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Sonny Eliot won't shine as weathercaster anymore

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Legendary TV and radio weathercaster Sonny Eliot, a veteran of more than 60 years of Detroit broadcasting, is retiring. His last day at WWJ-AM (950) will be today.

Eliot's TV career began in 1947 at Channel 4 (then WWJ-TV), and by the early 1950s, he was a weathercaster at both the TV station and its sister radio outlet, WWJ.

Eliot was one of Detroit's most enduring broadcast personalities when he left in 1980 for Channel 2, where he worked for two years. He settled into a radio-only career by the late '80s.

He was perhaps best known for an irrepressible sense of humor, over-the-top metaphors and frequent shout-outs to smaller cities around the state, a favorite being the tiny town of Engadine in the Upper Peninsula.

"I'm feeling just fine -- everything is right up to snuff," said Eliot, 89, a member of the Michigan Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame and the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. "The only thing is a short bout with memory; it's sometimes so bad that if I cut myself, I forget to bleed."

Asked about the short turnaround between the announcement and his last day on the air, Eliot said: "I just decided that if you're gonna do it, just do it. I don't play around."

He added that he plans to stay in metro Detroit and spend more time with his wife, Annette, and family.

As news of Eliot's retirement made the rounds on Thursday, other area broadcasters relished his

distinct personality. "Sonny is one of the most talented, creative, nicest human beings I've ever met," said longtime Detroit TV man Bill Bonds. "He's **responsible** in a very real way with establishing the connection that people have to television in metro Detroit."

Mike Lewis, journalism **director** at the University of Michigan's Flint campus and a former Channel 4 reporter, said, "People connected with Sonny because he's funny."

WWJ will pay tribute to Eliot throughout his final day. His last weathercast will air at 4:20 p.m.



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