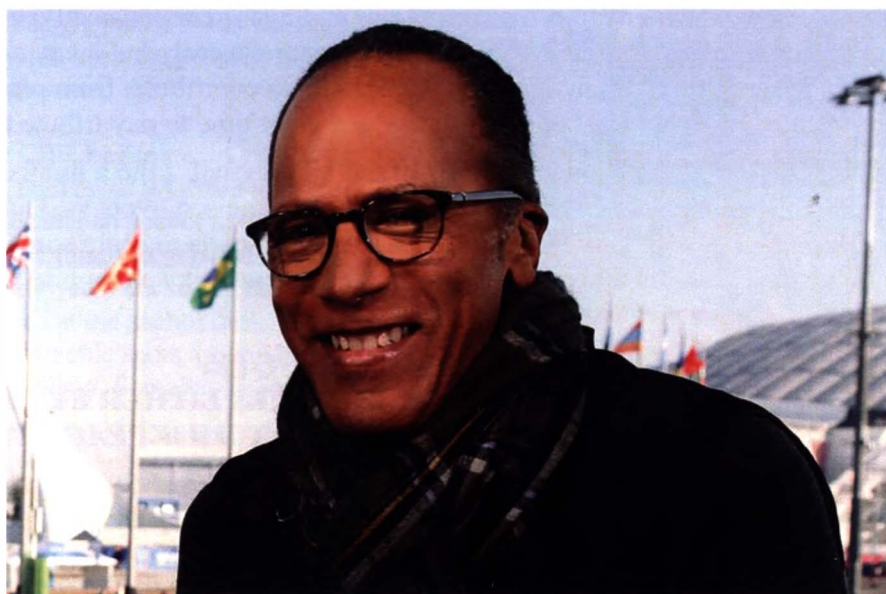




Lester Holt to be Guest Speaker at 2016 Spring Luncheon



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Marilyn's Page



The exciting news is on the cover: Lester Holt will be our guest speaker at the PN luncheon on April 24th. I am thrilled that he has graced us by accepting our invitation. I am sure he will generate a great deal of interest in attending, so please book early!

2016: May it find all of you filled with health, happiness, peace, purpose and ready for another political year! We have finally caught up with all the rhetoric; this edition comes on the heels of Iowa and New Hampshire. I can be very nostalgic about these events; they truly mark the beginning of the race to the White House and many of us covered these red-letter dates for decades. This year is proving to be a slug-fest!

In honor of the political year, I am tapping some of our most talented and experienced experts to offer their views and historical perspectives about this year's race. We are adding a political column to each of our 2016 issues. I encourage each and every one of you who have been involved with politics to see if there is anything you would like to contribute, from pictures to story-telling. NBC has had an amazing history with political coverage, now is a great time to pay tribute to that.

I also want to acknowledge that this is the 50th anniversary of the Superbowl! I did a number of Playoffs but only one Superbowl as a Technical Director and that was SB XXIII. San Francisco 49ers vs. Cincinnati Bengals. What a heady experience that was! I urge those of you having covered Superbowls to share some of your memories with us. There is nothing like history in the first person, and many of us were lucky enough to have had front-row seats to history.

IMPORTANT BUSINESS NOTE:

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES EITHER BY CHECK WITH THE COUPON ON PAGE 35 OF THIS ISSUE, OR ON LINE AT WWW.PEACOCKNORTH.COM.

We cannot sustain the newsletter without your contributions.

In addition, your name will automatically be dropped from our mailing list when dues are in arrears.

I urge you to make sure you are up-to-date.

And now for the good stuff, the rest of the magazine.



2016 Spring Luncheon Save the Date!

Sunday, April 24th, Noon to 3:00 pm

Sardi's

234 West 44th Street

Details and a reservation form are on page 34 of this issue and have been mailed to all members.

Current E-mail Addresses

REMINDER—When you change your e-mail address, please remember to notify us at peacocknorth@yahoo.com.

**Support Our Troops,
Our Crews
and Our Correspondents
in Harm's Way**

*Peacock Profile***Lester Holt—A Little Background**

Lester Don Holt, Jr, was born March 8, 1959 in Marin County, California, the youngest of four children of Air Force master sergeant Lester Don Holt, Sr, and June (DeRozario), a regional planner. He graduated from Cordova High School in Rancho Cordova, California in 1977, attended California State University, Sacramento and majored in Government. In 2012, Holt told *American Profile* news magazine: "My first on-air job was actually as a disc jockey at a Country and Western station. The only time I could land a full-time gig was if I was willing to report the news." Holt would keep the job with the radio station through his college years.

