

Goals are the key to success

By Ron Wilson,
Huck Boyd Institute

The high school gym is packed as the basketball teams take the floor. The players are excited, the coaches are prepared, the game is about to begin. But something is missing: There are no goals. It's impossible to have a basketball game without goals. Today we'll meet a leading radio broadcaster who knows the importance of local high school sports and the importance of having goals - in sports and in life.

Cliff Shank is owner of Ad Astra Per Aspera Broadcasting which owns four radio stations serving central Kansas. His stations are leaders in sports broadcasting in the state.

Cliff grew up near Salina. He graduated from K-State in radio-television in 1974 and went to work for a radio station in the rural community of Lyons, population 3,739 people. Now, that's rural. "Sports was my first love," Cliff said. This station did lots of local sports.

One day an older broadcaster at the station asked Cliff what he wanted to do in the future. "I want to be the Voice of the Royals," Cliff said, with all the optimism of youth. "Well, how are you going to get there?" his more seasoned friend replied. Cliff had noticed that a lot of radio station owners and managers were doing play-by-play at the time, so Cliff thought that was the way to go.

"I want to be a (radio station) general manager by the time I'm 30, and an owner by the time I'm 35," Cliff said, with the confidence of youth.

As he looks back on it now, Cliff said, "That was pretty brash for an inexperienced 22-year-old with no money." But he had given voice to his career ambition and it would prove to be prophetic. Sure enough, three months after his 30th birthday he became a general manager, and three months before his 35th birthday, he became an owner.

"It demonstrates the power of goal setting," Cliff said.

Cliff began at KLOQ in Lyons and then worked for WREN in Topeka and KLEO in Wichita. In 1980, he was hired as sales manager at KSKU in Hutchinson. He was soon promoted to general manager and ultimately became owner, and even-

tually purchased other stations as well.

Today, his company is named Ad Astra Per Aspera Broadcasting. It includes four FM stations: 94.7 KSKU, which does top 40; 95.9 KWHK, which carries oldies; 100.3 KNZS which does classic rock; and 106.1 KXKU, which carries country. One hallmark which applies to all of his stations is coverage of sports.

"We broadcast more high school basketball games than anybody in the state," Cliff said. His stations cover high school football, volleyball, basketball, softball, baseball, and state track, plus KU and Sterling College sports. "When I got started, there wasn't much sports coverage on FM," Cliff said. "It was almost all on AM. We were some of the pioneers in doing that."

By the way, when Cliff said he wanted to be the Voice of the Royals decades ago, the position was already filled by Denny Mathews. Today, more than 40 years later, it is still filled by Denny Mathews, which doesn't leave much room for job advancement.

"I didn't become the Voice of the Royals," Cliff said, "but I've become the voice of the Buhler Crusaders and the Little River Redskins and the Sterling Black Bears and more." Such local sports coverage is a vital way of building community in rural Kansas.

"Cliff built successful radio stations through providing good local programming and community service," said Steve Smethers, associate director of K-State's School of Journalism and Mass Communications. "He's the ultimate sports fan. His love of sports fits in nicely with his programming philosophy."

The high school gym is packed, the game begins, and the home team makes the first basket. A ball game needs a goal, and so does someone who wants a successful career. We commend Cliff Shank for making a difference with his pioneering work in local sports broadcasting.

And there's more. Cliff also specializes in severe weather coverage. He's even overcome a disaster which struck his stations directly. We'll learn about that next week.

Quality time



The Eisenhower Elementary first graders and their guests came together at the school Tuesday afternoon to create and build gingerbread houses together. The students and their parents, grandparents and other guests have been getting together at the school each holiday season for about 15 years to build the houses and have their photos taken with their creations. Pictured, Erika Miller and her dad, Brock Miller, work on their creation together at the school.

-Telegram photo by Carleen Bell

Traveler resources available for broadcast

The Kansas Department of Transportation encourages travelers to take advantage of state resources - including camera images of roadways - as part of your winter travel this winter.

In addition to the camera images, KanDrive at www.kandrive.org, the department's traveler information gateway, provides a variety of information on weather, road conditions, safety tips and much more. The site also links to information for all states that surround Kansas.

KanDrive provides camera images from 60 closed-circuit cameras and 53 electronic message signs along I-70 and other highways across Kansas. Live motion camera views have been added for many cameras along I-70 between Goodland and Auburn Road west of Topeka.

Links to metro traffic information are provided for KC Scout in Kansas City and the new WICHWAY at wichway.org in Wichita. Both sites provide travel speeds and camera images on select routes, electronic sign messages, accident and construction information and other helpful information for drivers.

The 511 Mobile site at 511mm.ksdot.org provides map, camera

and electronic message sign views, road conditions, work zone and event information and links to weather. All content is provided by six regions across the state and three metropolitan areas (Kansas City, Topeka and Wichita).

For further information or assistance, please contact: Barb Blue (785) 291-3818, cell (785) 817-4180; bblue@ksdot.org or Steve Swartz (785) 296-3585, cell (785) 221-5615; stevessw@ksdot.org

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We will also be CLOSED Mon., Jan. 2
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Join us on Christmas Eve for Worship Service
 6:00 p.m.
 Childrens Pageant
 11:00 p.m.
 Candlelight Service and Cantata
Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Myron Veh and Alberta Slaby took first place in Duplicate Bridge Wednesday night at Norton Manor. Second place honors went to Jack Graham and David Graham.

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 Saturday, Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve) 2:00 p.m.
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