

12th *Nate*

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“You’re Listening to *Morning Edition*, I’m ?”

Bob Edwards, longtime, and now former, host of *Morning Edition*.

As many of you probably know by now, NPR has decided to go in a different direction with **Morning Edition** and are removing Bob Edwards as host of the program. **Morning Edition** without Bob Edwards! Talk about strange! Many of us expect to wake up to the voice that has hosted the program for almost 25 years. I know that many listeners are disappointed — and some I’ve talked with are more than disappointed.

The NPR position is that **Morning Edition** needs to “evolve” and be “refreshed.” I can’t help but wonder if one of the most successful programs in radio history couldn’t evolve and refresh itself with Bob continuing to host if he wanted to. NPR also said the program needs to be more “flexible,” and there is no question that it does. But perhaps the responsibility for a more flexible program lies with the producers and directors, not the host. So it’s still not clear to me why NPR has made this move, and I’m not convinced they properly thought it out.

That being said, I’m not jumping into the “Save Bob” campaign, for several reasons. First, Bob has accepted and adjusted to the move, and so should we. Second, there are too many really important things that need our time and attention. And third, although I think NPR bungled the announcement

process, that their initial statements were disingenuous at best, and that they should have sought the counsel of station managers (who seem to be split on the matter, by the way) and others, ultimately, it is still NPR’s decision to make and we should trust them.

So in honor of Bob’s almost 25 years as host of **Morning Edition**, we’ve decided to devote a good share of this issue to Bob, which will include a few local comments and appreciations, the NPR rationale, and a note from Bob himself, being the good trooper he has always been.

One last thing — regardless of what you think of NPR’s decision, I hope you continue to support your local public radio station. As I remember saying once or twice, we need your help now more than ever.



**MORNING
EDITION**
with Bob Edwards

from NPR NEWS

Sincerely,

Gary Seston

Program Listings for the Months of May & June 2004

All programs are subject to change without notice.

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Mid.							
1:00							
2:00	Classical Music Overnight					Jazz After Hours	Jazz After Hours
3:00							
4:00							
5:00	BBC World Service						
6:00						Hearts of Space	Alternative Radio
7:00	Morning Edition					New Dimensions	Justice Talking
8:00						Weekend Edition	Weekend Edition
9:00							
10:00	Classical Music with Barbara Krauss					Car Talk	Performance Today
11:00						Whad 'Ya Know?	Harmonia
Noon						Says You!	
1:00	Classical Music with Michael Cervone						Classical Music
2:00						Metropolitan Opera	
3:00	Fresh Air						Living On Earth
4:00						Weekend ATC	
5:00	All Things Considered						
6:00	BBC World Today					A Prairie Home Companion	Sound and Spirit
7:00							Thistle and Shamrock
8:00	Performance Today					Jazzscapes with Rick Popovich	Folk Festival with Charles Darling
9:00							Says You!
10:00	Classical Music Overnight					Worldwide Jazz	Classical Music Overnight
11:00						Now's the Time	
Mid.							

Jazz on the Weekend

*Jazzscapes, with Rick Popovich
Friday and Saturday, 8:00 pm*

5/1 Horace Silver. Iconic pioneer of hard bop and influential pianist.

5/7 New Release. Ralph Peterson's latest *Tests of Time*.

5/8 Christian McBride. Top bassist in a wide variety of settings.

5/14 Blue Wails. Color of choice in the jazz world.

5/15 Grachan Moncur III. Nearly forgotten voice of adventure on trombone.

5/21 Soul Jazz. Still alive and evolving in the 21st century.

5/22 Bob Berg. Late hard-bop and post-bop-based tenor-playing Miles Davis alumnus.

5/28 Pick of the Month. Bobby Hutcherson's 1982 live release, *Fanewell Keystone*.

5/29 Dave Stryker. Rough-hewn sounding guitarist with a refined approach.

6/4 New Release. Vibraphone master Gary Burton's latest, *Generations*.

6/5 Water Music. H₂O, fluid and organic, makes for the perfect reference in this installment.

6/11 Steve Wilson. Highly regarded alto saxophonist as leader and sideman.

6/12 Bill Evans. Arguably the most influential piano voice in jazz history.

6/18 In Tribute. Other artists, past and present, serve as inspiration.

