

# After 35 years, beloved Channel 7 assignment editor retires

Bob Kuszynski spent 45 years in Detroit journalism

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SOUTHFIELD (WXYZ) - Back when names like Bonds and Hodak ruled the airwaves at Action News, a young assignment editor with shaggy hair walked into Broadcast House for the first time. The year was 1981, and Bob Kuszynski's been here ever since.

For 35 years, Bob has manned the nerve center of the newsroom: the assignment desk. That's where you'd find him working sources, listening to police scanners and routing reporters from story to story all over the state.

"Very few people turned him down," recalled longtime WXYZ news operations coordinator Bob Giles. "He had a way of dealing with people, he could get right into the heart of the matter and people trusted him."

Kuszynski got his start in radio but made his biggest mark in television. For 20 years, he worked alongside Al Upchurch, a longtime WXYZ executive producer and, later, news director.

"You knew you could always depend on Bob to get the facts," Upchurch said, "to get the information you needed, to keep you updated as a producer on what was going on."

In more than four decades in Detroit journalism, Kuszynski has worked for 11 news directors, worked hand-in-hand with hundreds of reporters and producers and helped shepherd countless of young careers in broadcasting; even his daughter Karen's.

In fact, it was at Channel 7 where she met her husband, Tim Kochenderfer, a longtime WXYZ producer.

"He's part of the history here, he's been here so long," Kochenderfer said. "I think it's going to feel really different without him being here."

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"Bob was pretty steady," said former reporter Cheryl Chodun, who worked alongside Kuscynski for decades. "He'd have one phone with the police department in one hand, another phone with us in the other hand. He was that calm during a storm for sure."

"He understood the difference between real news and fake news," recalled longtime WXYZ reporter Bill proctor. "He sent us to find the real story."

But tonight, after 35 years, the dean of our assignment desk is heading into retirement, where he'll devote himself to his music, his Red Wings and his beautiful family.

Of course, wherever Bob goes, we'll always consider him a part of ours.

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