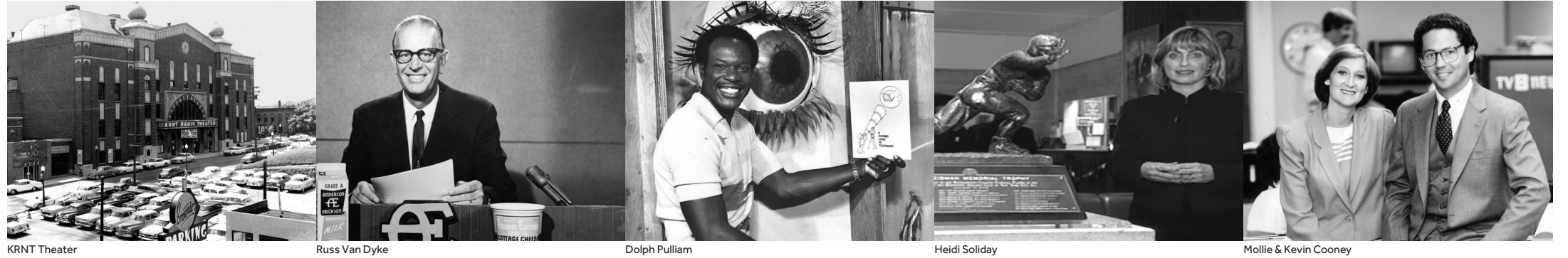


KCCI 8 NEWS

OUR STORY

DES MOINES, IA - KCCI Iowa's News Leader celebrates 70 years of service to Central Iowa July 31, 2025. This summer is a celebratory time for Hearst Television's legacy CBS affiliate in Des Moines. The station will host a gathering of alumni and current employees for a gala event at the Des Moines River Center and the station will debut a look back at the history and the moments of coverage KCCI provided viewers in a special presentation "This Is Iowa: KCCI Salute to 70 Years" on July 31, at 8 p.m. The 60-minute special is produced and hosted by KCCI 8 News This Morning Anchor Eric Hanson.



KRNT Theater

Russ Van Dyke

Dolph Pulliam

Heidi Soliday

Mollie & Kevin Cooney

In order to look forward, we must look back. KCCI-TV was born out of the radio station KRNT. The on-air signal went on July 31, 1955. The radio "personalities" people heard, eventually became household TV names. Russ Van Dyke was an example. He was known as the "Walter Cronkite" of Iowa. He initially handled all the news, including weather and sports. He also did live commercials, including taking a drink of Anderson Erickson milk at the end of a newscast.

"Many current viewers, still reference KRNT," said KCCI President and General Manager Brian Sather. "When that occurs, you know they have been watching a long time." Sather said he has been planning this celebration for the past five years. He insists every day is a day of growth. "KCCI continues to evolve as sales executives are building ad solutions that will reach multiple screens and platforms and our journalists' reporting is seen across multiple platforms including streaming and social media," said Sather. "You're a part of this amazing journey and the work done at the station daily is writing the next chapter."

There were several notable "firsts" that occurred during KCCI's 70-year history, and they include two talented journalists: Dolph Pulliam, and Heidi Soliday. Dolph was the first African American broadcaster in Iowa, and Heidi the first female Sports Director at a TV station in the nation. Heidi Soliday served KCCI for 31 years in total. She was hired initially as a part-time photographer on the recommendation of KCCI's Sports Director, Pete Taylor. When Pete left KCCI, Heidi was promoted to Sports Director. Heidi led KCCI in its coverage of everything from high school sports to collegiate and professional sports. In interviews Heidi has conducted, she routinely considered herself a "storyteller."

Adolphus "Dolph" Pulliam holds the distinction of being the first African American broadcaster in Iowa. Dolph worked at KCCI from 1969 to 1989. Dolph's journey to KCCI is unique. He was a stand-out star basketball player with Drake University

who was part of the team that went to the 1969 Final Four. Dolph's team lost to a UCLA team coached by the legendary John Wooden that featured the great Lew Alcindor or Kareem Abdul Jabaar. Dolph was an extraordinary athlete who was drafted both by Red Auerbach and the Boston Celtics, and Tom Landry and the Dallas Cowboys. But following the guidance of one of his college professors who told Dolph he could make a greater impact in broadcasting, he joined KCCI.

There may be no couple in television who have had more impact on a community than Kevin and Mollie Cooney. Kevin sat in the anchor seat for 33 years bringing the news to Central Iowa. In 1993, he worked 14 hours straight when the city of Des Moines lost its drinking water during the devastating flood of 1993. He was known for getting the big interviews. Cooney interviewed President Bill Clinton in Iowa and was invited to the White House to speak with President Barack Obama.

Right by his side through most of his career, wife and journalist Mollie Cooney was KCCI's first female newsroom reporter when she started in 1976 and became the station's first female anchor. She is known for her extensive anchoring during the Des Moines flood and her reporting on the McCaughey septuplets.

You trust Storm Team 8 to share up-to-the-minute information and provide an 8-day forecast. But for decades the KCCI tower, known as the "Weather Beacon," broadcast weather changes by the iconic changing of its lights. Not only was this a unique way to connect with viewers, but prior to a world where we consumed news and information in the palm of our hands, the weather beacon allowed KCCI to alert Iowans to the most updated weather forecast. The station made viewers aware before it became a brand promise.

As industry changed, so did the call sign. The call sign changed to KCCI-TV on February 25, 1974. KCCI began broadcasting in high-definition television on channel 8.1 in

At the time of its 1960 inception, a poem was created about the KCCI Weather Beacon-

**"Weather beacon red,
warmer weather ahead.**

**Weather beacon white,
colder weather is in sight.**

**Weather beacon green, little
change in temperature is foreseen.**

**Weather beacon flashing, night
or day, precipitation on the way."**

2002. KCCI produces more than 38 hours of news each week. The station includes digital subchannels 8.2 MeTV, 8.3 My Des Moines, 8.4 Story Television and 8.5 Nosey. Viewers can stream KCCI on Very Local. Its website KCCI.com is one of the most acclaimed sources for news, weather and information in the country.

Sather and the entire team at KCCI know there are more historical moments to come. His wish is to continue serving Central Iowans and, "take time to celebrate the proud history of KCCI and the shoulders of those giants on whom we stand," he stated.

A robust look at KCCI's 70-years of service is on KCCI.com and lowahistoryjournal.com.