

Bill Kurtis

An acclaimed documentary host and producer, network and major market news anchor, multimedia production company president, and grass-fed cattle rancher, Bill Kurtis is celebrating his fortieth anniversary in the field of broadcasting. Over the years, Kurtis has created a body of work that is virtually unparalleled.

Born in Florida and raised in Independence, Kansas, Kurtis graduated from The University of Kansas with a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism. He attended Washburn University School of Law where he was awarded a Juris Doctor degree.

Kurtis began his television career at WIBW-TV (CBS) in Topeka, Kansas. In 1966, after being recognized for his 24-hour coverage of a devastating tornado, Kurtis was hired by WBBM-TV in Chicago where he was a field reporter and later anchor of *The Channel Two News*. Kurtis moved on to the network level at CBS where he anchored the *CBS Morning News* and contributed to *CBS Reports*. During his career as a network newsman, Kurtis covered such notable stories as the Richard Speck murders and the Charles Manson trial. He is also credited with breaking the Agent Orange story and the story of Amerasian children in Vietnam.

Returning to Chicago and WBBM-TV as news anchor in 1985, Kurtis began his career as a documentarian, traveling to the far ends of the earth for the Peabody Award-winning series *The New Explorers*, which aired on A&E®. In 1990, he founded Kurtis Productions and began producing programs for the A&E Network, including the long-running, award-winning *Investigative Reports* and *Cold Case Files*® as well as *Investigating History* for The History Channel. Kurtis has also served as the host of A&E's *American Justice* – the longest running non-fiction justice series on cable. *Cold Case Files*® was nominated for 2004 and 2005 Primetime Emmys for Outstanding Nonfiction Series. Kurtis also provides satirical narration for the feature film comedy *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, starring Will Ferrell and has provided spoken word elements to the recent Dandy Warhols' album released by Capitol Records.

Kurtis is also an author. *The Death Penalty on Trial: Crisis in American Justice* (PublicAffairs) is his most recent book, which explores issues surrounding capital punishment in America. By profiling two murder cases, Mr. Kurtis reveals his change of mind regarding capital punishment.

In his home state of Kansas, Kurtis is a rancher, radio station owner, art gallery owner, small businessman, supporter of small-town America, and an active conservationist. His 10,000-acre Red Buffalo Ranch is located in the last section of North America to enjoy untouched tallgrass prairie, and there he raises free-range, grass-fed cattle which share the land with a wild buffalo herd.

In 2005, Bill founded Tallgrass Beef Company to champion the environmental and health benefits of grass-fed cattle ranching and to coordinate the efforts of small grass-fed ranchers across the country. Today, Tallgrass Beef can be found in restaurants, retailers, and on the internet at www.tallgrassbeef.com.

The Red Buffalo Ranch borders the small town of Sedan, Kansas, where Bill has worked closely with residents to renovate and restore the historic and charming Main Street. Nearby, in his hometown of Independence, Bill and local investors own KIND Radio, the station that gave Bill his first broadcasting job.

Mr. Kurtis is the recipient of numerous humanitarian, journalism, and broadcasting awards including Emmys, CableACE Awards, and the Thurgood Marshall Award for his *Investigative Reports* installment on the death penalty. He is a published author and a member of the board of directors of several distinguished organizations including The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Foundation, Chicago Green City Market, Chicago Botanic Garden, and the Field Museum of Chicago.