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Minneapolis Tribune

A taste of New Orleans / p 10

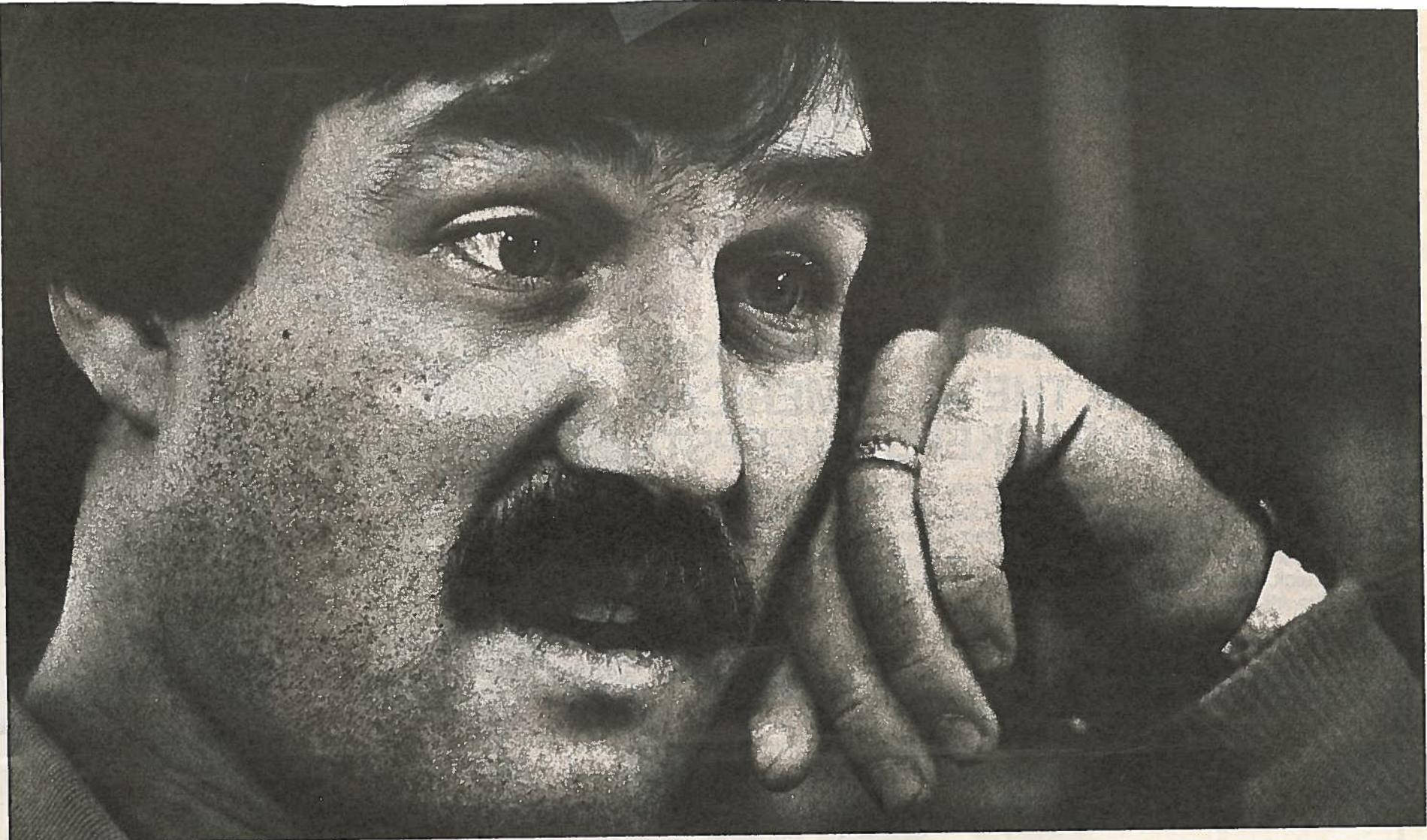
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January 9 / 1983

