Greetings,

It was inevitable, but some breaking news… Collective Talent is "retiring" at the end of this month, the 18th anniversary of our launch. Quite simply, things on this end have gotten just too hectic and it was, as they say…. Time.

I want to call and thank you for your support over the years and explain the situation, but thought I'd send you a background note first…

Back in 2018 I started trying my hand at Playwriting. With our backgrounds in TV, you'd think my first thought would be a television pilot or possibly a screenplay. But the odds of that ever being read by anyone other than friends and family was astronomical. So, I said, why not a play? Something that had at least some chance of being produced by a small community theater somewhere.

Well, I lucked out and my first play ended up winning first prize in a prestigious Ten-Minute play festival. Another short play then got produced at The Gallery Players in Brooklyn, NY just days before the COVID shutdown. All of this got me noticed by a theater company here in Sarasota called, "Theatre Odyssey," and they asked me to join their board. A year later, I was made President. (Apparently, I missed a meeting, and they voted when I wasn't there to say NO! :-) We do three festivals a year and, as you can imagine, the time commitment is substantial…. Here's a link to our website:

https://www.theatreodyssey.org/

Then, last year, I was approached by a non-profit group that wanted to create a production company to create plays, movies, music, and art to help address the stigma of mental illness. I helped them get up and running in a significant way and, as fate would have it, they then asked me to be on their board or directors. I said yes, and here we are. Our first production is a one-man show called “Clowns Like Me.” It debuted to a two-week sold-out run-in May at the historic Asolo Theater here in Sarasota. We also produced a three-camera shoot of the performances, and the video will be used by mental health organizations across the country. By popular demand, we are bringing the show back for another four show run in August, also at The Asolo. We are now deep into the planning stages of a nationwide tour of Clowns Like Me and more projects are in the pipeline. Here's the link to "Lifeline Productions" website:

https://www.lifelineproductionsinc.com/

A boatload of responsibilities and very little time left over. The irony, it has left me far too little time to write, which is why I got into all of this in the first place! But truly, the rewards have been substantial...

Also, I'm now in my seventies (still hard to even say that) and it's time to move on. My long-time business partner, Mike Von Ende, passed away a couple of years ago and that was a real gut punch about the fragility of life. My wife Lois and I also have a lot of travel plans and it's time to start checking off our bucket list.

So, there you have it. Close to 50 years in the broadcast business and time to move on to the next chapter. It’s been a great and rewarding ride.

Best,

Michael