6/19 Mark Turner. Underplayed post-bop tenor saxophonist.

6/25 Pick of the Month. McCoy Tyner's 1967 Blue Note gem, *The Real McCoy*.

6/26 Evan Svendsen. Innovative Swedish guitarist in the limelight.

Now's the Time

*with Martin Berger
Saturday, 11:00 pm*

5/1 Charlie Haden. Bassist with Ornette Coleman, advocate of radical politics and music.

5/8 Thad Jones. Brassman, Basie-ite, bandleader, composer-arranger.

5/15 Hank Jones. Durable modern-jazz pianist, brother of Thad.

5/22 Steve Grossman. Modern saxophonist of substance.

5/29 Billy Pierce. Another solid tenorman, with Harold Danko and others.

6/5 Red Garland. A reflective, thoroughly bluesy angle on modern-jazz piano.

6/12 Woody Shaw. Major post-bop trumpeter, a career tragically brief.

6/19 Muggsy Spanier. Assertive Oliver-flavored trumpeter, from his Great Sixteen recordings and other sessions.

6/26 Roy Eldridge. Perhaps the most exciting trumpet player in jazz, including some Decca dates with his own big bands.

Folk Festival

*with Charles Darling
Sunday, 8:00 pm*

5/2 Contemporary Folk, Part XXVIII. Includes both newcomers and veterans: Mandy Shaw, Thomasina, Peter Lang, Peggy Atwood, Brooks Williams, Soulscript, and more.

5/9 Steeleye Span Revisited. The pioneer British folk-rock group who reinvigorated folk music for a younger generation.

5/16 Blues in the Night, Part XIII. Country, city, and contemporary bluesmen and women from the 1920s to the present — from Papa Charlie Jackson to Papa John Kolstad and the Hot Club of East Lake.

5/23 Folk Moods and Styles, Part IV. Bits and pieces from various folk genres: country, blues, traditional, contemporary; Anglo, Celtic, African.

5/30 Story Songs, Part IV. More tales, real or fictional, ancient or modern, with Andrew Calhoun, Tom Russell, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and more.

6/6 Folk Groups. Featuring Fennig's All-Stars, Mo Mack & Company, Texas Tornadoes, Happenstance, and Maggie.

6/13 Something Old, Borrowed and Blue, Part II. Ancient ballads and songs mingle with borrowed tunes and blues notes.

6/20 Image Warp, Part II. Strange folk combinations: Gipsy Kings, Jim Post, Flatt & Scruggs, D Squared, Lemon Jefferson, Jim Layeux, Alan Sherman, etc.

6/27 Ninth-Annual Folk Festival Concert. By request, a repeat of the YSU Concert with Brady's Leap and Hillbilly IDOL.

NPR World of Opera Saturday, 1:30 pm

5/1 Florian Leopold Gassmann: Opera Seria. Theatre des Champs-Elysees, Paris; Concerto Köln; René Jacobs, conductor. Cast: Mario Zeffiri, Jeremy Ovenden, Alexandrina Pendatchanska, Miah Persson.

5/8 Saint-Saens: Samson and Delilah. Houston Grand Opera; Philippe Jordan, conductor. CAST: Denyce Graves, Sergej Larin, Greer Grimsley. A Saint-Saens spectacle, based on the biblical story of a legendary seductress whose wiles drive the hero Samson to bring down the house — literally!

5/15 Joseph Bodin de Boismortier: Daphnis et Chloé. Wilanow (Poland) Early Music Summer Academy; Simon Standage, conductor.

(Continued on page 6)

After 25 years BOB Edwards



A Letter from Bob Edwards

Dear Listener,

I am delighted that NPR and I have agreed on all of the details of my new duties as a senior correspondent. My new role will allow me to continue serving NPR listeners and will include profiling interesting and noteworthy people from all walks of life.

I plan to be here at NPR for the long haul. I am leaving a post that I have loved and have given my heart to. I now look forward to the new challenges ahead of me and continuing to be a significant part of NPR and the amazing program lineup.

Morning Edition will continue to be my first source for news. I encourage all of its listeners to stay with the program. It will continue to bring them the most in-depth and thoughtful journalism in broadcasting. I hope you continue to listen and support your public radio station.

Note: E-mails regarding Bob Edwards can be sent to nprcomm@npr.org.

