

*2011 Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame*

**Reid Duffy**

Reid Duffy has been a well known, and for many years, a unique presence in television news in Central Indiana for over 30 years, starting in 1971, when he was hired by WRTV, Channel 6, in Indianapolis, as a state government and political reporter. A native of Chicago, a 1967 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, with a masters in Radio & Television from the University of Illinois, Duffy was a reporter and anchorman for WILL, the public radio and television station in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois in the late 1960's.

Upon joining WRTV in 1971, Duffy covered the Governor Otis Bowen administration, the Indiana State legislature, and several elections and conventions in the 70's, as well as anchoring the station's weekend evening newscasts. On appropriate occasions, he would inject humor and satirical commentaries on some of the more colorful rituals and vagaries of Indiana politics, prompting News Director Bob Gamble in 1976 to have Duffy focus on offbeat feature and human interest stories, humor-oriented commentaries, and satiric presentations, under the banner of "Duffy's World". Two of his feature stories were awarded regional Associated Press awards for "Best Feature Story". In 1978, he took on a weekly assignment of reviewing area restaurants, under the title of "Duffy's Diner", a very popular staple of Channel 6 News for 18 years. And for several years, he reviewed films and local theatre for the news department.

After 24 years with WRTV, Duffy joined WNDY, Channel 23 in 1995, for three years, bringing his trademark wit and lively writing to a series of on-air assignments, notably writing, producing, and hosting the magazine feature series, "The Reid Duffy Chronicles". He also continued his weekly "Duffy's Diner" restaurant review series, contributed feature stories for Channel 23's extensive coverage of the Indianapolis 500; daily commentaries on Indiana history and Hoosier historical figures for the Network Indiana statewide radio network; and humor commentaries for the weekly Mike Pence political talk show.

Later in his career, Duffy has contributed feature stories to WFYI-Channel 20's popular and award-winning "Across Indiana" series, as well as writing and hosting an hour long special on Indiana food makers, titled "The Hoosier House of Good Eats"; weekly "Duffy's Diner" restaurant reviews for The Daily Journal in Franklin; monthly restaurant reviews for the Indianapolis Business Journal; humor commentaries for the weekly Indianapolis radio show, "In the Kitchen with Daina", starring Daina Chamness; and reviews and food features for the Indianapolis DINE Magazine. And throughout his career, he has often been tapped to provide his witty approach as master of ceremonies for many awards banquets and fundraising affairs, as well as a three-time roastmaster for the annual Indianapolis Gridiron dinner. Since 1997, he has been a volunteer reader for IRIS, the Indiana Reading and Information Service, specifically doing a live weekly radio reading of the Indianapolis Star, benefiting those who cannot read normal print due to blindness, vision and physical impairments or learning disabilities.

Duffy has also written three books, including a local best-seller, "Reid Duffy's Guide to Indiana's Favorite Restaurants", first published in 2006 by Indiana University Press, and the comic novel, "Festerwood at 5", with former Channel 8 anchorman Mike Ahern, a satiric look at local television news.

Duffy and his wife, Loretta, have two grown children, Megan and Matthew, and a granddaughter, Riley Norinc, born in 2009.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Mike Ahern  
**Date:** 11/3/2010 12:17:01 PM  
**To:** dmikelsshea@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** Reid Duffy Nomination

Hi Donna...

I hope this doesn't reach you too late to make your deadline. As I mentioned in my Phone call, Reid clearly deserves this honor on many levels. He practically invented the first-person feature story with his wildly popular Duffy's Diner series. In fact, as we toured the state on our book-signing adventures some years ago, he was asked at every stop about the Diner, his favorite restaurants, the best place to order French Onion soup, etc.....and this was some years after the series had ended.

Some people forget that Reid was also an accomplished political reporter for many years, and continues to be a successful writer both on line and in print. But I like him because Reid is that rarity in today's "in your face" culture....a genuinely funny man with compassion...who knows how to gently roast a subject without inflicting pain.

We've written a book together, tailgated together, and enjoyed many laughs at each other's expense....and he remains one of the funniest, kindest, and finest people I know.

He's in my personal Hall of Fame, and has been for years.

Thanks for thinking of me...and again, sorry this is so late.

Mike Ahern

From: "Howard Caldwell" <hccaldwell@comcast.net>  
Date: Thursday, October 28, 2010 1:12 PM  
To: <dmikeisshea@abcglobal.net>  
Subject: A Confused retiree

Donna, I don't know if you received my note of yesterday but since I didn't hear from you I am sending this. I am leaving Indpls. at noon tomorrow

for a weekend at Toledo University. You seemed to be concerned about getting info in a hurry regarding Reid Duffy. Since I have not heard from the

Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame I am not clear on whether he is being nominated for that or the Indiana Broadcast Hall of Fame. He is quite deserving

and should end up in both. I am taking no chances and have just a few thoughts drawn from the years I worked with him at Channel Six.

He joined us in 1971 to be a back up reporter at the state house. Since my title at the time was TV News Editor, News Manager Bob Gamble had me

meet him and wanted to know what I thought. I learned very little about him because he seemed very modest and hesitant to talk about himself.

He did not show us his humorous side. Slowly but surely it began to show up off the air but he didn't let it interfere with his main job at the time,

serious reporting. Eventually we realized we had a real jewel with talent that was a specialty that our competitors did not possess. Reid was a heavy

reader who mixed knowledge with wit doing reports he was finally encouraged to do he titled Duffy's World and Duffy's Diner. He also could review

a book now and then. Duffy also proved that he was a skilled journalist along the way. He became a personality who was in demand to serve as

master of ceremonies in his viewing area. He also authored a number of books and an even greater number of essays about the Channel Six

news staff when they retired. Newer news executives wanted Duffy to alter his style a bit by 1995. After nearly 24 years he opted to leave and

joined Channel 23 for 2 years. A change of ownership ended that. Two years later Channel Six invited him to come back and do some more

Duffy's Diner.

Howard C.

10/28/2010