Holt spent 21 years with CBS, beginning in 1979 at KCBS in San Francisco, then on to WCBS-TV in New York City. In 1982, he became an anchor and reporter at KNXT in Los Angeles, and finally at WBBM-TV in Chicago, where he spent 14 years anchoring the evening news. Holt not only worked at the anchor desk, but also reported extensively from trouble spots around the world including Iraq, Northern Ireland, Somalia, El Salvador and Haiti.



Lester joined MSNBC in 2000. He assumed full-time duties at NBC News in 2003, where he became a substitute anchor for *NBC Nightly News* and *Today*. Holt became a full-time co-anchor of *Weekend Today* following the untimely death of previous co-anchor David Bloom. Until late 2005, he also anchored a two-hour daily newscast on MSNBC. On May 9, 2007, Holt was named anchor of the weekend edition of *NBC Nightly News*, succeeding John Seigenthaler. On June 17, 2015, NBC named Lester as the permanent *NBC Nightly News* weekday anchor. He moderated the Democratic Candidates Debate in January 2016 alongside a panel of NBC political reporters. He has also been the anchor of *Dateline* and has anchored *Weekend Today* for the past 12 years.

He has worked at every Olympics since 2002, and in 2004 and 2014 anchored NBC Olympics coverage in addition to his duties with NBC News. In the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 games he also worked as a correspondent on the Sports Desk at NBC Olympics. In addition to his primary responsibilities at NBC News, he hosted a special for The History Channel about the 9/11 conspiracy theories, and is the host of *Dateline on ID*, an edition of *Dateline NBC* shown on the Investigation Discovery network.

He has been married to Carol Hagen since 1982. She is currently a realtor at Town Residential Realty, and worked previously in the cosmetic industry in sales, training and management. She also worked in the travel hospitality business. They have two sons, Cameron, a sales & trading analyst at Morgan Stanley in New York, and Stefan, who is the morning news anchor at NBC's Chicago affiliate. The two previously shared a heartwarming moment on one occasion when Stefan filled in on WMAQ's nightly broadcast and threw the show to his dad.

Holt has made cameo appearances in several films and television shows. He is also a jazz bassist and has demonstrated his skills on the network by sitting in with The Roots on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, and in a 2013 *Saturday Nightly News* feature about jazz at a Brooklyn Bed and Breakfast.

—Adapted from © Wikipedia and © Encyclopedia.com by Joel Spector

What's Now!

Rokerthon 2 Sets Guinness World Record!



Red Cloud, NE turns out for Al

Rokerthon 2 was all for a good cause. While Al Roker made his way across the country by planes, trains and any other vehicle he could catch, Rokerthon 2 supported Feeding America, an organization devoted to feeding those in need across the nation. Of course, Al getting where he needs to go on time was just part of the challenge. Here's what else he had to do to set the record:

Forecast the current local weather from each state.

Have GPS data evidence of his location at all times.

Have two independent witnesses in each place on hand to confirm that he actually did it.

After visiting 50 states, traveling 17,000 miles, delivering 104 forecasts, being greeted by nearly 5,000 cheering fans and having the rare opportunity to meet and greet 36 goats across the country, Al returned to New York this morning. There was fanfare waiting for him, including a marching band, Mets mascots, The Rockettes, one more goat and Al's own family. But his homecoming offered him more than just a chance to reunite with familiar faces. After delivering one last forecast for his home state, it offered him one heck of an honor: a new entry in the "Guinness World Records" book. While last year's Rokerthon event was all about endurance, as TODAY's go-to guy for the weather delivered the forecast for 34 hours straight, this time around, Al upped the challenge with his trip across the weather map, delivering 104 forecasts from all 50 states — from Hawaii to New York — in one short week.

He's been greeted by nearly 5000 cheering fans along the way. And he packed light! Al took just one suitcase for his amazing journey.