Staff Photo / Darlene Pfister

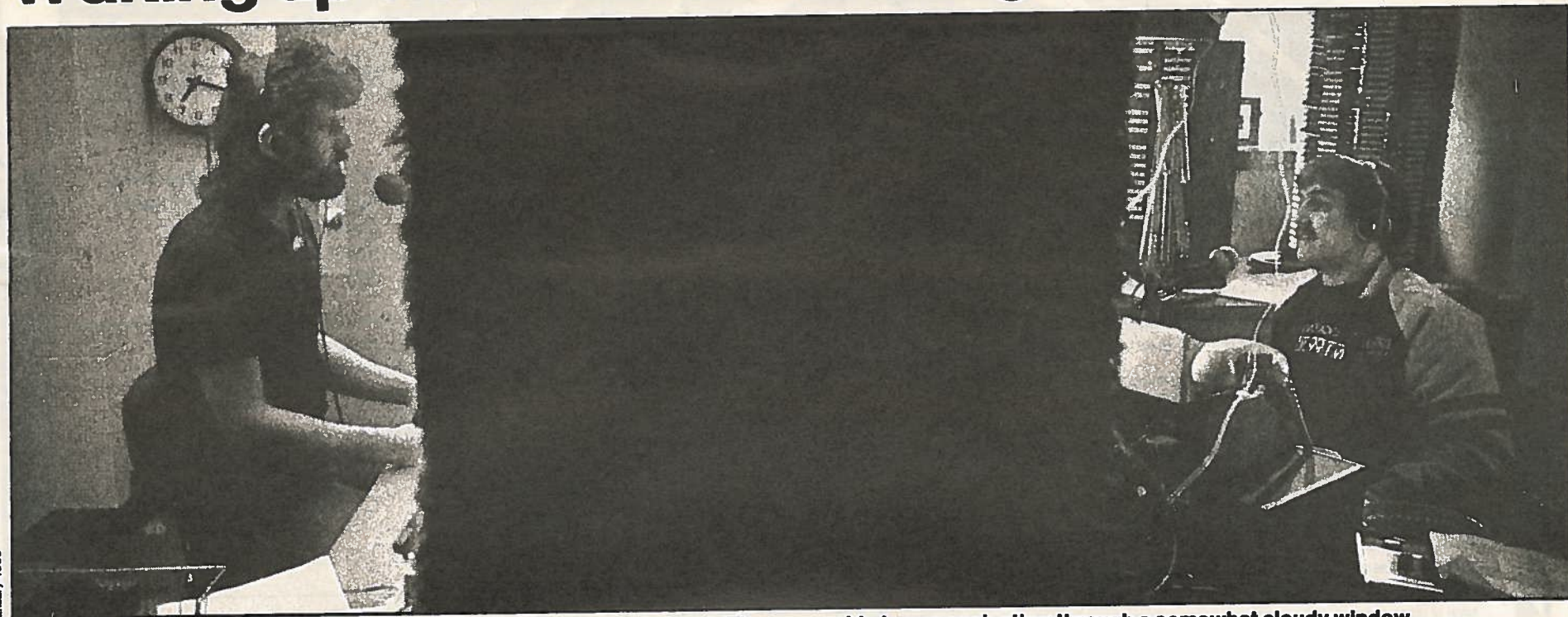


Hines and Berglund of WLOL-FM



John Hines

Waking up with Hines and Berglund



Picture © January 1983

Berglund, left, and Hines were separated by a wall during the broadcast. They were able to see each other through a somewhat cloudy window.

**By George Monaghan
Staff Writer**

It's nearly 6:30 in the morning, and the radio alarm is off and running, and you aren't ready for tension and jazz and electricity, and all you want as you fumble around in the dresser drawer in the dark is pair of socks that match.

Nothing matches, and out of the darkness comes:

"Hey, what the heck . . ." It's the radio voice, and it's tight and tense and when it grabs you it won't let go.

Laughter. The traffic report. "Outbound . . . lights on . . . inbound . . . careful . . . lights on . . . watch it . . . lock your car, and don't help a good guy go bad. . . . Yuk, yuk, yuk. . . . Hey, what's going on with this goldarned thing?"

The socks. You find them.

The news. "Norman Mayer's nuclear-war protest cost him his life yesterday . . . and now a little Christmas music."

