

## PHOTO TRIVIA

from the Summer, 2018 issue



*Nowadays there's no shortage of media outlets that talk about racing. Back in the day, very few opportunities like those existed. Here's an ad for one such show. Do you know what track was discussed on Friday nights at 7:50 p.m.? What was "WJLK"?*

WJLK is an adult contemporary format radio station originally based out of Asbury Park, NJ that broadcasts on the 94.3 FM frequency. WJLK was created by a New Jersey newspaper, The Asbury Park Press. The call letters were chosen to honor the late J. Lyle Kinmonth, who was a pioneering publisher for the Press. Shortly before the first broadcast, the station changed from the 104.3 to the 94.3 megacycles.

The station's first broadcast took place on November 20, 1947, which was Kinmonth's birthday. WJLK made history as the first FCC licensed radio station in New Jersey. The station was dedicated to news. Broadcasts ran from 6:30 a.m. to midnight Monday through Saturday, and 8 a.m. to midnight on Sundays. Eventually, The Press purchased an AM radio station located at 1310 on the radio dial. The FM station rebroadcast the AM station's programming. The newscasts for the station were 15 minutes long at the top of every hour, as well as a briefer at every half-hour. In between newscasts, there was a variety of shows featuring different types of music, or shows on specific subjects, such as gardening and, according to the above advertisement, auto racing.

Bob Howard Sr., presenter of the Speedway Slants show, was involved with local auto racing in a few capacities. He was the General Manager of Wall Stadium in its early years. He also served as a race announcer and Master of Ceremonies at awards banquets. Howard was known for his reputation as a sensible and fair person, and conducted negotiations during two drivers' strikes in 1960 and 1967. Howard left Wall Stadium when his brother, James J. Howard, began his political career. In 1964, he served as James' campaign manager.

Howard began his radio show in 1960 and continued every Friday night until 1964. The broadcast time changed periodically, but generally aired in the evenings between 6:30 p.m. and 7:50 p.m. The show gave the rundown of all the action at Wall Stadium as well as provided interviews with a variety of folks involved in racing. In June of 1960, for example, racing photographer Phil Garand was the show's guest. Occasionally guest hosts joined him. Bill Couse, a WJLK disc jockey and Lou Puma took part in speaking "to the STARS about the CARS".

Apart from the race track and radio station, Bob Howard, Sr. was a resident of the New Jersey boroughs of Spring Lake Heights, Belmar and Bradley Beach. He was the founder and former president of a title

search business, Howard Realty Abstract Company. He married Helen Slocum, and they had five children. Howard passed away on November 3, 1987 at age 55.

Thanks to Earl Krause, GSVSCC Historian and Editorial Assistant of *Area Auto Racing News*; Ed Salvas, Reporter for *The Coaster*; Robert W. Stewart of the Asbury Park Public Library; and Wikipedia.com for their contributions to this piece.

