

Chuck Reynolds leaves CHYR

New challenges for man behind familiar voice

by C. Scott Holland

Thousands of people have heard his voice on local radio station CHYR for more than two decades. But as of Sept. 3, Chuck Reynolds is no longer a part of the station with which his name became synonymous.

September was the month in which Reynolds began his reign at CHYR and the same month in which his recent resignation caught many listeners by surprise.

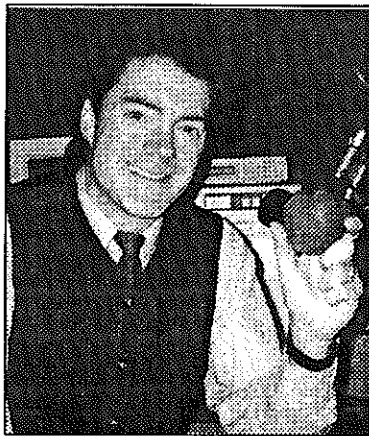
Recalling how he came to CHYR, Reynolds explained, "I was working two jobs at the time. One as a supply teacher for the York County School board, the other as an assistant manager of a golf club pro shop in Richmond Hill. I was also finishing a night course at a Toronto broadcasting school. "In the middle of September at the broadcasting school - on a Wednesday afternoon - Lou Tomasi phoned and left an urgent message about an all-night disk jockey (DJ) job being available at CHYR. Interviews would take place the next day."

While the news was great for Reynolds, it was a fluke that he even came to Leamington for an interview.

"Once I'd found out that Leamington was four hours away by car, I figured that I would mail a resume and "air check" (on-air voice work) I'd done. But at the time I never knew that Lou never hired a person that way. He liked to meet you in person."

Another fellow from the same school wanted to go, so Chuck borrowed his dad's car and made the trek. "Lou had conducted eight interviews that day and mine was the last one. He told me he'd be in

touch the next morning to let me know one way or another. He called



**PAUL BUNNETT-JONES
aka CHUCK REYNOLDS**

early the next morning and told me I got the job and was to start on Monday, Sept. 19 - just three days later."

Excited, Chuck finished his work at the golf course on Saturday, then with a suitcase in hand hopped a Leamington bound bus on Sunday. He got into town about 8 p.m. The bus let him off in front of the CHYR studios (at that time in the upper part of the Shotton building above where Dixie Lawn and Cycle is today.)

"I was nervous. The front door was locked and I banged on it for four or five minutes. Finally, the evening DJ Jim Alexander, opened it. I introduced myself as Paul (Bunnett-Jones) but immediately he told me my name was 'Chuck Reynolds'."

"I was shocked, thinking he must be kidding. But he wasn't."

In those days, CHYR, like many other stations, used professionally produced jingles announcing DJs

on the air.

"They had eight or nine with names like Pete Summers, Jeff Parker, etc. and Chuck Reynolds happened to be the first available when I arrived. The name has stuck with me ever since, although I'm used to either Chuck or Paul now."

From a few months doing the night shift Chuck moved into the afternoon slot then into the prime-time morning slot in 1980. He would remain associated with the morning shift until 1994 when he relinquished it to become the program manager "I couldn't be both the morning DJ and program manager because it was simply too much work. It was a hard choice; but getting up every weekday morning at 4 a.m. and with my DJ business thriving on weekends, keeping me up late at night..." So he took on the program manager's role and began doing a shorter stint in the afternoon.

During the course of time Reynolds grew very fond of the Leamington area and by 1980 he had joined the Erie Shores Golf club, Lions Club, and Knights of Columbus.

His roots here became greater when in 1983 he married a Kingsville girl, Margaret Moman; they have two daughters Emily and Heather. Memories abound from Chuck's 22 years as a CHYR disc jockey and during that span many accolades and awards have come his way. Among those honors have been awards from the Easter Seals Society, Canadian Cancer Society and the Canadian Broadcasters' Association for his public service work. Also, he has toiled endlessly with many local service groups and charities.

His efforts in that area are the result of being in contact with local citizens and community-minded people. Among those he admires are Larry McDonald, Jim Reid and Joe Colasanti.

"These people," Reynolds says, "spend countless hours raising funds for many worthwhile causes."

It's people like Colasanti who have a commitment to the community is part of what motivates Reynolds.

"Joe's work alone is responsible for events like the Happy Acres Festival and the Ruthven Apple Fest which brings thousands of people to the area and they may never have come had it not been for his facilities."

Since leaving radio, he has recently completed a life insurance course and obtained his license. Now a new challenge lies ahead of him dealing with people face-to-face. He'll be selling life insurance and RRSPs to members of the Knights of Columbus. "It's a bit scary, like when I first started radio. But I'm looking forward to it. I've spent half my life in radio, but that's done now. This is a new challenge that excites me."

Long time CHYR employee Heidi Hotz Tetzlaff is the new program director and is currently handling the mid-day slot while Tim Mickle has moved into the afternoon shift Reynolds vacated.

Besides getting to spend more time on the weekends with his family, Chuck will still be visible in the community doing public service work. And his voice will still be heard on some CHYR commercials since he considers the station to be like a "second "happy family."