"On the first day of Christmas

"My true love gave to me . . . beer . . ."

You are off and running to your car.

You are in your car.

You turn it on.

The radio suddenly is asking what you give to an Iowan who has everything, and as you begin driving you don't know it, but you have been hooked. WLOL 99-and-a-half FM has given you three or four cups of coffee, and you haven't even touched a drop.

For Iowans who have everything? Give them a garbage truck, the voice says, so they can haul it around. Uncontrollable guffaws.

You have been yanked up hard from a sea of sleepy lethargy, and now you should be ready for anything.

That's what WLOL-FM wants. It planned it that way. And for more than a year now its plans have been carried out, beyond expectations, by a couple of broadcasters—Hines and Berglund—who had talent even before they knew each other. But when they came together more than a year ago at WLOL-FM on Davern St. in St. Paul, they found magic.

And for radio stations in the Twin Cities area, such magic converts into dollars.

Before Bob Berglund and John Hines came to WLOL-FM, it had a little more than 4 percent of the radio audience in the Twin Cities area. A year later the station had 10 percent, and it was in third place just behind a couple of radio giants—KSTP-FM and WCCO-AM.



Bob Berglund

Now, says Doyle Rose, who a year and a half ago was on the verge of losing his job as the station's manager, it is up to 12, sometimes 13 percent of that audience, an unprecedented ratings leap, and it's hovering in and out of second place among the most popular stations.

It is laughing and carrying on all the way to the bank.

Normally an elevation of 1 percent in the ratings brings in about a quarter million dollars in revenue, Rose says. But the higher you get in the ratings, the more

you can command from advertisers, and by now the increase is bringing in a couple million in added revenues.

The secret behind Hines and Berglund is, basically, their hooking power. Tune them in early in the morning, radio people contend, and you have them the rest of the day. You get out of your car when you get to work. When you leave to come home that afternoon you are still on WLOL-FM, and then the next morning, when you leave again, there they are—Hines and Berglund frolicking on the airwaves, getting everyone up and aroused.

Once they leave the air at 9 a.m., WLOL-FM isn't the same anymore. Instead of uninterrupted Iowa jokes, gags, uncontrollable laughter, constant phone conversations with listeners and what Hines calls "mindless rock-'n'-roll," there is virtually nonstop music for the rest of the day.

The magic of Hines and Berglund isn't so magical when you see them operating. Berglund, the straight newsman, watches the news wires and gets weather together and collects anecdotes for the next day while Hines, →

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Hines assumed a feet-on-desk posture as he answered the phone during a song.

separated from Berglund by a glass partition, goes on and on—jokes, records, surprises, gosh darnin' it from one situation to another.

In the background, usually in another room, is Roger Anderson. He's usually the wild laughter in the background.

They depend on speed, spontaneity, intensity. Even as they play music they are moving. Much of their magic depends on a nearly endless dialogue with listeners, and while a piece like Adam Ant's "Goody Two Shoes" is rocking along, Hines and Anderson are answering the phones nonstop. On a typical morning, they say, they'll pick up the phone maybe 500 times.

Berglund is the stable one, feet on the ground. Hines is the wild one, nonstop and unrehearsed.

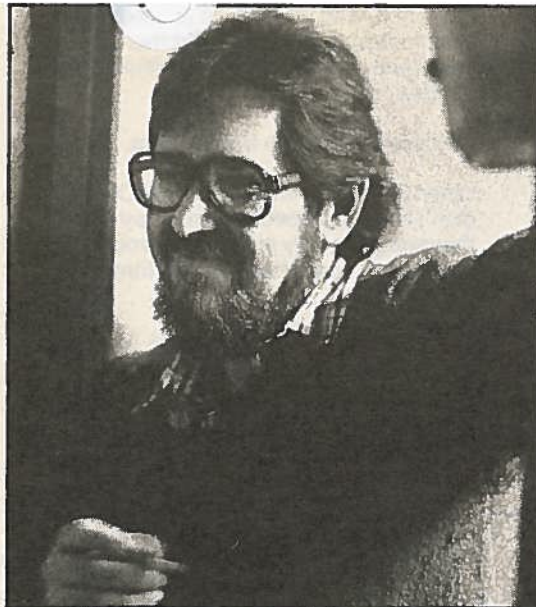
When a record is finished, Hines is likely to keep talking on the air, and you'll hear him going on and saying things like, "O.K., O.K., we're back on the air now. Darn! Hey! I got to go now, Yeah, sure. Great. O.K. Bye."