Good Bye to an Old Friend

Morning Edition will irreversibly close a favorite chapter in this listener's mind with the final broadcast of the wonderfully rich, confidently poised voice of Bob Edwards. To me, his presence in my morning's radio — yes my morning radio is an animate object, full of the things I like to know and hear — makes him one of the voices with whom I've become good friends.

The commencement of my day has become an inseparable mélange of senses, including the smell of freshly brewed coffee, the reluctant clearing of cobwebs from the end of slumber by timbre of voice and news, almost as if my radio were slapping cold water on my mind's face, waking it up to the day.

So goodbye, old friend. Although I've never had the pleasure to personally meet you, I know you as an old friend and will miss your place in my radio. Be well.

— Tim Smith, Smith & Co. Jewelers Inc. and longtime listener and supporter of WYSU-FM

Trust

In 1976 in the film "Network," Peter Finch as the character Howard Beale, a news anchor upon being let go to "improve ratings", uttered his famous quote, "I'm mad as hell and I am just not going to take it anymore." After hearing that the leadership of National Public Radio had decided to reassign Bob Edwards, the host of **Morning Edition** for all of that program's 24 years I may not be "mad as hell..." but I am deeply disappointed.

We live in an era of rapid change and great complexity. Making sense of the world in which we live is supremely difficult. Most of us search for sources of news and information that we trust to help us sort it all out. Many of us, and certainly most of us in this listening audience, have relied on National Public Radio to deliver the best possible information.

With many approaches possible, National Public Radio has always focused on content, on measured rational approaches, and has been driven by a strong civic purpose. As a member-based organization, NPR has always seemed to respect its members and to reflect values that promote justice and fairness. We have trusted that NPR's choices of stories and perspectives have been made based on rational analysis and social significance rather than, as is so often the case in corporate media, reasons of audience share or the interests of corporate sponsors. But now I wonder. The corporate-styled decision to reassign Bob Edwards has seriously shaken my trust in NPR.

We all know that trust is a very valuable commodity. It accrues slowly over a long time but can be squandered quickly. My wife and I have listened to Bob Edwards for 24 years. It may be more important to note that my two sons know Bob Edwards' voice as well as they know my own voice. Over those 24 years my family has grown to respect Bob for his integrity, his perceptive analysis, his measured commentary and his calm and good-natured approach. To us, he is **Morning Edition**. He has earned our trust and, more importantly, over that time he has done nothing to lose our trust. Bob did not ask to be reassigned, and his audience did not ask for Bob to be reassigned.

I have read all of the statements from NPR management about why Bob is being reassigned and none of them speak to me. None of the statements give me reason to think that a sound decision has been made. None of the statements gives satisfactory justification for totally removing Bob Edwards from the anchor slot on **Morning Edition**. I now find myself in the uncomfortable position of having to trust someone about whom I have no knowledge as they make a negative decision about someone I do trust. If we do not trust the decisions that NPR leadership makes about people we value, if they do not act with obvious fairness, then we must ask if they are still acting for their members.

I learned early on in my life to admit mistakes. I would suggest that the leadership of NPR admit that this was a mistake and to work to re-establish our trust by placing Bob Edwards back in his usual slot on **Morning Edition**, just as the Network in the film gave Howard Beale his anchor slot back. Write and tell NPR leadership that you are "Mad as hell and you are just not going to take it anymore."

— Paul Kobulnicky, listener & member of WYSU-FM
(This commentary aired on WYSU on Wednesday, April 14)

is leaving Morning Edition



An Open Letter to Bob Edwards from Jeffrey A Dvorkin, NPR Ombudsman

Dear Bob,

You won't be surprised when I tell you that I have received a lot of e-mail about your departure from **Morning Edition**. Almost every one is a protest against your leaving. There is a lot of sadness in these e-mails, sadness and anger over the lack of a clear explanation of why this is happening. Your note to the listeners, posted on the NPR Web site has helped to calm some of that anger, but not all of their misgivings.

Almost every one pointed out that their lives just won't — just can't — be the same after you leave **Morning Edition** at the end of April. Listeners feel that NPR has let you down and let them down at the same time.

I am a devoted listener of Morning Edition. Much of the reason I listen to the show every weekday morning, without fail, is that I can count on hearing Bob Edwards conduct a newscast that is serious, comprehensive and credible — leavened with adult humor and irony. Apparently the geniuses at NPR believe people are looking for something else in a news program. Some people may be, but those people don't listen to NPR.

