

Trailblazing Christian Broadcaster Stuart Epperson Sr. Dies at 86

Stuart Epperson Sr., who spent decades involved in the National Religious Broadcasters organization and played a key role in the formation of NRBTv, died Monday, July 17, in his sleep at the age of 86.

A broadcasting pioneer, Epperson spent lengthy tenures on the NRB Executive Committee and its Board of Directors and served in membership in the President's Council. He was inducted into the NRB Hall of Fame in 2009.

The NRB website said of Epperson's standing in the Hall of Fame: "The NRB Hall of Fame stands as a witness for today's Christian communicators—a showcase of warriors for Christ who live exemplary lives of valor and compassion, blazing trails and leaving paths for succeeding generations to follow. The Hall of Fame award is NRB's most prestigious award and is presented to an individual NRB member for invaluable contribution to the field of Christian communications, exhibition of the highest standards, and evidence of faithfulness in Christ."

"Stu's contributions to the field of Christian broadcasting cannot be overstated," NRB President & CEO Troy A. Miller said. "He touched countless lives with his unwavering commitment to Christian communications excellence and using the airwaves to advance the truth. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his loved ones and to the Salem Media family at this time."

Epperson served as the chairman emeritus of the Salem Media Group.

“Stuart will be greatly missed by many,” Ed Atsinger, Epperson’s brother-in-law and the executive chairman of the Salem Media Group told the Winston-Salem Journal. “I will miss him, but I take comfort in realizing that he is already receiving his reward for a life well-lived.”

Epperson’s broadcasting exploits allowed him a place in Time Magazine’s list of America’s Most 25 Influential Evangelicals.

Epperson bought his first radio station in 1961 in Roanoke, Virginia. In 1964, he and his wife, Nancy, moved to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where he bought and operated WKBX, which he ran as a country-and-western station until he sold it in 1976.

In 1974, he partnered with Atsinger to establish Salem Communications, now now as Salem Media Group, which became America’s leading multimedia company specializing in Christian and conservative content.

The company owned stations from New York to California, focusing on a Christian inspirational format feature music, Bible teaching and talk, the Winston-Salem Journal wrote.

The company’s variety of media content reaches millions through broadcast, digital media and publishing platforms.
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