

Who Remembers...Dialing For Dollars?

Dialing For Dollars began as a radio show in 1939 and grew into a popular franchised television show in the late 1940s.

Here is another installment in our *Who Remembers?* series. You can browse previous articles by using the search bar on the right. These articles are strolls down memory lane. In some cases the buildings, but new businesses have replaced them. In other instances, the buildings or even the properties have been razed. Instead of a building, it may be a TV show, personality, or commercial that no one longer exists. Either way, it can't stop us from taking the Memory Lane stroll!

As always we would rather this be a discussion. No one knows this area better than those who grew up here! Please, leave constructive criticism, feedback, and corrections. We'd love to hear your anecdotes. Please share!



*New Bedford's
franchise on WLNE-TV
56*

Just mentioning the words "*Dialing For Dollars*" conjures George Allen's voice and the cheesy set that he worked. Why was I fascinated by *Dialing For Dollars* considering that I was a child, far too young to participate? Because after he dialed that number, there was a hush...a holding of one's breath –

would my phone ring? Could George Allen accidentally called our house? Mom entered her phone number without telling us, maybe?

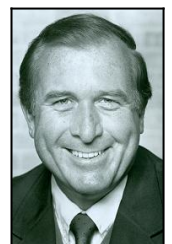
We're going to win the \$100 – which would buy a car, some candy, a house, a lifetime supply of Cookie Crisp, and one each of every comic book down at Magazine World.

Even if someone else called at that one moment, it would have been – to quote Hulk Hogan – *"Hulkamania's running wild, brother!"*

That darn phone never rang. One of the most traumatic experiences of my childhood.

For those of you who need a jogging of the memory, the program was on WLNE-TV. If I remember correctly, it was Channel 56 – at a time when there were about 12 channels. The show had its inception on WCBM in Baltimore, Maryland in 1939 as a radio program, but moved to television in the late 1940s where it was franchised.

At the beginning of the television show, Allen would mention a password. He would then randomly draw a phone number from a bowl.



*George
Allen
hosted
'Dialing
For
Dollars'
on WLNE-*

These numbers were strips containing lots of eighteen phone numbers cut from a telephone book. Allen would then “count” from the bottom or the top, i.e. “eight from the top”, “six from the bottom.”

If you were called you were required to declare the “count and the amount (current prize amount)” as well as the password. If there was no answer, the prize amount was raised until someone finally won.

As more and more women were leaving the household and building careers in the workforce, it was becoming increasingly difficult to find people home to answer the phone. Daytime talk shows increased in popularity, *‘Dialing For Dollars’* waned in popularity. These two factors led to the eventual death of the show.

George Allen passed away in November of 2010 at the age of 71.