Bob, that e-mail from listener Karyn Severson is pretty typical, if somewhat restrained compared to others.

The official explanation from NPR left many listeners wondering what is meant precisely when it is decided to "freshen up" a program.

You and I have talked from time to time about what makes the *Morning Edition* listeners so passionate. Sure, a lot of it is you, especially your calming presence at a time of commercial radio hype and that wonderful baritone. All the males who ever come near a microphone had larynx envy for those "pipes" of yours. But of course it's more than that. And it's more than just habit, although it's almost impossible to understate how habit works for radio listening.

What you have done — perhaps from the beginning — is to communicate something essential about radio. It is, in almost every way imaginable, the most personal, even intimate of all media.

We've talked about the writing on **Morning Edition**, about when a script just doesn't work (that doesn't happen very often, thankfully). But when you read a script that does work — that is to say when it connects with the listeners both intellectually and emotionally — we know something happens inside the listeners' heads. They start to actually imagine what you are talking about — they can see what you are describing.

Your gift to the listeners was to take that well-crafted script and allow the listeners to be complicit in the act of imagination. They felt they were actually THERE — in Vietnam, in Israel, Nicaragua and everywhere in the United States where a public radio reporter turned on the microphone to describe what is going on. I know because they wrote to tell us that is what happens when they hear your voice.

That quality is going to set a very high standard for whoever comes next.

So a lot of people are sorry to imagine life post-Bob. So am I. Listeners may not always like what they hear, but they knew that they could trust you and the staff of **Morning Edition** to try to make sense of it all.

Whether the change will be good for you, for **Morning Edition** and, most importantly, for the listeners won't be known for some time. But it is an astonishingly good program, thanks in no small way to you and to the staff that puts it together every night. My guess — certainly my hope — is that because of you the program is likely to go from strength to strength.

Best,
Jeffrey

Another Point of View

It was Benjamin Franklin who said that nothing was certain except death and taxes, but he might have added one more sure thing — change. It is sometimes scary, it is sometimes unwelcome, but inevitably, it just is.

Like so many who have made public radio a part of their daily lives through the years, I have heard lots of changes at NPR — changes that involved some integral personalities. I vividly remember a time when Susan Stamberg reigned indisputably over **All Things Considered**, and when it was quite impossible to separate Martin Goldsmith from **Performance Today**. Now Bob Edwards, having been with **Morning Edition** since its inception in 1980, will be leaving the program in May, and for many, this will be a difficult change to reconcile.

Bob's leaving has been attributed to a desire — either on the part of the network, or Bob, or perhaps both — to go in a different direction. To some that has a sinister ring to it, and many have jumped to the conclusion that this will necessarily be a bad thing. I don't share that view. Change in itself is neither good nor bad, and it is difficult to anticipate the outcome of this decision based solely on assumptions. But even with only assumptions to go on, I find myself perfectly willing to give NPR the benefit of the doubt. After three and a half decades, NPR news continues to be the essence of integrity, having forged for itself a standard of journalistic integrity that has set the benchmark for all other news media. That hasn't changed, though its personalities have.

I look forward to the new face of **Morning Edition** with great anticipation and confidence. As for Bob, I certainly hope we haven't heard the last of him; but maybe now he can enjoy a normal sleep schedule. After nearly twenty-five years, he's certainly earned it!

PS: Listeners can contact me at 202-513-3245 or at ombudsman@npr.org.

NPR Answers Frequently Asked Questions

We've seen references by NPR management that the decision to move Bob Edwards to a senior correspondent position was about the need to "evolve," and "refresh" *Morning Edition*. What does that mean?

Over the past three years we've been engaged in an intensive process of reviewing all of our programming with three questions in mind: How can we continue to improve and deepen our coverage of the critical stories of the day? How can we better tell powerful stories from around the world and from all over the U.S. in the way only NPR can? And how can we enhance our on-air diversity? The changes we're making in *Morning Edition* — and the changes we've made in many other areas — are part of our answer to those questions.

