



## Signing Off

Remembering WGAJ by Brock Hines '79

I discovered the world of popular music on the Panasonic cassette radio I received at Christmas, 1972. After listening for hours a day to different radio personalities, I decided I wanted to be a radio disc jockey or at least involved in broadcasting in some way. Also waiting in the wings was a family insurance business. Even then, I knew the risk and reward each career path offered. Little did I know I would be lucky enough to have the opportunity to travel both paths instead making one choice at the fork in the road.

There was no radio station at Deerfield in 1975, my freshman year. Like my fellow students, I was wrapped up in academics and sports all day. And the thought of starting one? I didn't know where to begin. But two fellow youth hockey players knew of my passion. One, Doug Stotz, was a genius and assembled a contraption that broadcast an AM signal to about 20 households. My neighbor Jamie Hanley assisted by hooking up a turntable, and my neighborhood station was live. I was playing the hits for ten dedicated listeners

Hockey became my favorite sport in the 70s and if I wasn't playing, I was watching my neighbors' games with a microphone in hand, calling



the action. Although sports broadcasting wasn't on my radar initially, calling the games and broadcasting them on my station on a delayed basis was great.

After Deerfield, I attended Babson College. I had outgrown the homemade station and wondered what lay ahead. Babson didn't have a radio station either, but I partnered in a student mobile DJ service that played at many colleges and high schools, and my broadcasting fix continued to be satisfied.

Then in 1982 Mark Beaubien '83 and a team of students did the necessary work to get Deerfield a student radio station, and WGAJ-FM 91.7 was born. Beaubien was the station's first student general manager, and he told me the time involved in launching WGAJ made keeping his grades up a challenge, adding "I never slept." He also had at his disposal faculty member and engineer Jim Hemmingway, who was invaluable to the process.

I reunited with childhood friends Tim Hanley '84 and Danny Smith '85 after college graduation, and watched the duo and others spin the vinyl at WGAJ. With their help and Jim Hemmingway's,

