

Grand Forks Central Radio

Through the Decades

By

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In the year of 1934 a new, and quite popular activity graced the organizations page of The Forx yearbook for the first time. This activity was also quite short-lived which is very unfortunate as this organization was something that could have benefitted central students for a very long time. The activity I'm speaking of is Central's very own Radio News and Radio Guild. The radio news provided short recaps of the week's news at Central and in the ever-changing world around them. The Radio Guild was introduced shortly after the Radio News club, a year later in 1935. The Radio Guild was where students would get together and for 15 minutes they would perform short skits for entertainment. While both of these organizations were very short lived they do both live on in their own ways, through other activities at Central. The Radio Guild was more of a primitive version of our Theatre department which produces very impressive works, so we can be thankful that we don't have to tune our radios to a certain number to hear our classmates for 15 minutes but instead we can now go see them perform. While there is nothing like the Radio News today, there are the morning announcements and the monthly published Centralian, to meet the Central news needs of students.

In its first year of running in 1934 the Radio News broadcast by central students was run on a short, five minute slot on a local radio station. The central students were on the air for five minutes once every Tuesday at 5:45. A student would read the news, which would be prepared by the others in the Radio News club who were not reading that week. The reason the writers/readers were rotated every week was "to lighten the burden of the individual and to give many students the chance to participate." (1934 The Forx Yearbook)



(The picture above are the original members of the Radio News during its very first year in 1934)

The Radio Guild was a new activity in 1935 which “offered the students a chance for self-expression and dramatic experience”. The Radio Guild would go on the air once a week to perform plays taken from sources such as *Scholastic*, *National High School Weekly*. Eventually the students began to write and perform their own plays on the air rather than using plays published nationally. As of 1936 Central was the only high school in the country to offer an activity in which students write and perform their own plays over the radio.

After two years of the Radio News club running five minute presentations of the weeks past events, in 1936 they evolved to have a fifteen minute time slot to provide a recap of the weeks events. Also during 1936 the Journalism class took over the Radio News club to prepare the week’s readings and events. Due to the extended time slots the Radio News club added new features to their program such as headline reading and a “Strolling Reporter”. During the second half of this school year Central’s Radio News made it “big time”, with a fifteen minute extension being granted by the radio station which broadcast them, KFJM. Now with an even larger time slot, six times larger than what they started with in 1934, there was a tremendous opportunity to do new things on the radio.



(The picture above is of students gathering around and participating in the Radio News activity in 1934)

In the following years there were no large changes to the Radio News and Radio Guild at Grand Forks Central, except for the increase in patriotic pieces being broadcast after America became involved in World War II. The Radio News and Radio Guild were pioneers for high school activities in radio, and they were very popular among Central students for doing so. Albeit these programs were sadly short-lived, or at least to recorded knowledge, as the last yearbook in which the Radio News and Radio Guild are present is the 1943 yearbook. Through interviews I have discovered that the Radio Guild was not in existence in the 1960s, so it can be assumed that the Radio News and Guild ended in 1943 or shortly thereafter.

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