Here are few of the amazing feats Al's ticked off his list so far (and counting!):

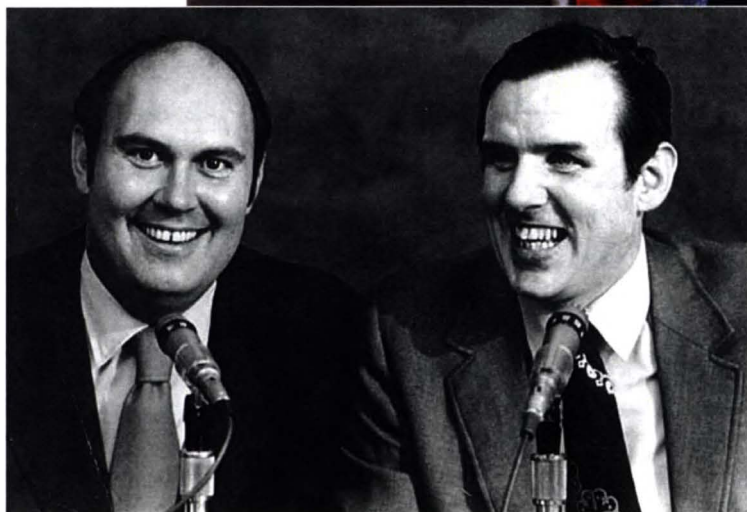
16,581 miles traveled

12 modes of transportation: planes, cars, a chuck Wagon, the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile, a boat, a horse, a golf cart, a party bus, a military carriage, a firetruck, an RV and trains

10 times across time zones

24 goats spotted

--By Ree Hines November 13, 2015 © NBCUniversal

*What's Now!***Willard Scott Retires—Al Roker Will Become “Birthday Guy”**

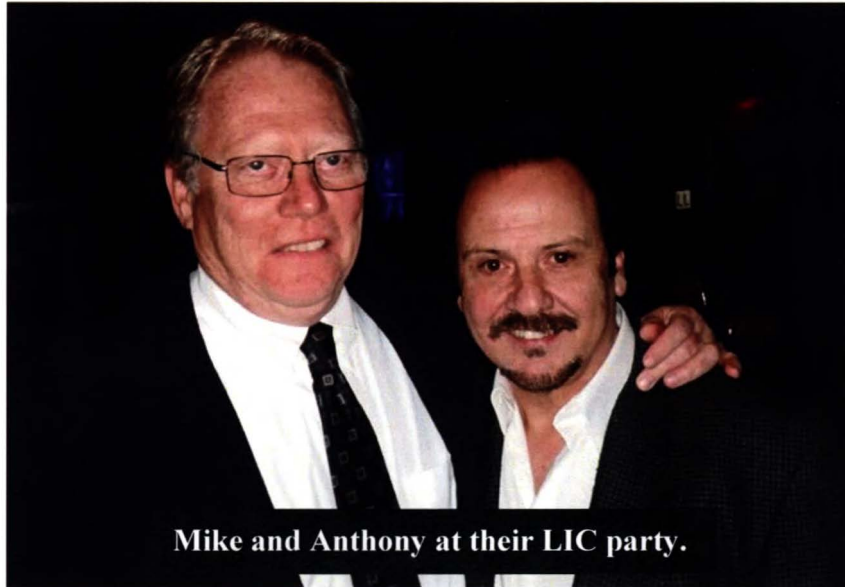
Willard Scott, *Today*'s longtime weatherman, and the man who wishes centenarians “Happy Birthday,” will be retiring after 65 years at NBC. Scott, who has spent 35 years on *Today* and started at NBC as a page, will be honored on the December 15th episode of the NBC morning show. That Tuesday is his official last day. Al will join Willard at the Scott farm in Raphine, Virginia, for the tribute broadcast. “He’s my second dad, he really is,” said Scott’s successor, Al Roker. Matt Lauer called the news “bittersweet.” Though Scott hasn’t been the regular weather forecaster on *Today* since 1996, when Al took over full time, he has been a regular and comforting presence on the show with his greetings to 100-year-old celebrants.

Willard, a Washington-area native, started with NBC's Washington radio station WRC in 1950 as a page. Through the years, he has been a radio host, a children’s television character, a local weather forecaster and a *Today* mainstay.

From 1956 to 1972 he and the late Ed Scott were *The Joy Boys of Radio*. A website devoted to them is at www.thejoyboys.com.

