***PRESS RELEASE***

**NC BROADCAST LEGENDS PREMIERES THURSDAY, JULY 9, AT 7 PM**

***First-of-Its-Kind Look at the Trailblazers Behind North Carolina’s Airwaves***

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC, 7/1/2020—UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina presents an intimate, first-person look at North Carolina’s radio and television pioneers as **NC Broadcast Legends** premieres Thursday, July 9, at 7 PM, on the UNC-TV PBS & More channel. Each half-hour episode of the 13-part series, conceived by executive producer and host Mike Weeks, explores how these bold, visionary leaders pushed broadcasting’s boundaries to serve their communities.

“The **NC Broadcast Legends** project features our state’s leading radio and television leaders telling ‘their stories’ as only they can tell,” said Weeks. “The series is designed to preserve historical facts and stories from the rich and significant history of Broadcasting here in our state.”

North Carolina’s broadcasting history is not quite a century old, with early experiments by NC State University engineers in early 1922. By April of that year, the first commercial broadcaster, WBT Radio in Charlotte, signed on the air and followed that feat with the state’s first commercial television station, WBTV, in 1949. Public Television launched 65 years ago this year with WUNC-TV in Chapel Hill.

Over the last 98 years, leaders, with deep roots from the mountains to the coast, have powered NC’s broadcast industry with their commitment to storytelling, technology, innovation and public service. While the first generation of these radio and television pioneers has passed, many of those who followed are still here. Weeks, an award-winning broadcast veteran, captures and shares stories of **NC Broadcast Legends**. The inaugural series features interviews with:

* Jim Goodmon, July 9
* Don Curtis, July 16
* Jim Heavner, July 23
* Carl Venters Jr. , July 30
* Robert Murray “Bob” Horner Jr., August 6
* Wade Hargrove, August 13
* Charlie Gaddy, August 20
* Cullie Tarleton, August 27
* Bob Harper, September 3
* Dr. James Carson, September 10
* Jim Babb, September 17
* Bill Rollins, September 24
* George Beasley, October 1

Extending beyond statewide over-the-air broadcast and on-demand, online streaming, this ongoing, multiplatform initiative also includes a robust web page at [unctv.org/ncbl](https://unctv.org/ncbl), as well as a digital archive at [ncbroadcastlegends.com](https://ncbroadcastlegends.com/) where stories of television and radio leaders past and present are collected and preserved. By streaming the programs and in-depth interviews online, this important archive will also be available to journalism, communications and media students and researchers for years to come highlighting the important role that North Carolina broadcasters have played in their communities, the state and the nation. Additionally, two roundtable discussions, which will be filmed for broadcast, feature several of these NC airwave pioneers sharing their stories of the state’s distinctive broadcast history.

**NC Broadcast Legends** captures and shares the stories of a strong broadcast industry spearheaded by leaders who have pushed forward storytelling, technology, innovation and public service to their communities in previously untold ways.

**About Mike Weeks**

Michael D. “Mike” Weeks is a marketing and advertising professional with over 30 years of experience in writing, creating and executing marketing campaigns. Prior to starting his own firm, Weeks spent 15 years in executive management with WITN-TV, ultimately serving as general manager and president. In addition to his communications work, Weeks is a retail entrepreneur. He served on the Pitt Community College Community Foundation Board for several years and is a past president of the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters, which awarded Weeks with its Distinguished Service Award. He was also named to the Order of the Longleaf Pine, one of the state's highest honors. Weeks shares his passion for broadcasting and deeply held commitment to documenting these first-person stories of **NC Broadcast Legends**.

**About UNC-TV Public Media North Carolina**

As North Carolina’s statewide PBS network serving the country’s third-largest public media market, UNC-TV educates, informs, entertains and inspires its statewide audience on-air, online and in-person. Through its unique partnership of public investment and private support, the statewide network includes in-person engagement, digital-first social and online content delivery, and four over-the-air channels—UNC-TV PBS & More, the North Carolina Channel, Rootle 24/7 PBS Kids and the Explorer Channel. Its transformational events and content spark curiosity and wonder for all North Carolinians. Additionally, UNC-TV serves as the backbone for North Carolina’s state’s emergency services. Visit [unctv.org](http://unctv.org/?utm_source=not%20set&utm_medium=not%20set&utm_campaign=not%20set&utm_term=not%20set&utm_content=not%20set&utm_source=not%20set&utm_medium=not%20set&utm_campaign=not%20set&utm_term=not%20set&utm_content=not%20set&utm_source=not%20set&utm_medium=not%20set&utm_campaign=not%20set&utm_term=not%20set&utm_content=not%20set) and join the conversation at [facebook.com/publicmediaNC](https://www.facebook.com/publicmediaNC), [instagram.com/publicmediaNC](https://www.instagram.com/publicmedianc) and [@publicmediaNC](https://twitter.com/publicmedianc) on Twitter.

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