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# 'Magic' spell is over for Howell in afternoons

The latest fine-tuning of WJMK-FM (104.3) began Monday with the ouster of Big John Howell after only four months as afternoon personality at the Infinity Broadcasting oldies station.

Howell, whose last day on the air was Friday, joined the station last March after 14 years at WUSN-FM (99.5), Infinity's country music outlet. Despite previous experience as a classic rock jock at WCKG-FM (105.9), Howell never sounded comfortable in the oldies format.

Charley Lake, program director at "Magic 104.3," called Howell "a class act and a talented guy," adding: "We wish him only the best."

Howell said he leaves without bitterness. "No matter how briefly I was there, the fact that I got to work with the legendary Dick Biondi

every night made it all worth it," he said. "I had a great time and loved every minute of it."

Speculation on a successor centers on Chicago radio veteran Fred Winston, a part-timer who's been filling in this week for morning personality John Records Landecker. For now, weekend host John Calhoun is substituting in afternoons.

Under Dave Robbins, vice president and general manager of WJMK, Lake is expected to reposition the station with a more narrowly defined playlist of oldies from the 1960s and '70s and a return to its former "Oldies 104.3" slogan.

Leff's predecessor at WNND, Tom Hanson, reports that he plans to continue his free-lance voice work and "explore other media opportunities as well."

### Tracking: TV's dream team?

◆ Call this one: "Scary Larry" meets "The Voluptuous Vixen."

Larry Mendte, the former WBBM-Channel 2 news character who recently jumped from NBC-owned WCAU-TV to CBS-owned KYW-TV in Philadelphia, could be teaming up with Jennifer Santiago, the former Playboy model who briefly was considered for a weekend anchor job at Channel 2 in 2001.

One of the Playboy publica-