

**BROADCAST PRO-FILE**  
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CASTAIC, CA 91384-3028

## **WTEM**

### **Profile Prepared for Skip McCloskey**

WRC were the call letters assigned to a new broadcast station, erected in April of 1923 on the Riggs National Bank Building (Riggs-Thompkins Building), 14th Street N. W. and Park Road, Washington D. C. The Radio Division, Bureau of Navigation, U. S. Department of Commerce granted a license in June 1923 to the Radio Corporation of America to operate on 469 meters (equal to 640 kilocycles). That dial position was simultaneously granted to another Washington station, WCAP, which was installed by the Chesapeake and Potomac telephone Company. The two stations were required to divide operating hours on the "Class B" wavelength.

Two 150-foot three-legged steel towers, 175 feet apart, were placed on the roof of WRC's bank building quarters to support its 4-wire "T"-type flattop antenna, 190 feet in length. Its 500 watt transmitter (capable of 2,000 watt output) was installed in "the apparatus room" adjacent to WRC's third floor studios. WRC made its 500 watt air debut August 1, 1923, initially sharing time with WCAP on alternating nights. RCA's Washington headquarters were located at this time at 1110 Connecticut Avenue.

Power was increased to 1,000 watts on April 24, 1925. On August 1, 1926, WRC acquired the hours, programs, and technical facilities of its former share-time partner WCAP, which was then discontinued as a result of an agreement reached between RCA, WRC's licensee, and the subsidiary of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, which owned WCAP. On November 15, 1926, WRC aired the National Broadcasting Company's inaugural program, which originated from New York City's old Waldorf-Astoria Hotel at 8:00 p. m. that evening. Power was reduced to 500 watts in early 1927. An auxiliary studio was opened in downtown Washington in the National Press Building in June 1927. Main studios continued to be at 3308 14th Street N. W. On August 27, 1927, WRC became a fulltime affiliate of NBC's Red Network.

As a result of the nationwide frequency reallocations ordered for 3:00 a. m., Saturday, November 11, 1928 by the Federal Radio Commission, WRC shifted to 950 kilocycles. Station Manager by 1929 was Ralph Edmunds. WRC moved its main offices and studios to the National Press Building, 14th and "F" Street N. W. (three blocks from the White House) in early 1929. Its transmitter, 110-foot towers, and antenna system remained behind at 14th and Park Road. In November 1930, full interest in WRC's licensee, the Radio Corporation of America, was acquired from former co-owners General Electric and Westinghouse, and on March 31, 1931, WRC's licensee name was changed to the National Broadcasting Company Inc. When NBC leased Washington's WMAL in February 1933 to release NBC Blue Network programs in the District, WRC began sharing studio and office space in the National Press Building with its newly-acquired sister station.

In 1934, WRC doubled its daytime power level to 1,000. Its nighttime power remained at the 500 watt level. Also in that year, Kenneth H. Berkeley became Station Manager of WRC and WMAL. By 1937, Frank M. Russell was named by NBC to head that network's Washington D. C. operations as Vice President. New

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studios three blocks north of its present National Press Club Building locale were secured and occupied by WRC and its sister station WMAL in May of 1937. The studios, in the Trans-Lux Theatre Building, at 14th and New York Avenue N. W., were dedicated July 22, 1937. Also in 1937, the Federal Communications Commission granted WRC a construction permit to increase day power from 1,000 to 5,000 watts and raise night power from 500 to 1,000 watts with a move to a new transmitting location.

Effective March 15, 1938, WRC's Riggs Building transmitting site was closed and technical operations were relocated to its new Chillum Township (near Hyattsville, Maryland) facility, a few miles to the northeast. A 400-foot Truscon vertical radiator was erected at the suburban site and power was boosted to 5,000 watts days and 1,000 watts nights. (Also in March, Washington's WOL moved to its new site on Ager Road, Chillum, adjacent to WRC's new facilities.) The FCC authorized WRC to increase nighttime power output to 5,000 watts in 1939. In 1940, night power was increased with the installation of two new 250-foot Schuler steel towers, enabling nighttime-only directionalized operation. The existing 400-foot tower remained in use for non-directional operation. Niles Trammel was appointed President of NBC Inc. effective July 17, 1940.