And, of course, he was Ronald McDonald for several years.

--by © The Hollywood Reporter Staff, and Todd Leopold © CNN

*What's Now!***Mike Noseworthy and Anthony DeRosa Retire**

Mike and Anthony at their LIC party.

Nearly 100 colleagues and family members filled the event space at the Z Hotel in Long Island City on December 18th to honor two veteran NBC News engineers. Audio expert Mike Noseworthy and Videographer/DP Anthony DeRosa were roasted in fine style by News Technical Services' Stacy Brady, Len Venezia, Dan Miller, Mike Gallagher, news producer Susan LaSalla and anchor Brian Williams. Photos and video clips highlighting the duo's more than 30 years of international news gathering exploits were shown throughout the evening. A shorter version of the video tribute was presented on *Today* accompanied by heartfelt praise from the show's anchors.

The guys expressed their feelings in these notes to Peacock North:

On my first day at NBC Skip Dresch was assigned to give a few of us "The Cook's Tour." As we were approaching the doors of Studio 6A they flew open and Frank Sinatra walked briskly through our small group. I thought to myself, "Wow, this going to be an experience." I was right. I have enjoyed a long career filled with great experiences. I have gotten to see the world and I have met some of the most interesting, kind, and intelligent people the world has to offer, both in front of and behind the camera, and behind the desks in the offices that run the company. If I were to name each person, both living and many deceased, who has given knowledge, support, trust, and friendship to me it would easily fill this publication. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

All the Best,
Mike
That's a Goodnight.

I had a great career at NBC. My 36 years in the Electronic Journalism department started as a vacation relief audio engineer. After being made a permanent employee I changed careers to become a camera person, traveling all over the world, doing and seeing things I would otherwise never have experienced.

I worked for the *Today Show* for the majority of my camera career, covering many Olympics and *Where in the World is Matt Lauer* remotes, as well as many high-profile interviews with *Today Show* talent.

Thanks,
Anthony.

*What's Now!***Linda Ellerbee Retires from Nickelodeon**

NEW YORK (AP) — Linda Ellerbee, a veteran newswoman who wrote an irreverent best-seller about her time on television and built a second career at Nickelodeon explaining tough stories to youngsters, says that she's signing off the air for good. Ellerbee, 71, said Tuesday she's retiring from TV after Nickelodeon airs a one-hour retrospective of her work on December 15th.

"It's really nice to be one of the few who walks away from television news on their own time and of their own choice and I'm really lucky in that," she said. "That really didn't happen for so many of my contemporaries, didn't happen because of age or cutbacks in news. ... I go smiling." The outspoken Texan and multiple award winner was among the first prominent women in TV news and a model for the sitcom character Murphy Brown after actress Candice Bergen studied her work. Ellerbee — and later Murphy Brown — survived breast cancer.

Ellerbee began a television news career after being fired by The Associated Press in 1972. On the night desk in Dallas, she wrote a gossipy letter to a friend that was inadvertently sent on the wire to three states. A news director at Houston's KHOU-TV saw it, thought Ellerbee was a funny writer, and hired her. She quickly moved on to local news in New York and then NBC, where she covered politics and co-hosted the prime-time newsmagazine "Weekend" with Lloyd Dobyns. She hosted weekly news segments on the "Today" show and, later, "Good Morning America."

Her network news highlight came in the wee hours when she and Dobyns wrote and co-hosted the nightly news program "Overnight" from 1984 to 1986 on NBC. When honored by the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, judges called it "possibly the best-written and most intelligent news program ever." "There's never been anything plastic or blow-dried about Linda," said Cheryl Gould, a creator and senior broadcast producer on "Overnight." "She has always been the antithesis of your stereotypical, perfectly coiffed anchorwoman. Her emotions are not manufactured for the on-air effect. Linda is as real as they come."

Ellerbee's 1986 book, "And So it Goes" — named for her signature sign-off — was climbing the best-seller lists when she was told her contract would not be renewed. "I wrote it predicated on the assumption that my bosses at NBC News had a sense of humor," she said. "It turned out to be wrong on that."