Then he'll explain to a mildly impatient Berglund that even though it's news time, and they're a few minutes late, he was talking with Barbara Flanagan or Dino Ciccarelli or some such celebrity, and, hey, you just don't hang up on people like that.

They'll try nearly anything together, and now and then they find something no one else has found, and it works.

Most of the time the music WLOL plays is determined by surveys the station makes among the 18-to-24-year-old and 25-to-34-year-old age groups in the area, with emphasis on the 18-to-24 people. But now and then Hines or Berglund will break away from scientific surveys.

That's what happened with a record called "Hubba, Hubba, Zoot, Zoot," by a Swedish group called Caramba. A listener told Hines about it and brought it to him, and it was just crazy enough, with its hubba hubbas and zoot, zoots and its jungle rhythm, to grab attention and gather up enough force to make a wave across the metropolitan area. No one



Roger Anderson, producer of the Hines and Berglund show, provided background guffaws.

else has it. Every morning they get 20 or so calls for it.

Hines sometimes brings in his own favorite records, like "Davy Crockett," with its multiple verses, or "Robin Hood," and everyone in the station calls out, "Stop," or "Please," or "No, not again." But he goes ahead anyway, and now and then, to add a little authenticity, you'll hear a tortured s-c-r-a-a-t-ch, and outside in radio land listeners keep calling for more, and Hines gives them more.

Hines and Berglund are always looking for a party. On their first anniversary together last Sept. 20, they had an unforgettable one. They got Bob Lurtsema to do the news and Jesse (The Body) Ventura, the wrestler, to be the disk jockey.

Hines and Berglund, dressed in tuxedos, did the party part.

Berglund brought a grill and a toaster and fried eggs and sausage and made toast and coffee for breakfast. Among the guests:

- A farmer from Waconia who brought a cow.
- The entire 80-member marching band from Roosevelt High School, of which Hines is an alumnus.
- Two squads of cheerleaders from the school.

A lady from Dunkin Doughnuts brought over 14 dozen doughnuts for the crowd, and Hines and Berglund ordered 131 Egg McMuffins for the cheerleaders, the band and the farmer from Waconia.

The festivities lasted through the day at the station, and then, as evening fell, a limousine whisked Hines and Berglund over to Duffy's in Minneapolis. On it went through the night.

The trouble is, says Hines, he isn't sure it was the real anniversary date. It might have been a day or two off. Who cared?

Last fall they did a show from one of the billboards →

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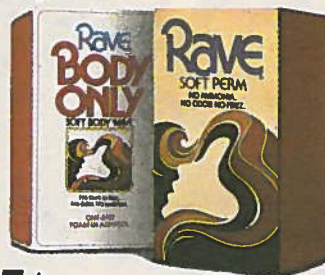
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AFE-1-3-26-21

00521-102251

35¢

the station bought to publicize Hines and Berglund. The billboard was near the intersection of Interstate Hwys. 94 and 35W, and in all the Twin Cities there is probably not an intersection with more visibility. The sign read, "This space reserved for Hines and Berglund."

Then it showed them, in person, broadcasting, and when they asked people over the radio to honk if they saw them, they got a chorus of honks, and it was music to their ears.

They once did their own version of "Hooked on Classics."

"I played the harmonica," Hines said, and he (Berglund) banged together a couple of 2-by-4s, only the 2-by-4s were too long, and instead of banging they sort of conked, and so we had to get a saw and cut them in half."

Hines and Berglund and Anderson started out on divergent paths that began converging in Minneapolis at the Brown Institute broadcasting school.

Hines, 32, graduated from Roosevelt in 1971. Three days later he began thinking about what he wanted to do for a living. He was walking past Brown Institute and saw a picture of Casey Jones, the television

personality.