WRC shifted from 950 to 980 kilocycles on Saturday, March 29, 1941, pursuant to the NARBA Treaty reallocations effective at 3:00 a. m. on that date. 1941 found Carleton D. Smith named to the post of WRC General Manager, replacing K. H. Berkeley, who was then named Executive Vice President and General Manager of WMAL when NBC's lease of that station expired in late 1941. While now under separate ownership, both stations remained in the Trans-Lux Building, but now a floor apart. Mr. Smith was transferred to NBC's new Washington D. C. television station, WNBW (TV) in 1948 when William R. McAndrew was appointed to replace him as WRC's General Manager. Effective October 7, 1949, Joseph H. McConnell was named President of NBC. In 1951, Eugene Jester succeeded Mr. McAndrew as General Manager of WRC.

Studios were relocated from Washington's Trans-Lux Building, 724 14th Street N. W., to new quarters in the Wardman Park Hotel, consolidating NBC's Washington studios of WRC, WRC-FM, and WNBW (TV) there in 1952. That location's name was changed through acquisition a year later to the Sheraton Park Hotel. Frank White served as NBC President from January 2, 1953 until August 7th of that year, when Sylvester L. (Pat) Weaver assumed that post. Also in 1953, Carleton D. Smith was reappointed General Manager. In 1954, he was elevated to Vice President and General Manager. Robert Sarnoff rose to President of NBC on December 7, 1955. Joseph Goodfellow, former Sales Director, became Station Manager of the NBC affiliate in late 1957. On Thursday, May 22, 1958, WRC's studios were moved to a new 4 million dollar studio-office building at 4001 Nebraska Avenue N. W., Washington. Robert E. Kintner became NBC President on July 11, 1958.

In late 1959, Joseph Goodfellow rose to Vice President and General Manager of WRC. Replacing him as Station Manager in 1960 was Harry A. Karr Jr. By mid-1964, the station was in operation 24 hours-a-day with a "middle-of-the-road" music format. Former Manager Kenneth H. Berkeley died at age 65 on September 13, 1964. He resigned from Washington's WMAL in 1954 to move to Florida to acquire an AM station there.

On January 1, 1966, Julian Goodman was appointed President of WRC's licensee, the National Broadcasting Company. Stephen B. Labunski in 1967 was named President of NBC's owned and operated stations, which included WRC and WRC-FM. Harry Karr Jr. rose to General Manager in 1968, and remained in that post until his death on May 3, 1972. In early June, Peter V. O'Reilly joined WRC as its new General Manager. In October 1972, Bruce A. Houston became General Manager of WRC, which, in that month, dropped its long-standing Adult "MOR" music format to switch to a "Top 40" rock music format. Former Washington area Vice President and Director of WRC for many years, Frank M. "Scoop" Russell, died on November 11, 1972. He was 77.

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Harold L. Green was appointed General Manager of WRC in early January 1974. In 1975, Jack G. Thayer was named President of NBC's O & O stations. WRC began an around-the-clock all news format June 18, 1975 as an inaugural member station of NBC's News and Information Service (NIS). It then became an around-the-clock all news outlet. Its NBC network affiliation was retained. The AM station's former "Contemporary Music" format was moved in toto to its FM sister station, WKYS (FM). NIS Washington headquarters were established in the WRC studios initially but in late 1975 moved to its own quarters in the National Press Building in downtown Washington. General Manager Harold Green resigned in March 1976 to join Kaiser Broadcasting. His replacement at WRC in April was Frank Scott.

NBC's NIS shut down effective May 29, 1977. Its Washington affiliate elected to retain its all news format, but with added talk segments. Frank Scott was appointed Vice President and General Manager in early June 1978. By April 1979, the station was mostly all talk. Its air slogan was "The Voice Of Washington." Jerry Nachman succeeded Mr. Scott as Vice President and General Manager in late October 1981. In early 1983, WRC completed its move into a new 10,000 square foot wing of the NBC Building at 4001 Nebraska Avenue N. W. Its former facilities in another wing of the building were torn down in June. Effective March 14, 1983, WRC joined NBC's "TalkNet" for nighttime talk programming. It remained the Capitol District's NBC Radio Network affiliate.

When Jerry Nachman was "kicked upstairs" to become Vice President of News for the NBC owned and operated stations in late April 1983, his successor as WRC's Vice President and General Manager was Bartley D. Walsh. Retired NBC Vice President (and former WRC General Manager) Joseph W. Goodfellow died at his Florida home on August 5, 1983. He was 73. WRC changed call letters to WWRC on March 5, 1984. Former Vice President and General Manager Carlton Dabney Smith died April 27, 1984 at 79. In the thirties, he was NBC's Presidential announcer.