Three years ago, we looked at the rest of the broadcast world and saw only retreat: fewer reporters in the field, less international coverage, less diversity of views and voices. NPR made a clear and conscious decision to move in the opposite direction. We opened two more foreign bureaus, opened a production facility called NPR West in Los Angeles, and added field reporters in communities around the United States. We launched new shows, like the *Tavis Smiley Show* and *Day to Day*, to expand our range and bring new voices to public radio. We made major changes to *All Things Considered*, *Talk of the Nation* and *Weekend All Things Considered*. These changes in their entirety have improved and deepened our programming, allowing us to provide the broadest range of ideas, sounds, and stories.

We believe, and listeners have told us, that these changes have brought real improvements to our programming, and we're confident the same will be true for *Morning Edition*.

So, why are you moving Bob out as host of *Morning Edition*?

Morning Edition is our most important show, and we wouldn't make changes without a lot of planning and discussion. More than 18 months ago, we began a careful series of discussions about the program with Bob, stations, and NPR staff.

Twenty-five years ago, *Morning Edition* was created with a single, in-studio host. That model is no longer sufficient to bring the weight of credible, in-depth reporting that we are demanding of ourselves. In the last year, we have experimented with a different model: two hosts (one in DC and one in Los Angeles) for the show, both capable of providing unique reporting from the field, and of working in tandem to carry the show forward during even the most pressing news events. We believe this is the right model for *Morning Edition* in the years to come. In making this change, we don't mean to diminish Bob's remarkable career at NPR, and we know that he will continue to make an extraordinary contribution in his new role.

Are you doing this because you're trying to attract a younger audience?

We don't program to one audience — but to everyone who wants in-depth, intelligent news and information. Over the last two years, we have hired at least six new hosts at NPR — Michele Norris, Alex Chadwick, Tavis Smiley, Melissa Block, Neal Conan and Steve Inskeep. They range in age from the mid 30s to the late 50s, they are white and black, male and female, East Coast and West Coast. They are threaded together only by their excellence of craft, love of radio, and dedication to the highest standards of journalism.

Morning Edition's audience has been growing dramatically over the last few years. If it ain't broke, why are you fixing it?

You're right, it isn't broken; it's a great show. If we were a commercial outfit where decisions are profit driven, we probably wouldn't make any changes. But we're not. We're driven by a mission to provide the highest quality journalism to our listeners. We have asked ourselves hard questions, and we're acting on our answers to make *Morning Edition* even better. Our goals are to take the show to more places, with hosts as reporters going into communities, giving it more depth, flexibility and responsiveness.

NPR World of Opera

Saturday, 1:30 pm

(Continued from page 3)

5/22 Carlisle Floyd: *Of Mice and Men*. Houston Grand Opera; Patrick Summers, conductor.

Floyd's telling take on the Steinbeck classic, in a production featuring a stunning performance by Anthony Dean Griffey, in the challenging role of Lenny.

5/29 Verdi: *La battaglia di Legnano*. Opera Orchestra of New York; Eve Queler, conductor.

Cast: Krassimira Stoyanova, Carlo Guelfi, Francisco Casanova, Carla Wood. The setting is the middle ages but this stirring opera is really a thinly veiled revolutionary statement, a rousing patriotic drama inspired by Verdi's dream of a free and united Italy.

6/5 Francesco Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Opera Orchestra of New York; Eve Queler, conductor. Cast:

Aprile Millo, Marcello Giordani, Anthony Laciura. If not for this one, steamy melodrama, Cilea might have died in complete obscurity. It's a cauldron of intrigue and jealousies, complete with murder by poisoned violets.

6/12 Rossini: *La Donna del Lago*. Opera Orchestra of New York; Eve Queler, conductor.

Cast: Ruth Ann Swenson, Stephanie Blythe, Mario Zeffiri, Jason Grant, Bruce Fowler.

6/19 Verdi: *Attila*. Opera Orchestra of New York; Eve Queler, conductor.

Cast: Lauren Flanigan, Samuel Ramey, Francisco Casanova, C.Y. Liao, Jason Grant.

6/26 Bizet: *The Pearl Fishers*. Opera Orchestra of New York; Eve Queler, conductor.

Cast: Darina Takova, Daniil Shtoda, Luis-Ottavio Faria, Jean-Luc Chaignaud.

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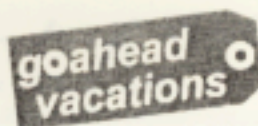


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