

JANUARY

edited by Lucinda Hahn

Frontlines

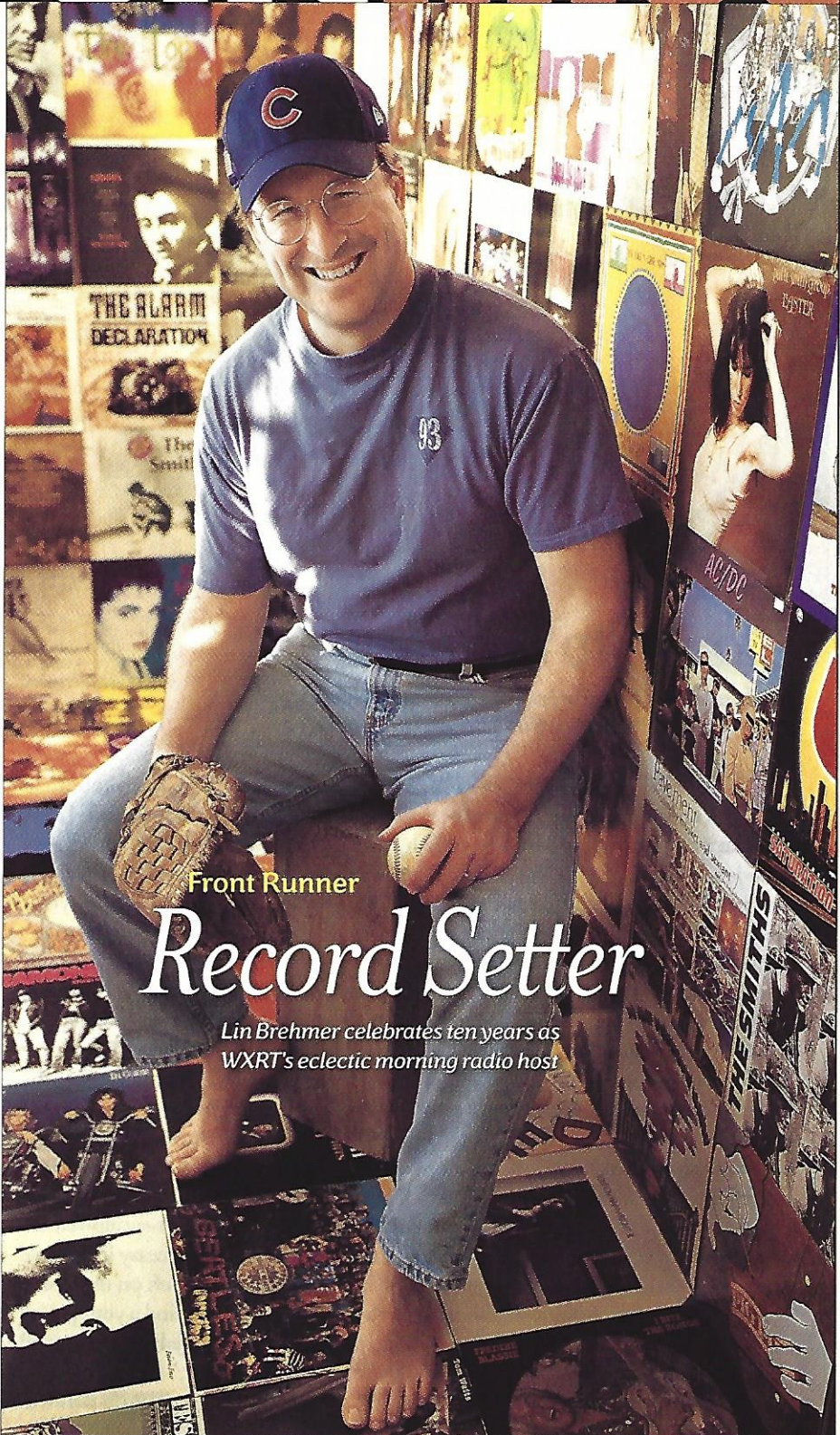
LIN BREHMER RECALLS THAT IT WAS DECEMBER

29, 1991, when he opened his first morning radio program on WXRT 93.1 FM, playing "This Must Be the Place," by the Talking Heads. As it turned out, WXRT was the place for Brehmer, 47; he's been serving up his distinctive mix of wry humor and rock 'n' roll for ten years, a tenure that makes him the morning rock DJ with the longest continuous run in Chicago.

It's hard to imagine another DJ who knows the songs of the Blake Babies—and quotes the poetry of William Blake, too. It's even harder to think of one who would deliver Brehmer's upbeat Friday signature, "It's great to be alive," a phrase he adapted from a song on the 1971 Frank Zappa album *Just Another Band from L.A.* Though he's not above the occasional Hunter S. Thompson parody, most of the time, Brehmer's sense of humor shines in his music selections. After airing a review of the movie *Evolution*, he played "Space Monkey" by Patti Smith. On the city's traditional moving days for renters in May and October, he'll sometimes play "Cardboard Boxes" by Loudon Wainwright III.

Brehmer, who grew up a Cubs fan in Queens, New York, attended Colgate University, where he studied poetry and worked for the school radio station. After seven years at WQBK in Albany, he joined WXRT in 1984 as music director. In 1990, he was named Music Director of the Decade by *The Hard Report*, an industry trade magazine. For the past three years, he has been named Adult Album Personality of the Year by *Radio & Records*.

Unlike other DJs in town, Brehmer does not have his picture plastered on buses or billboards. But at the supermarket, you may spot Brehmer Breakfast Blend, a gourmet coffee from java company Papanicholas (a longtime advertiser). "That's the pinnacle, right there," he says. "After getting your own coffee, what do you do next?" —PAUL ENGLEMAN



Front Runner

Record Setter

Lin Brehmer celebrates ten years as
WXRT's eclectic morning radio host