

KOB weatherman says goodbye to New Mexicans with farewell tour

Written by Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
Friday, 26 May 2023 04:29



After 33 years of keeping New Mexicans informed about the weather, KOB 4 weatherman Steve Stucker is retiring. His next career move? Embracing his faith and turning to ministry full-time at his church, the New Covenant Church in Albuquerque.

“I’ve been really really involved in my faith. I lived a crazy life for a long time, and Jesus just changed my life. ... I just get a lot of joy in just being able to share that,” Stucker said in an interview with the *Sun*. “About three years ago it became clear to me it was time to hang up the T.V. thing while I still have some time and some health left and really devote the rest of my time to serving the Lord in ministry.”

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Stucker is currently an Associate Pastor at the church. He leads the men's ministry and directs the "Compassion Ministry," which helps families with special needs, such as single mothers or grandparents raising their grandchildren.

To celebrate the end of his television career, Stucker is going around the state and meeting with his fans.

He was in Gallup May 10 at Sammy C's Rock N' Sports Pub & Grille.

Stucker said he was very thankful for everyone who came out for the event, saying that people from all over the Four Corners showed up.

"I have just been overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and support from the viewers. It's so much more than I deserve," Stucker said. "It makes me laugh and brings tears to my eyes. People have always been so kind to me, and they've really treated me like family."

Sammy C's Rock N' Sports Pub & Grille owner Sammy Chioda said he was glad Stucker made his restaurant a stop on his tour.

"First of all I thought it was great for Gallup to be recognized as a destination place for Steve Stucker to do his farewell tour. ... We were touched he even considered coming to Sammy's, and we were so excited," Chioda said.

Stucker was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa. After going to college in Missouri, Stucker ended up in Armallio, Texas right after college, where he reported on the weather part-time. He moved to New Mexico in the fall of 1983.

When he first moved to New Mexico, he was a radio disc jockey, playing Top 40 rock n' roll

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music. After 15 years in the radio business, he turned to television, and joined KOB 4 in 1990.

Despite reporting the weather for so many years, Stucker doesn't consider himself a meteorologist. Instead, he calls himself a "metriocracist." But telling people whether it's going to rain or not is just the beginning of what he does.

"Weather is first and foremost, but here in New Mexico, we go for long stretches where we just for day after day talk about how beautiful it's going to be. And that can be kind of boring sometimes," Stucker said. "[The job] was a great opportunity for me to be an entertainer, to create some fun, and to really become a part of the community."

In his new role, he's hoping to remain a part of the communities of New Mexico. He said he hopes to host some community seminars and become a guest teacher/preacher at area churches.

Along with being a pastor, Stucker will also continue working with the non—profit he founded and directs, Beds4Kidz. The non-profit gives beds to needy families. The organization has helped over 16,000 people, according to their website.

But Stucker isn't quite finished with his time at KOB 4. Although his last forecast aired on March 31, Stucker is still traveling on his "Thank You New Mexico Tour" as he says 'farewell' to fans and shares fond memories. His final day on air will be on May 31.

KOB 4 news anchor Danielle Todesco-Espinosa often shares the news desk with Stucker. As someone who grew up watching him talk about the weather, Todesco said she was really going to miss Stucker.

"He's such an icon, so somebody like him leaving KOB, you definitely feel it. ... We always say people like him are part of the fabric of KOB, so we'll always have his legacy there, but we definitely feel him being gone already," Todesco said.

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