After a stop at ABC, Ellerbee and partner Rolfe Tessem opened a production company and what became their biggest job happened by chance. The new kids' network Nickelodeon asked her to make a show explaining to youngsters the U.S. war with Iraq in the early 1990s. She was Nick News head for 25 years, making programs tied to events like the 2001 terrorist attacks, the Oklahoma City bombing and Hurricane Katrina. The show delved into social issues like same-sex marriage and AIDS. She won Emmys for shows on AIDS, children of alcoholics, kids living with cancer, the adjustment of parents returning from war, autism and ethnic cleansing. After a decade of trying, she produced a special this year with dying children talking to their peers.

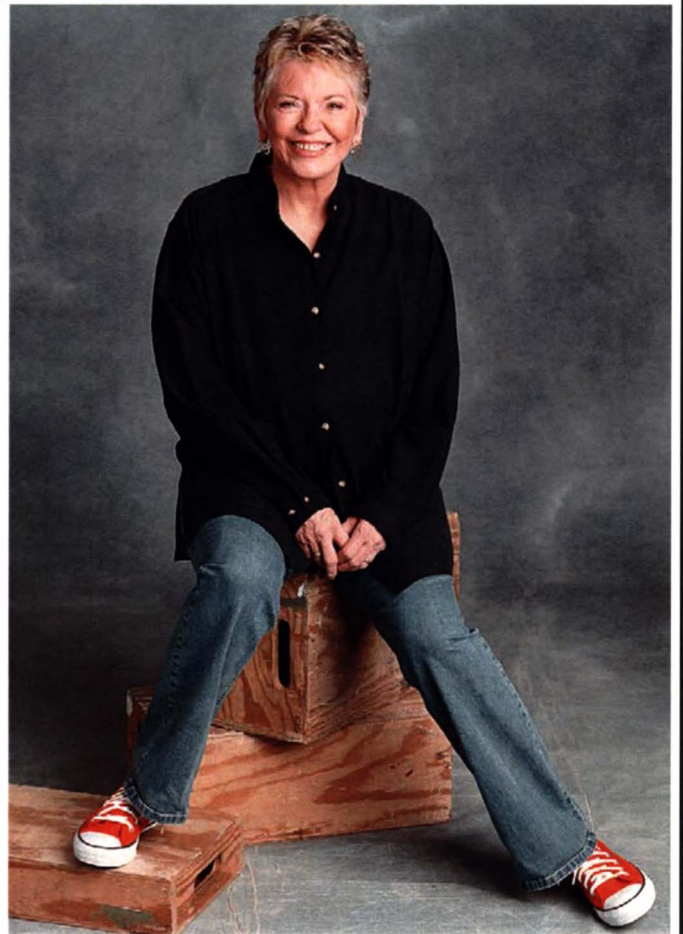
The guiding philosophy was not to talk down to young viewers. Children in a wired world are aware of news events, but might not always have reliable information, she said. "The days are long past, if they ever existed, where kids live in some happy little childhood protected by elves and fairies," she said.

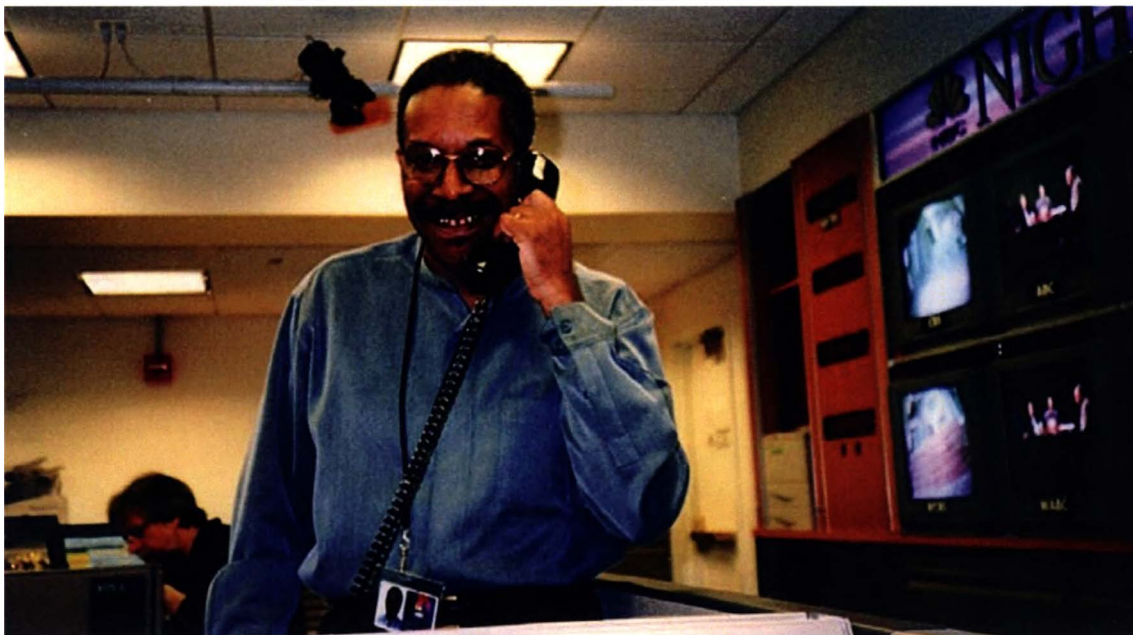
Cyma Zarghami, president of the Viacom Kids and Family Group, said Ellerbee has "helped multiple generations of kids understand the issues of the day, and she helped a lot of parents navigate how to talk about the tough topics as well. We are deeply grateful for her immeasurable contributions." The network isn't replacing Ellerbee, but promised to continue a dialogue with viewers on current issues.

