

Kirt Jacobs: Welcome to MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs. This is an archived edition when our program was called Leadership Landscape TV.

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Kirt Jacobs: Welcome to a new partnership between Metro T.V. and Y-PAL, the Young Professionals Association of Louisville called Leadership Landscape where we go inside the minds of local community leaders and allow them a chance to offer some keen insights into how they see themselves and most importantly explore just what makes them tick. I'm Kirt Jacobs a current Y-Pal board member and host of today's show Leadership Landscape. Today our guest is William F. Reed. He's better known as Billy Reid. He's a national award winning newspaper and magazine journalist, a radio talk show host, public speaker, investigative reporter, communication specialist, and author of 12 books.

He was born in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. He graduated Transylvania University. He served in the U.S. Army Reserves and he went on to the then to Louisville Courier Journal as a staff writer in 1966 graduating to sports editor in 1977 through 1986. He then went on to become the sports columnist for the Lexington Herald Leader from 1987-2001 during that time he was senior writer for Sports Illustrated as well 1988-1998. He's authored some 12 books. Some notable ones are Born to Coach, the Denny Crum Story published in 1986. Hello Everybody This is Cawood Ledford published in 1992 and Golden Boy The Paul Hornung Story published in 2004. Billy Reed has also done numerous appearances on ESPN, CBS, ABC and The History Channel to name a few. With that Billy, welcome to the Leadership Landscape. It's great to have you here. It's quite an honor actually.

Billy Reid: Well thank you Kirt. I really appreciate you all inviting me.

Kirt Jacobs: Thank you. The first question we like to ask all of our

guests is what drives you do all this? I mean you could just be a journalist but you're much more than that I mean you're an author, who is it is an investigative reporter. I mean the list goes on.

Billy Reid: I've just always loved journalism, loved writing and reading and the power of the printed word. The ability to hopefully have some modicum of influence on events. It's just something that I think once it gets in your blood certainly the way it has in mind you never lose it and I still even though I'm I'll be 63-years-old this year I still feel energized. I still feel young and it's just something that I've been one of those fortunate people I think in life to where my job is also something that I really do enjoy.

Kirt Jacobs: Great. Whom do you credit most influential in your life Billy? If you can name one person or two.

Billy Reid: I've been fortunate as most people have and at certain junctures in your life where you need a mentor that I've had those. Certainly one of the most influential is CM Newton, the former athletic director of Kentucky. I was ready to quit. To not go to college really. Because I came from kind of a not a good family environment and and CM Newton at that time was at Transylvania College in Lexington and he told me to not quit school. That he had to help me find some money to get through Transylvania and and he did that. And without his encouragement I probably never would have had a college education and and just I think I think a man ST Roach he was the coach of of all black Dunbar High School back in the in the 60s in those days. And he taught me a lot about dignity and and compassion and I think those are those things have stuck with me probably throughout my career. So off the top of my head those are the two names I can think of.

Kirt Jacobs: It's interesting to see CM Newton I bet a lot of people know that story. What was the most defining moment of your life Billy? If you could look back as I say to all our guests and armchair quarterback kind of hindsight 20/20? That one defining moment that kind of turned the tide one way or another.

Billy Reid: I think probably I would say when it when I got the of-

fer to go to work Sports Illustrated and took it in 1968. I think all of a sudden that opened up a whole new world for me. It's first time I've really been out of Kentucky. To be able to go to New York City. Live there, work there with some of the most talented journalist of that time and editors. I think that that decision really changed my life and set me on a direction and it just just really just elevated my standards about journalism. And I would probably say that was as important as anything.

Kirt Jacobs: If there is one, what is your biggest professional regret? You know in other words is there something you would have done differently?

Billy Reid: I don't know if it's a professional regret although it's tied into my profession. I wish that I could have been a better father to my children. And I think I became as many people do, I think I became so consumed with my job and with wanting to be the best I could be in and seeing how far I could go and that I probably, I probably cheated my children. If I had if I had to do over I would probably try to manage my time better and make some different decisions. Certainly I would always you know my profession is really important to me...

Kirt Jacobs: Absolutely. Its pretty diverse too.

Billy Reid: ...some of those points where you can go one way or another I think I would have would make the choice to spend more time with my children.

Kirt Jacobs: It's a very honest answer. Appreciate that. On the flip-side, on a lighter note, if you will, what's your biggest professional triumph? Not a defining moment, not a regret but but a triumph. Something that you really like every all the stars aligned just right so to speak.

Billy Reid: That is a that's a tough question and you have to think about stories I've done. Probably. Probably in 1972 when I came back from Sports Illustrated to the Courier Journal. My friend the late Jim Bolus and I conducted an investigative series of did an investigation

series about thoroughbred racing in Kentucky and we won two national awards for it. Sigma Delta Chi National Award for general reporting where the runners up in our category were Bernstein and Woodward and we won a National Headliners Award for that same series. So I guess I'm as proud of that as probably anything I've done.

Kirt Jacobs: What do you find exciting about all this? I mean you were talking your energy level at the beginning of the show you keep going you keep doing. I think it's arguable that you're a little bit controversial in your approach to things. What do you find exciting about all this?

