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Dec15

[Mike](#)

[Going all the way \(and a bit farther\) . . .](#)

A pause from the usual this week. This isn't about podcasting . . . placements . . . or public relations. In fact, it's not about University News at all.

Because we're in the news business, I'd like to use this space (as I occasionally used "space" on my old radio show to recognize local radio greats) to pay tribute to a newspaperman—someone whom I met in person only once, about a decade ago, but whom I fondly recall as amiable and unassuming (while, unbeknownst to him, I regarded him as a living legend).

[George Beahon](#), the legendary sportswriter and slightly offbeat local TV sportscaster, made his mark writing for the *Democrat and Chronicle* beginning in the 1940s. My first memories of him, though, are of the TV sportscaster with the deadpan delivery and signature sign-off, "And that's as far as I go." And I recall my dad (who had attended Aquinas Institute around the same time as did Mr. Beahon) sometimes recounting the story of George being reprimanded by the Aquinas nuns—for writing sports stories during English classes!

Later, Mr. Beahon left TV and returned to his original calling—sportswriting—when he became a columnist for Rochester's old afternoon daily, *The Times-Union*. That was right around the time when our own [Kathy Lindsley](#) was writing restaurant reviews as the *T-U*'s food editor (and—as I like to good-naturedly remind Kathy—it was when I was slinging a newspaper carrier bag around my neck each afternoon and delivering George's and Kathy's words to homes in my former neighborhood in Brighton).

But time marches on. Suddenly, it was 1996 and I was in the second year of hosting my oldies request show on WKLX-FM. By then, with the decade of the '70s far enough behind us, people started feeling nostalgia for disco, bell bottoms, long sideburns—and *anything* '70s.

To help put my listeners in the proper mindset for my show's first hour—which was called "'70s at 7"—I threw out lines such as:

"Playing great songs from back when your parents bought a brand new car from Hallman's Chevrolet!" (Sometimes I would substitute "Judge's Ford" for Hallman's.)

Or, "Playing the hits from back when Hooters restaurant was Arrows drive-in!"

You get the idea. Then suddenly I had a brilliant idea: Why not have actual '70s icons remember the decade by coming to the studio and recording show liners? So I asked Rochester's "Mr. Baseball," Joe Altobelli, to come in, and Alto graciously agreed. So, too, did the "Kingpin" himself—Ron DeFrance, the former host of "Bowling For Dollars." And one-time Channel 8 weatherman Bob Mills wished my listeners, "Have a happy." Even Tom Snyder, the avuncular host of NBC's "The Tomorrow Show" back in the '70s, recorded a personalized greeting for my show.

Too, I invited George Beahon—the man with "a face for radio" (as the *D&C* affectionately put it) that complemented a voice that was perhaps better suited for newsprint (nonetheless, both made him loveable to TV viewers). I don't recall for sure how I got in touch with him—it was probably as simple as looking up his name in the telephone book and calling him—but I introduced myself, explained what I was looking for, and asked if he wouldn't mind stopping by the radio studio sometime.

Then one Saturday morning, Mr. Beahon came up to the old studios on the sixth floor of the B. Forman Building in Midtown Plaza. I offered him a script—but, showing deference to him, I explained that it was only "suggested copy." He could say whatever he wanted. I had only one request: "At the end, please say, 'And that's as far as I go.'"

He read it word for word.

[George Beahon - WKLX '70s at 7 drop](#)

Mr. Beahon had long since retired from full-time TV and newspaper reporting by then, so he probably didn't receive many special requests for his signature phrase. So, upon learning of his death at age 86 earlier this week, I wondered: Had my listeners and I heard him use his trademark line for one of the last times? I have a sense, though, that he may have spoken it once more this week upon entering the press box in the sky. Yes, [George Beahon](#) is once again covering the Wings (and the Angels and the Saints, too).

"And that's as far as I go."

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1. [John Follaco](#) Dec18

Very well done, Mike. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Beahon two or three times during my stint at the D&C—each time was in the Frontier Field press box while I was covering the Red Wings (even in retirement, Mr. Beahon remained one of the biggest Wings fans in Rochester). I used to love listening to his stories. Mr. Beahon was a class act and, undoubtedly, one of the all-time greats.

2. [Will](#) Dec20

It is nice to hear stories about Rochester's past. Not being from the area originally I really enjoy learning about the people who made the city great. Rochester is chocked full of interesting characters and Mr. Beahon sounds like one of the all time greats!

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The Tiger Beat takes you behind the scenes with the members of [RIT University News](#)—the news and public relations division of [Rochester Institute of Technology](#). Get the "story behind the story" and an insider's look at who we are and what we do to publicize RIT news.

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