In Danny's long broadcast career he has been asked to provide seminars and presentations in Washington DC for Pro-Max, several CBS Affiliate Conferences in Los Angeles and New York, numerous broadcast conventions, and a long list of colleges, businesses and organizations, including the KAB.

Danny and his wife, Jana, live in Joplin with their 3 ½ year old son, Gabriel.

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## **2006 Tony Jewell Award**

The 2006 Tony Jewell Award and \$500 honorarium are presented to the DUI Victim Center of Kansas, to recognize outstanding contributions to the prevention of alcohol/drug abuse in Kansas. The Center's mission is to reduce the traumatic effects a drunk driving crime has on victims and their families and to increase the awareness of the danger and human consequences of drunk driving.

The DUI Victim Center of Kansas was started in 1987 by Center President Mary Ann Khoury after a childhood friend who was three months pregnant, was hit when a repeat offending drunk driver ran a red light. Her friend and unborn child died after two months in a coma. Mary Ann, who was also hit by a drunk driver in 1971, realized there were no support groups or help for victims of drunk driving crashes in Wichita. After considerable research and inquiries to law enforcement, prevention, intervention, and treatment professionals, and victim services, Mary Ann launched the DUI Victim Center with the support of the Wichita Orthodox Christian Church clergy and parish members. The Center is now the only comprehensive program in the Wichita and Sedgwick County area, with expanding programs throughout the state providing services to victims of DUI crimes.

Programs and services of the DUI Victim Center include

- Instilling the dangers and hazards of consuming alcohol at a young age to youth;
- Helping victims, families, and friends overcome physical, emotional, and monetary trauma caused by a drunk driver;
- Ensuring a formal community response to DUI crime victims throughout Kansas;
- Instilling into the minds of drivers, to always make the right choice when they consume alcohol;
- Educating and informing offenders about the consequences of drinking and driving, reducing the amount of repeat offenders.

One of the most requested services of the DUI Victim Center is the DUI Victim Panel, which was established in 1990 to address DUI diversion, juvenile and adult court ordered offenders. More than 4,500 offenders attend this program each year and the DUI Victim Panel also is requested by local schools and businesses.

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# Background on KAB Individual Awards

## KAB Distinguished Service Award

The KAB's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, is given annually for exemplary service to the community, state and broadcast industry.

Past recipients:

1969 \*George Gow  
1970 Bob Wells  
1971 \*Grover Cobb  
1972 Bob Schmidt  
1973 \*Olaf Soward  
1974 \*Alf Landon  
1975 \*Thad Sandstrom  
1976 \*Arden Booth  
1977 \*Fred Conger  
1978 \*Robert Pratt  
1979 \*Sherwood Parks  
1980 \*Martin Umansky  
1981 Kay Melia  
1982 \*Ed Mason  
1983 \*Tony Jewell  
1984 \*Dale McCoy, Jr.  
1985 \*Bob Hilgendorf  
1986 Lowell Jack  
1987 Jerry Holley  
1988 Robert Fromme  
1989 Ed Hundley  
1990 Hank Booth  
1991 \*John Mileham (d. 11/15/90) posthumously  
1992 Bill Bengston  
1993 H. Pat Powers  
1994 \*Mike Oatman and \*Mike Lynch  
1995 \*Lynn Higbee (d. 9/7/95) posthumously  
1996 Stuart Melchert  
1997 George Logan  
1998 Bill Miller  
1999 Merle Blair  
2000 Max Falkenstien  
2001 Ken Jennison  
2002 Jack Sampson  
2003 Ed O'Donnell  
2004 Joe Engel  
2005 Richard Wartell  
\* Deceased

## **Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame**

Kansas Broadcasting Hall of Fame inductees have worked in the broadcasting business and are selected based on substantial contributions to broadcasting and the state or nation. Inductees may be Kansas natives and they may have made contributions in other states or at the national level. Individuals who are NOT Kansas natives are eligible, but they must have worked in Kansas broadcasting. They may be recognized for major contributions in Kansas, in other states or on a national level.

