

Weatherman broadcasts from Hills' yard

Continued from Page 1

The quality of the forecasts — some recorded, others live — is so keen that it seems as though he's in a sound studio at the radio station on 10 Mile in Southfield.

THAT'S BECAUSE Kress has his own little makeshift studio in his family room. His microphone, complete with headset, is hooked up to AT&T lines which carry his forecasts into the studio and onto the radio.

"They used to call me and say, 'stand by, you're going on in 2-3 minutes.' Now I listen to the radio announcers and follow with the clock. It sounds like I'm right in the radio studio," said Kress.

What really enables Kress to do his forecasts at home is his IBM computer. It's similar to the one he uses in the television studios but a little less sophisticated.

"What you need to do radio is the source of information. And what I have is a little computer that gets the information and brings it right to me."

When he gets up in the morning

Kress taps into the National Weather Service computer in Oklahoma. On his computer's screen is a description of the day's weather in Michigan as well as temperatures and even weather warnings.

"WITH THIS computer I have absolutely the most advanced weather system. I can tell you what the weather is on the oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico."

Looking out the window, though, gives him the best idea of what Detroit-area motorists are facing in the morning. But Kress also makes calls to state police posts, for example, to find out what the weather is like in other communities.

During snowstorms he'll hop into a truck equipped for radio transmittals and drive down the Lodge so he can get the clearest, most realistic picture of what's happening. He thinks motorists are appreciative, knowing he's sharing their anger and concern while muddling along a frozen freeway.

Looking out the windows or sitting on the backyard deck is in keeping with Kress' broadcast style — simple and

realistic.

"Weather is so incredibly important to the people who live here. People want to get outdoors. They want to know they can go to Traverse City and that the weather will be okay. You have to almost tell them what to expect."

So he avoids using the standard meteorological terms many forecasters let roll off their tongue. The terms, Kress said, just don't make sense to most people.

THE BEST EXAMPLES of confusing lingo are the terms, "partly cloudy" and "partly sunny," Kress said. Instead, he prefers announcing that there's a "mixture" of clouds and sun simply because when you look up in the sky that's exactly what it looks like.

At 9 a.m. he's finished with the radio broadcasting portion of his day. By 11 a.m. he's showered, dressed in suit and tie and off to finish the day on TV.

The Channel 7 television weather forecaster began broadcasting for WXYZ about 1½ years ago.

"I did it for a year on WHIC about 2½ years ago. But I decided I was tired of getting up at 5:30 a.m. and driving down to the studio."

Now that he can do his broadcasts from home, getting up at 6 a.m. isn't so bad. He can put on his blue jeans and T-shirt, get a cup of coffee, light up a cigarette and he's ready for work. And he never has to leave his wife, Carolyn, or the comforts of home.

KRESS IS ON the air anywhere from seven to 14 times during the station's 6-9 a.m. morning drive hours. His forecasts for the rest of the day are taped.

Those he also does from his home between the live broadcasts. One by one, he goes through his 11 30-second spots.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Rob Kress' dog, Thunder, attempts to get in on his owner's weather act.

Getting out that vote

Continued from Page 1

"get out and vote," he added.

Committee members will also try to work with the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce to make "get out a vote" signs for business and store windows.

PLANS ALSO are under way to encourage the school district to have election notices sent home with students, Vagnozzi said.

"We've had some ideas with the cable company (MetroVision). We're hoping for some interviews with candidates."

Senior citizens, whose voter participation has been better than most, also will be asked to get involved by encour-

aging neighbors in their area to vote, Vagnozzi said.

Although the committee is working to publicize the Hills' elections, Vagnozzi says he's hoping some of the publicity will spill over to the Farmington City Council election where six candidates are seeking three seats.

Both the Farmington Hills and Farmington council elections are Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Farmington candidates are Arnold Campbell, Gerald Lynch, Elizabeth Mibolich and Richard Tipper and incumbents Alton Bennett and Roger Walker.

Farmington Hills candidates are Terry Sever, Jonathan Grant and incumbents Jan Dolan, Ben Marks and Jodi Soronen.

on the agenda

FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
City Hall
31555 11 Mile Road
7:30 p.m. Monday

The city council will hear a report from city attorney Paul Bibeau on the proposed construction of a group home for mentally retarded in the Briar Hills subdivision. Bibeau's report is expected to include whether the city was proper-

ly notified, according to state rules, on the home's proposed site. Council will consider asking the Oakland County Board of Commissioners to increase their financial share of the cost of widening and paving a portion of Orchard Lake Road. Council also will consider adopting a resolution calling for the preservation of the historic Harger House on Halsted Road. Proposed procedures for absentee voter application requests will be discussed.

Architecture lecture set

"Chicago: 150 years of Modern Architecture," a lecture by Chicago architect John Hartray Jr., will be the first presentation in the Lawrence Institute of Technology School of Architecture's ArchiLECTURE series.

Hartray, a principal of Nagle, Hartray & Associates, will mark his presentation at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19 in the architecture auditorium on LIT's campus, 21000 W. 10 Mile, Southfield.

The free lecture is open to the public.

An adjunct professor at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Hartray is responsible for the design of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, the Auditorium Theatre Restoration and the preservation of the historic Harger House on Halsted Road. He has received numerous design awards from the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

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