Billy Reid: I just I just found life exciting and I think that that I love Kentucky. I love Louisville. I wanted to be the best you can be. I've always been a very idealistic person. A very hopefully a compassionate person and I just would like to see this city in this state. Do a better job of realizing its potential and anything that I can contribute to that. Thought here or there, an idea. I'm very big on transparency in government and I'm very big on holding our elected officials and our leaders to do what they should be doing. And just that. It's just I mean it's just being being in the newspaper in the newspaper business. The media as a whole is just a very seductive, exciting, alluring thing to me and every day is different and there's always a new issues and different personalities and is just being involved. I can't imagine being a bystander and I can't imagine just sitting and watching things go back. I kind of have to be in the arena and that's something that has never lost as its magic for me.

Kirt Jacobs: You're definitely in the arena at heart. No pun intended. This, this next question to a journalist is like giving drug to a drug addict and I mean no offense to that. What is your favorite word in the English lexicon if you could pick one word?

Billy Reid: I think compassion. First of all like the way it sounds. I think it's a very rich nice sounding word but secondly what it means. I think that, that if we in various areas of our lives had more compassion for each other. I guess it kind of goes back to the to

the Golden Rule which I have always tried to live my life by. Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. I think that would probably be the be my favorite one of them certainly.

Kirt Jacobs: And since the show is based on leadership, it's called Leadership Landscape. Can you define leadership in one word? I mean you've been in some pretty interesting spots throughout your career. You've been there. You've reported it. What have you. Maybe even been the news yourself some people say. How do you define leadership?

Billy Reid: That's obviously a very tough question.

Kirt Jacobs: You bet it is.

Billy Reid: I can think of a lot of one words that all put together would apply. Vision. Courage. I think probably the one I would pick would be imagination. And I think a leader has to have imagination. Has to see things that others don't see. And then then have the ability to to inspire others. So I'd say maybe imagination or inspiration. I think those two would go hand-in-hand.

Kirt Jacobs: and I just might put you on the spot. Have you ever seen anybody exemplify that imaginative leadership? Maybe some individuals?

Billy Reid: I think that I've worked for various editors who did that. Certainly Andrea LaGare the man who made Sports Illustrated what it is would qualify. Fellow I work for in Lexington, John Carroll, had that kind of leadership. At the Courier, Mr Bingham Sr and Jr and some of their editors George Gill and the those people all had that that that ability to they had the imagination and then they had the ability to inspire others to to really be better than you can be. And Jim Host who I work for in Frankfort. I think Jim has a lot of that those qualities.

Kirt Jacobs: Do you see any of the younger generation of leaders coming up to you see not particularly individual but do you see that same style the imagined leadership or imaginative leadership

or is it different now? We are in a different world now it seems like the pace is so quick.

Billy Reid: It is quick and yet I am really encouraged by the the what I see from from young people in Louisville, young leaders. I think Tyler Allen with what he's done and his project you know. I think that. Yeah I think we have some some committed, very bright, visionary young people and and it really you know my generation our time is quickly coming to an end and it's time to to hand that torch over. And I feel really good about it I think. I think after after decades really of cynicism that probably go back to the Kennedy assassination and through Vietnam and Watergate. I think this country is ready for a new sense of idealism. A new sense of doing things the right way. Of maybe correcting some of the errors of the past and I think young people are going to rise to that occasion. I feel I feel very good about what I see from young people.

Kirt Jacobs: You know that's good to know. To get your perspective from like 30 thousand feet up now it's kind of nice to hear that refreshing. If you can change one thing what would that be? And this is a question you can interpret really any way you like really. In your life. In general.

Billy Reid: I still think that that probably the the biggest problem that we continue to wrestle with in our society and it is I think race continues to be a big problem and I think I think intolerance. And I think it and I mean intolerance of other people's point of views. Other people's religious beliefs. I'm very big on tolerance, on diversity, and on inclusion. Those I think are are core qualities that every great city in this in the world have and I think to be a great city you have to have those things. And and I'm talking about getting more women, minorities, African-Americans, Hispanics. I think that, that those are the things that and just that respect for each other. I would like to see this have more of that. Get back to that.

Kirt Jacobs: This next question, and you kind of touched upon earlier as he said the chapters quickly coming to a close for your generation, I wouldn't say quickly. But when the great day comes Billy, how do you want to be remembered? You know if it all ended to-

day. You know you walked out of here.

Billy Reid: I think as somebody who who tried as as a writer as a journalist to do the right thing. To stand up for the right principles. Even though sometimes it wasn't the most popular thing to do and certainly I'm I'm sure I've made mistakes in judgment but by and large I have always really tried to do the right thing. I've tried to stand up for the underdog and I guess just as somebody who was a stand up guy. And did his best according to his conscience in the way he saw events to do the right thing.

Kirt Jacobs: Billy that's a great note to end on. It's quite an honor to have you on Leadership Landscape.

Billy Reid: My pleasure. It is an honor to be here. Thank you. Best of luck to you.

Kirt Jacobs: Thank you. I'm Kirt Jacobs and that's it for today on to the Leadership Landscape until next time. Thank you.

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Kirt Jacobs: Thank you for listening to MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs. This episode was archival audio from when we were known as Leadership Landscape TV. If you have any feedback, general comments, or a recommendation for a suitable guest feel free to email me at kirt@moxietalk.com or catch us on Facebook under MoxieTalk with Kirt Jacobs, or on Twitter under [@kirtjacobs](https://twitter.com/kirtjacobs) or our extensive website at www.moxietalk.com