"I knew I had to do something, and I knew I didn't want to go to college, and Dunwoody already had enough butchers, bakers and candlestick makers, and so there it was. I didn't have much choice."

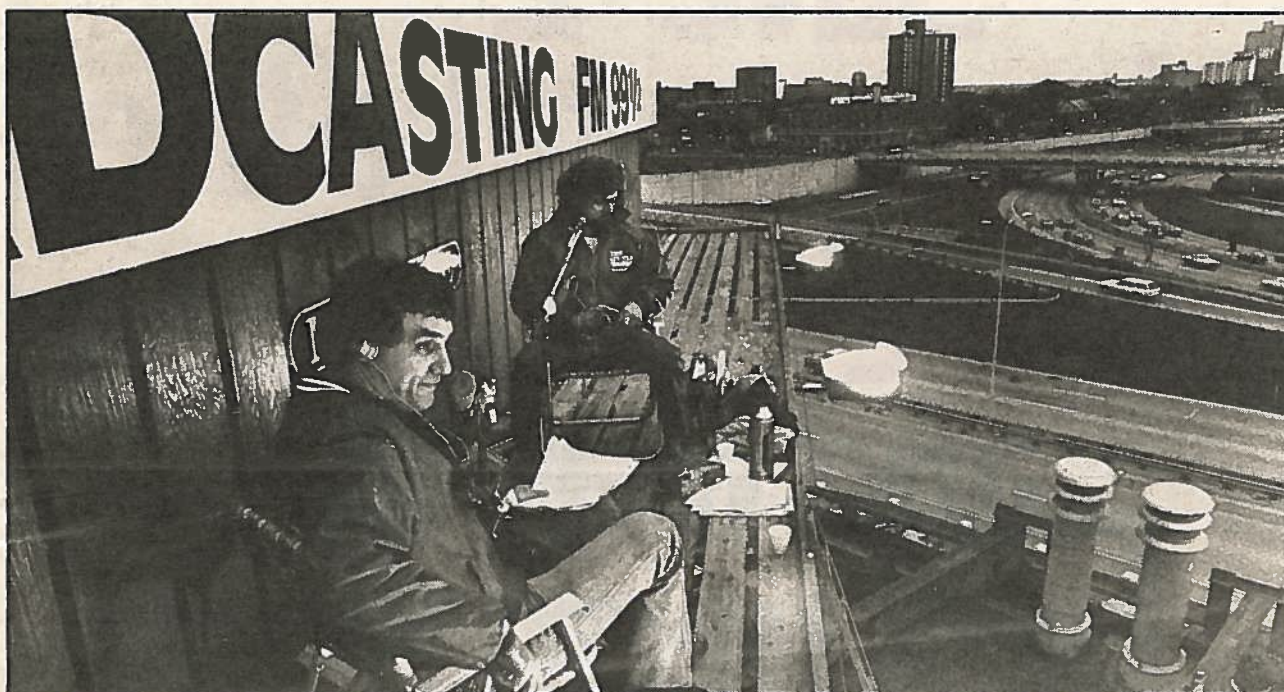
Berglund, 35, is from Warroad, Minn. The excellence of a radio station in Winnipeg got him interested in radio, so he decided to major in broadcast journalism at the University of Minnesota in 1969. But he couldn't stand all the nonradio courses. His adviser had some advice. Quit and go to Brown. He did.

Anderson, who started out as an actor, went to Brown too. He taught there four years and was director of admissions for another four.

All three live in south Minneapolis.

When they came together at WLOL they didn't have any special plan. They say they weren't really sure how it would work out or what would happen. But they grew together.

Now, they say, they know each other so well they can complete each other's sentences, and every morning they learn a little more.



Last fall Hines and Berglund broadcast from beneath a billboard at the intersection of Interstate Hwys. 94 and 35W.



Although there is another car in the family, Hines likes his 1953 Chevrolet. The car is a bit chilly on cold days. The left side window broke several years ago and Hines has been unable to find a replacement.



Two of Berglund's constant companions during the show: coffee and cigarettes.