On September 1, 1984, WWRC was sold by the National Broadcasting Company for 3.6 million dollars to Greater Washington Radio Inc. (a subsidiary of Greater Media Inc. -- Peters A. Bordes, Chairman). FCC approval took place July 6th. In early September, the station replaced its "News-Talk" format with a nostalgia "MOR" music format, dubbed "The Station Of The Stars." Its new Vice President and General Manager in 1984 was Theodore R. Dorf. By the end of the year, offices and studios were relocated to the landmark "World Building," 8121 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland. It now shared space on the top three floors with co-owned WGAY (FM). On August 3, 1987, its nostalgia music format was dropped in favor of an "All Talk" programming format. Also dropped at this time was its "NBC TalkNet" liaison.

The FCC granted WWRC permission March 30, 1989 to change from directional nights only (DA-N) to two pattern directional (DA-2) both days and nights. The station's long-time NBC network affiliation was replaced with programming from the ABC Direction Network in 1990. In that year, it began Motorola C-QUAM AM stereo operation. The Greater Media stations, including WWRC, suffered severe smoke damage in their "World Building" headquarters on February 23, 1991. Studios of WNTR on the 7th floor were destroyed by the fire. Vice President and General Manager Ted Dorf retired at the end of December 1991. In mid-January 1992, Alan Goodman was appointed General Manager of WWRC. The station began carriage of "The Larry King Show" from the Mutual Network beginning on July 1, 1992. Dick Rakovan was named to succeed Mr. Goodman as General Manager in late November 1992.

On September 29, 1993, FCC permission was obtained for WWRC to increase power from 5,000 to 50,000 watts and make changes in its antenna system. In late 1994, WWRC began a new "Hot Talk" format, as "Stimulating Talk Radio." Its affiliations with the ABC Direction Network and the Mutual Network ended at this time. Bob Longwell became General Manager in mid-January 1995. Major technical improvements were carried out on March 9, 1995 when daytime power rose to 50,000 watts (5,000 watts continued at night) and

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WWRC switched to two pattern (day and night) directional operation. It continued to use its three-tower array on Agar Road, Callum, Maryland.

WWRC replaced its affiliation with NBC's "TalkNet" in mid-February 1996 when it joined the ABC Contemporary Network. Bennett Zier replaced Bob Longwell as General Manager in late June 1996. In late 1996, WWRC was sold by Greater Washington Radio Inc. to group station owner Evergreen Media Corporation for 22.5 million dollars (the price included Washington's WGAY (FM), a sister FM station). Effective September 8, 1997, WRC was acquired through merger by Chancellor Media Corporation (Thomas O. Hicks, Chairman; Scott K. Ginsburg, President). This 1.075 billion dollar consolidation gained FCC sanction September 5th. Charlie Ochs became WWRC's new Vice President and General Manager in late December 1997.

Effective February 9, 1998, WWRC's "Hot Talk" format was abandoned in favor of a "Business News" format, featuring frequent Bloomberg Business Radio feeds. When that format shifted to another Chancellor-owned AM outlet in Bethesda on March 9, 1998, WWRC changed call letters to WTEM and began an "All Sports" format (as "The Team.") Its ABC Contemporary Network affiliation was dropped at this time. New offices and studios at Suite 707, One Central Plaza, 11300 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland were inaugurated in October 1998. (In 1999, its old 9th floor "World Building" quarters were occupied by Mega Communications' cluster of Washington-area AM stations). Bennett Zier was named Vice President and General Manager of WTEM in early January 1999. In July 1999, the station's licensee name was changed to AMFM Inc. as the result of the merger of Chancellor Media Corporation and Capstar Broadcasting Partners, which took place July 13th. The combined firm now owned 465 stations in 105 U. S. markets.

In a stock transaction worth 23.5 billion dollars, AMFM Inc. was purchased by Clear Channel Communications Inc. on August 30, 2000. This multi-station transfer obtained FCC approval August 7th. In 2001, studios were moved from Rockville to 8750 Brookville Road, Silver Spring, Maryland. Programming from ESPN Radio Sports was added in 2003.

Today, WTEM "The Team," the District's oldest continuously licensed AM broadcast station, operates 24 hours a day with an "All Sports Talk" format on 980 kHz. with 50,000 watts days and 5,000 watts nights (two pattern directionalized) from studios at 8750 Brookville Road, Silver Spring, Maryland but remains licensed to nearby Washington D. C. A member of ESPN Radio Sports, the C-QUAM AM stereo outlet is licensed to group station owner Clear Channel Communications Corporation. Bennett Zier is Vice President and General Manager.