All **past recipients of KAB's Distinguished Service Award** are Hall of Fame Inductees.

### *Additional Inductees include:*

- 2001 Harold Ensley  
Tom Hedrick  
Tom Leahy and  
Dev Nelson (posthumously)
  
- 2002 Wendell and Frances Elliott (posthumously)
  
- 2003 Tom Bashaw (posthumously)  
Bill Kurtis  
Harriet Lange
  
- 2004 Len Dawson  
Elmer Gunderson  
Denny Matthews  
Fred White
  
- 2005 Rod Cupp (posthumously)  
Dan Dillon  
Larry Hatteberg  
Mike Kennedy

## **KAB Sonny Slater Award for Service to Station and Community**

The Sonny Slater Award was established in 1992 to honor Sonny Slater and to recognize a Kansas broadcaster, who is not an owner or general manager, for service to his or her station and community.

Sonny Sater was farm director at KSAL Radio in Salina for 40+ years. He retired on May 25, 1990.

On retirement, he and his son, Tom bought a 400-acre farm in the Flint Hills near Madison. Sonny and his wife, Esther, moved to the farm. Sonny died December 9, 1991 in a farm accident. He was 64.

Sonny began his broadcast career in 1945 at WIBW Radio, Topeka. He was one of 85 paid entertainers at the station, where he played the guitar and was part of the Kansas Roundup Gang. He worked with a state radio network and with stations in Clinton, IL and Shenandoah IA, before joining KSAL Radio as farm director and singer in 1950. He was featured vocalist with KSAL's Smoky Valley Boys.

During his tenure at KSAL, Sonny was up at 2:30 AM each morning, at the studio by 4:00 AM, and on the air from 5:00 am to 8:30 am. He also aired market and farm news and weather over the noon hour. Before his retirement, Sonny was one of Kansas' senior broadcasters in terms of years spent covering state farm meetings and workshops and farm Extension events.

KAB started the award to recognize Kansas broadcasters who work in the tradition of Sonny Slater - who provided so many excellent years of service to his station, to his audience and to his community.

### **Sonny Slater Award Recipients**

- 1992 \*Sonny Slater, KSAL/KYEZ, Salina
  - 1993 \*Dan Willis, KKOW AM, Pittsburg
  - 1994 \*Bob Kearns, WIBW Radio/TV (retired), Topeka
  - 1995 Tad Felts, KKAN/KQMA, Phillipsburg
  - 1996 Don Engelhardt, KSAL/KYEZ, Salina
  - 1997 Wilma "Perky" Perks, KWBW AM, Hutchinson
  - 1998 \*Abram Burnett, KHOK FM, Great Bend
  - 1999 Mike Cooper, KAYS/KHAZ, Hays
  - 2000 \*Claude Hughes, KNGL/KBBE, McPherson
  - 2001 Larry Hatteberg, KAKE TV, Wichita
  - 2002 Larry Moore, KMBC TV, Kansas City
  - 2003 Lloyd Mintzmyer, KOOD TV, Bunker Hill
  - 2004 Laverne Goering, KWCH TV, Wichita
  - 2005 Marlena Adkison, KTPK FM, Topeka
- \* Deceased

## **KAB Mike Oatman Award for Broadcast Sales Excellence**

The broadcast industry lost a leader when Michael C. "Ol' Mike" Oatman, Wichita, died in January, 2003. He was 63.

KAB established the Mike Oatman Award in 2003 to honor his memory and to recognize outstanding achievement in Kansas broadcast sales, sales management and mentoring others to sales success. It was presented the first year, posthumously to Mike Oatman.

According to one KAB Board Member, "Mike Oatman was an incredible broadcaster who touched the lives of almost everyone in Wichita. Mike was an incredible on-air talent, executive, community leader, industry leader, family man, and the hardest working person I have ever met!"

Mike was a partner with Mike Lynch in Great Empire Broadcasting Inc. until his retirement and the sale of Great Empire's 13 radio stations to Journal Broadcast Group in June 2001. He continued to do his five-minute daily show of poetry and homespun humor on Wichita's KFDI/KFTI radio. He also wrote a weekly column for *The Wichita Eagle*.

