

# IN MEMORY OF CHARLES “CHUCK” MELLONE

OTIA sadly announces the passing of our Chief Engineer Charles J. “Chuck” Mellone on April 6, 2011. Chuck had been with the PTFP program since 1984. He was well known and respected for his engineering expertise which helped build production facilities in Los Angeles for the ABC and CBS television networks as well as putting many public broadcasting facilities on the air in the 1970’s. Most fascinating was his career as a record producer working with stars like Glenn Campbell, Hoyt Axton, the New Riders of the Purple Sage and Eric Clapton. Chuck was a treasure who could translate and move comfortably among the Hollywood artistic production community, broadcast equipment manufacturers, Washington policymakers, station managers and federal grants officers.

Chuck was a visionary and leader in broadcast engineering and digital broadcasting. Wired Magazine reported on Chuck helping a friend to “hack a Mac” so it could receive a video signal. The Apple people were not amused about their machine being used for video, although later they certainly changed their mind. During the nineties Chuck was the driving force insisting that PTFP fund only digital compatible equipment. His enthusiasm and expert engineering advice helped public radio and TV be leaders in the digital transition. Chuck’s engineering leadership led to NTIA’s exacting technical specifications for the TV converter box. One only needed to walk the NAB exhibit hall with Chuck to realize how the broadcast community greatly admired him.

Below are some pictures reflecting the many sides of Chuck Mellone: one from 1979 with him and Dennis Fetchet (fiddle player for Hoyt Axton who wrote “Jeremiah was a bullfrog...”) and later in 2007 with the NTIA Converter Box Silver Medal team.



Dennis Fetchet, Jana Lee Dare, Chuck Mellone, and Miranda Alcott in Nashville in May of 1979



Chuck holding the plaque with the NTIA Digital Converter Box 2007 Silver Medal team