



Robert Todd Storz entered broadcasting at the age of eight, when he built his first crystal set. He got his ham license at sixteen, took over his first commercial station at 25.

Todd went to Omaha public schools, then to Choate School, Wallingford, Conn. He spent a year at the University of Nebraska, and three years in the Army Signal Corps as a cryptographic officer.

After his discharge in 1945, Storz attended a 12-week summer radio institute sponsored by NBC and Northwestern University. His first radio job was with KWBW, Hutchinson, Kansas, where "I did everything—engineering, announcing, selling, typing, copy, sweeping the floor."

In 1947, he moved to Mutual's Omaha outlet, KBON, where for a year he was a disk jockey with the *1490 Swing Club*, which ran from 11:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. Storz then switched to KFAB, Omaha, for a sales job.

When KOWH went up for sale, Todd and his father, Robert H. Storz, v.p. of the Storz Brewing Co., saw their opportunity to get into broadcasting. Descended from Omaha's pioneer station, WAAW, it had been operated for 10 years by the World Publishing Company, publisher of the *World Herald*.

Asking price was \$75,000, which included an FM affiliate, KOAD.

The senior Storz put up \$30,000. Todd mortgaged a farm he owned in Iowa's Webster County, got \$20,000. A bank lent father and son \$25,000. Todd became v.p. and general manager of the new Mid-Continent Broadcasting Co., his father, president.

By 1950, says Storz, "the general character" of KOWH had been pretty well established. It was the music-and-news formula described elsewhere in this study. At the end of its first year—the station went under Storz ownership in 1949—KOWH showed a profit of \$84. It took two years to achieve rating leadership.

As ratings climbed and finances improved, Todd began to look for other stations. In August, 1953, Mid-Continent bought WTIX, New Orleans, for \$25,000. WHB, Kansas City, was purchased in May of the following year for \$400,000. In January, 1956, Storz bought WDGY, Minneapolis-St. Paul, for \$334,000, and in May of the same year WQAM, Miami, for \$850,000. In March, 1957, he sold KOWH to William Buckley for a reported \$822,000.

First year billings for Mid-Continent were \$125,000; for the fiscal year ending June, 1956, they were about \$3,500,000.

Todd Storz is five-eight, 135 lbs., and has dark brown hair and eyes. He is married and has one child, a daughter.

Even in his spare time, the young broadcaster is never really away from radio. In his Omaha office he keeps a short-wave transmitter-receiver, with which he keeps in touch with fellow hams the world over.

Todd does enjoy one hobby—fishing. He likes the English River system of Ontario for fresh water angling and Florida and Cuban waters for deep-sea fishing. But even in these quiet places, radio is his companion, in the form of a transistor portable.

ters. Just about everyone, however, likes popular music. Another way of putting it—the classical music lover may not be enthusiastic about popular music but he will not usually take violent objection to it."

The basis, therefore, of the Storz program structure is the Top 40 tunes. Some stations go in for Top 50, Top 100, etc.

In addition, hit tunes of the past are played, along with songs which are likely candidates for the hit category. The credo of a Storz disk jockey is: "I won't play anything that isn't a hit, can't be a hit, or wasn't a hit."

To determine popularity, Storz depends on local juke box plays, sheet-music and record sales, and listings in *Variety* and *Billboard*. The trade paper listings provide prospects for "future hits" that may not yet have shown up as such in the market.

Fundamental to Storz's thinking is the concept of repetition. The top songs are played throughout the week. There is a late afternoon Top 40 show, for ex-

ample, which runs three hours and plays the same records, for the most part, at approximately the same time, every day. This is considered heinous in some quarters, which maintain that variety of musical diet is necessary. To Storz, however, daily repetition follows inevitably from the chain of logic he employs.

He insists that the listener *wants* to hear his favorite numbers again and again. "I became convinced that people demand their favorites over and over while in the army during the Second World War," he recalls. "I remember vividly what used to happen in restaurants here in the states. The customers would throw their nickels into the juke box and come up repeatedly with the same tune. Let's say it was 'The Music Goes Round and Round.'

"After they'd all gone, the waitress would put her own tip money into the juke box. After eight hours of listening to the same number, what number would she select? Something she hadn't heard all day? No—invariably