Mike was born in the West Texas town of Marta, and began his broadcast career with a variety of radio jobs. Mike Lynch, who founded Great Empire, hired Mike from an El Paso station in 1964 to be program director and drive time anchor for KFDI AM. He later became co-owner of Great Empire with Lynch. They grew the company with the purchase of radio stations in medium size markets.

Mike served as president of Country Radio Broadcasters and as chairman of the Wichita Chamber of Commerce. He was named to the Country Music Disc Jockey Hall of Fame, America's Old Time Country Music Hall of Fame, and Kansas Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame. He received the American Broadcast Pioneer Award in 2002.

Testament to the affection for Mike held by his colleagues, employees, clients, and listeners, nearly 2000 attended his funeral. To the thousands of radio listeners and *Wichita Eagle* readers who read his weekly column, he was simply known as "Ol' Tee-legged, Toe-legged, Bee-legged, Bow-legged, Curly-headed, Pee-williker Ol' Mike".

In his newspaper column of September 26, 2002 – Life With Ol' Mike – he wrote: "Maybe, like the old spiritual says, we are all just passing through, and the ownership we seek lies not in accumulation of stuff but in how we choose to treat our friends, our families and our neighbors. Maybe this life is but a small part of the journey, and we should acquire character and compassion as well as material stuff. . . A character that is defined by compassion, love and kindness toward all living things might be our only chance at being remembered more than a few weeks after the funeral. We might be able to own that."

Mike Oatman lived a life worthy of remembering and honoring for a long time to come.

### **Mike Oatman Award Recipients**

2003 Mike Oatman (awarded posthumously)

2004 Mike Lynch (posthumously)

2005 Mike Hill, KSKU/KXKU/KGGG, Hutchinson

## **KAB Tony Jewell Award for Contributions to the Prevention, Intervention, or Treatment of Alcohol/Substance Abuse**

The KAB Tony Jewell Award was established in 1987 to recognize an individual (volunteer or professional) who has made a significant contribution to the prevention, intervention or treatment of alcohol and/or drug abuse in Kansas. The award includes a plaque for the recipient and a check for \$500 to an alcohol/drug organization of the recipient's choice. The award is named for one of the KAB's own.

Tony Jewell was a 40+ year veteran of Kansas broadcasting and KIUL, Inc. in Garden City and a past president of the KAB. Because of Tony's commitment to seeking solutions to the alcohol/drug abuse problem, it is only fitting that this award be named for him. His accomplishments included serving as the first chairman of the KAB's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Committee, during which time the KAB was recognized by the President's Citation Program for Private Sector Initiatives for Kansas' efforts in combating alcohol and drug abuse, and he served on the National Association of Broadcasters Alcohol/Drug Abuse Task Force. Tony died earlier this year. (2006)

### **Tony Jewell Award Recipients**

- 1987 Judge Herb Rohleder, Great Bend
- 1988 William Leipold, Ph.D., Valley Hope Association, Norton
- 1989 Andrew O'Donovan, Commissioner, SRS Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
- 1990 Judge Robert Theissen, Wichita
- 1990 Bernice Hutcherson, Wichita State University
- 1992 Cal Cormack, Kauffman Foundation, Kansas City
- 1993 James DuBois, Saline Co. Sheriff's Dept.
- 1994 Judy Donovan, SRS Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
- 1995 James Nugent, Fort Hays State University
- 1996 Ike Walter, Hoisington
- 1997 Harold & Ruth Keeling, Mission
- 1998 Judge John Barker, Abilene
- 1999 Fern Rosenberg, Topeka United Way
- 2000 Kristine McKechnie, SE KS RPC
- 2001 Bryan Thompson, KANU FM
- 2002 KJIL FM, Meade
- 2003 Dennis Gilhousen, Valley Hope Association
- 2004 Dr. Merlyn Colip, Norton
- 2005 Methane Watch Group/Rice County Coalition for Children and Families