

## Steve Baker, Broadcaster

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The Morning Show - Mondays, 7:00 AM - 10:00 AM

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"The best you can do is tilt at windmills every week," he says, "And, hopefully, knock a few over."

So a typical Monday might zoom from tongue-in-cheek interviews with Elvis Presley or Ethel Merman to real ones with anyone from comedian George Carlin, news analyst Larry Bensky, a flea circus ringmaster, or the mayor of the first U.S. city to ban cell phones while driving. Plus the goings-on at the Dead Dog Café Comedy Hour, environmental commentary from Alan Stahler, Golden Reel-winning mile-a-minute musings from cranky satirist Ian Shoales, and even the odd, naturalist goings-on of "Pulse of the Planet."

"The music can be eccentric, the sound is definitely eclectic," he says. "I try to make it an 'anything-can-happen' day."

Baker's pretty well steeped in radio, show business and journalism. A onetime college editor at the University of Iowa, he hooked up as manager and offstage partner with the underground alternative Iowa comedy troupe, Duck's Breath Mystery Theatre, as the quintet moved to San Francisco 25 years ago in search of fame, fortune and middle age. "So far," notes Baker, "we're one for three."

Duck's Breath toured nationally with its acclaimed Monty Python-esque screwball humor, although Hollywood producers were mostly baffled at what to do with the absurdist troupe. During the 1980s, they became a mainstay on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" and then began spewing their own satirical features like "Ask Dr. Science" (heard on 40 stations, including KVMR, Mondays, 5 p.m.), the Shoales essays and "Homemade Radio."

The troupe's opted for individual projects in recent years, though they all reunited for a 25th anniversary tour in the summer of 2000. That's given Baker a chance to run its management, marketing and ancillary operations from Nevada City, while working as program director at KVMR and, proudly, as producer for U. Utah Phillips' national series, "Loafer's Glory," which airs on some 25 community radio stations nationwide. He became program director in mid-1998, after previous stints as an interim program director and acting station manager (during Brian Terhorst's illness in 1997).

Baker's teenaged daughter, Molly, lives in Sacramento with her mother. Molly's an award-winning Irish step-dancer, avid reader, and spirited participant in all she does. "Molly's got the makings of a good program director," he smiles. "Whether it's bugs, pets, step-dancing or Harry Potter, she knows what she likes and she throws herself into it completely."