

# R.I.P. Dick Clark

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Dick Clark who is known as American's "Oldest teenager" died today at the age of 82 from a massive heart attack. Clark is an icon of the television era who started his career in 1947 and he would eventually host *American Bandstand*, *Pyramid* and *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve*. Clark's involvement in *Bandstand* is where he made the most impact on the music and TV industries. The show was the first dance show on American TV and Clark introduced several rock stars to a national audience. He became the host of the show in 1952 and soon after demolished the whites-only policy. The integration of *American Bandstand* was also reflected in subsequent concert tours hosted and produced by Clark where Blacks and whites appeared on the same stage. Chubby Checker, Ike & Tina Turner, Stevie Wonder and Smokey Robinson and the Miracles were some of the Black artists who made appearances on the show. He was an early champion of rap music and Run DMC would be the first rappers to appear on his show in 1985. The Guinness Book of Records called it the "longest running variety show in TV history." To younger generations he is known for his *New Year's Rockin' Eve*. He hosted the show for a last time in 2009 and Ryan Seacrest has hosted the show since 2010. *American Bandstand* was the inspiration behind *Soul Train* and Don Cornelius and Clark worked together on various specials that featured Black artists. Now that Cornelius and Clark have passed just months apart it is truly the end of dance-oriented television programming that embodied new trends in pop culture as dictated by the youth.