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## Remembering Dean Borg

The Iowa PBS and Iowa Public Radio families sadly note the passing of Dean Borg, longtime Iowa Public Radio political correspondent and former host of Iowa PBS's ***Iowa Press***. Borg died yesterday afternoon at the age of 81 due to complications caused by pancreatic cancer. Borg's career in journalism spanned more than five decades, earning him multiple awards and a place of honor in Iowa's journalistic history.

Borg was widely known as a diligent journalist and consummate professional. He will be fondly remembered for his commitment to public policy, politics and public media in the state of Iowa and beyond.

In 1971, Borg appeared on Iowa PBS's inaugural ***Iowa Press*** broadcast and, until his retirement in January 2017, hosted the statewide program that set the standard for public affairs broadcasting in Iowa. To this day, he holds the title of the longest-serving host in Iowa PBS history.

"To say we all admired Dean is the most colossal understatement," said Iowa PBS General Manager and Executive Director Molly Phillips. "His experience, intelligence, tenacity and, most of all, integrity was what made him such a unique and invaluable journalist and friend. Whether it was a statehouse issue, a presidential candidate interview or a gubernatorial debate, Dean always brought his best to each broadcast."

From 2000 until his passing, Borg reported for Iowa Public Radio, and his work was often carried nationally by other broadcast networks, including PBS, NPR and more. Dean's broadcast news career began at WOI Radio as an Iowa State University student.

"Iowa Public Radio has lost a treasured and respected colleague, and Iowans have lost one of the best reporters the state has ever seen," said IPR Executive Director Myrna Johnson. "In his 50-plus year career, he covered everything from presidents to flooding events and gave us context and reporting that helped us understand our world – always with a steady hand and complete integrity. We are devastated, but so glad to have had him as a part of the Iowa Public Radio family."

A Forest City native, Eldean "Dean" Borg graduated from Iowa State University as the Outstanding Broadcast Journalist in 1959, and later earned a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Iowa. He began his career at WMT in Cedar

Rapids, Iowa, eventually directing a staff of 34 news, weather, sports and farm journalists.

Borg's contributions to Iowa PBS, IPR and Iowa journalism overall are immeasurable. Throughout his long and storied career, Borg became one of the state's leading and most trusted voices on public affairs and politics. He had the distinction of interviewing every president from John F. Kennedy to Barack Obama and moderating several nationally telecast presidential candidate debates during Iowa caucus campaigns.

"Dean was a mentor that shared more than a half-century of journalism experience with his colleagues and our viewers," said Iowa PBS Senior Producer Andrew Batt. "He believed ***Iowa Press*** and public affairs journalism was a public service, and Dean strived for truth and in-depth information in an era of partisan political coverage. His calm demeanor and professionalism leaves a void for all of us."

In addition, Borg's career included reporting from the scene of school integration in Little Rock, Arkansas, during the 1950s, and the Midwest farm economic struggles of the 1960s. He produced news and public affairs coverage from South Vietnam and Southeast Asia, as well as Paris and other European cities. He also produced news and health programming for The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, and hosted nationwide television public affairs programs on military affairs topics for NBC.

Though he was never one to brag, Borg was no stranger to humbly accepting the accolades of his colleagues and awards from prestigious industry organizations. He was inducted into the Gold Circle Honor Society at the National Academy of Television Arts and Science at the Upper Midwest Regional Emmy® Gala in 2017. The Gold Circle is a society of honor; it is recognition of eligible individuals who have made a significant contribution to television well above and beyond that required by their job. Recipients answer to the highest standards of integrity and honor in all aspects of their personal and professional lives.

Additionally, the Iowa Broadcast News Association honored Borg with the prestigious Jack Shelley Award. He also held the Mitchell V. Charnley Award from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association. Iowa State University honored him with its Distinguished Alumni Citation, the highest award given by ISU to an alumnus, and its journalism school bestowed its highest honor, the Schwartz Award for outstanding achievement in journalism.

Borg's family includes his wife, Sheila, four sons — Randy, Barton, Lindsey and Matthew — and one daughter, Kierstyn. Iowa PBS and IPR wish them, and all those who loved and respected Dean, peace as we all come to terms with this loss.

Dean's family will hold private funeral services due to coronavirus pandemic precautions. A memorial service may be scheduled later in the year. To honor Dean's lifelong interest in learning and opening doors of opportunity, his family suggests multiple options:

Donations to the Mount Vernon Schools Foundation will help to fund an annual scholarship for a high school graduate.

[mountvernon.k12.ia.us/foundation.html](http://mountvernon.k12.ia.us/foundation.html)

Donations given to the Iowa PBS Foundation will help fund an annual internship for a college student pursuing a degree in journalism.

[iowapbs.org/friends](http://iowapbs.org/friends)

Learn more at [iowapbs.org](http://iowapbs.org).

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#### **About Iowa PBS**

*Iowa PBS is formerly known as Iowa Public Television. New name. Same essential mission.*

*As Iowa's only statewide television network, Iowa PBS's mission to educate, inform, enrich and inspire Iowans guides its quality, noncommercial programming that tells Iowa's stories like no one else can. Four statewide, public channels offer programs of lasting value to Iowans, regardless of where they live or what they can afford: Iowa PBS .1, Iowa PBS KIDS .2, Iowa PBS WORLD .3 and Iowa PBS Create .4 on Channel 11, Des Moines; Channel 12, Iowa City; Channel 21, Fort Dodge; Channel 24, Mason City; Channel 27, Sioux City; Channel 32, Waterloo; Channel 32, Council Bluffs; Channel 36, Davenport; Channel 36, Red Oak. More information can be found at [iowapbs.org](http://iowapbs.org).*

#### **About Iowa Public Radio**

*Iowa Public Radio (IPR) was formed by the Iowa Board of Regents in 2004 to manage the day to day operations of the 26 public stations licensed to Iowa State University, University of Northern Iowa and University of Iowa. IPR, a member of National Public Radio (NPR), provides news, talk and music programming via 26 radio stations and through digital streaming and on-demand audio downloads. IPR currently serves a weekly audience of 220,000 listeners across three programming streams: News, Studio One and Classical.*