While leaving television, Ellerbee said she'll continue to write and travel.

"I can hold my head up, look in the mirror and I didn't have to be ashamed of anything I ever did or wrote," she said. "I fought some battles and I won some and lost some. But I get to walk out the door and look back feeling good about it."

—By David Bauder, © The Associated Press December 1, 2015



*Peacock Profile***Geraud “Rod” Prince
by Allison J. Davis**

Most people at NBC remember Geraud “Rod” Prince as an unflappable journalist who could be counted on to get the story on the air even under the most difficult of circumstances. His road to 30 Rock started at the Cleveland, Ohio O&O.

Rod Prince was born and raised in Cleveland. He and his twin sister attended public schools in the city and it was in high school that Rod decided to become a journalist. Rod worked full time after high school while attending Cuyahoga Community College. He later transferred to Ohio University where he graduated with honors earning a degree in journalism. In 1969, just a month after receiving his degree, Rod was hired by WKYC. He was part of NBC’s Minority Training Program. The first story he “shadowed” as a trainee was the lead story on the Huntley-Brinkley Report that night. “That blew my mind!” said Rod.

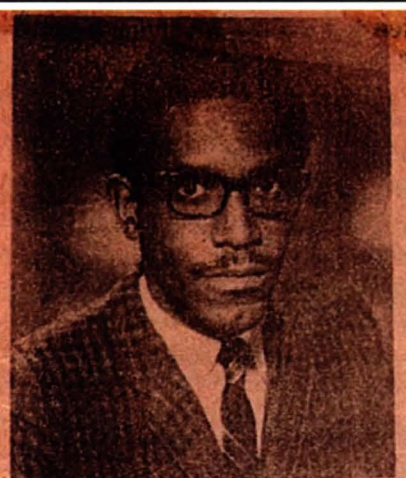
Rod climbed the ladder at WKYC and moved west to Chicago where he started in local television but quickly went to the NBC bureau where he served as field producer and then bureau chief. In 1987, Rod, wife Arlice and children Alisha and Brian transferred to New York where he took on the position of Senior Producer of Instant Specials. That led to stints as Director of Domestic News Coverage, Producer and Senior Producer of *Nightly News* and finally Executive Producer of *Weekend Nightly News*. He was the first African-American to be named E.P. of an NBC Network News Program.

Rod retired in December of 2001 and began “giving back” by training aspiring journalists. He was an adjunct professor at Howard University and later at Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, NJ.

In 2005, Rod and Arlice built their dream home in Atlanta, Georgia, “a place where Mother Nature is in charge of snow removal,” he quips. These days, Rod describes himself as totally retired though he’s involved in his fraternity’s mentoring programs, tends to a needy 2,000 square-foot flower garden (which was bare ground 10 years ago), and listens to music (jazz and r&b). He and his wife also enjoy “theme” cruises (Soul Train Cruise, Tom Joyner’s Fantastic Voyage, Smooth Jazz, etc.), and plan to take another one this February.

When asked if he had any “war stories” to share from his many travels through the decades, Rod coolly responded, “Yes, but if I told you, I’d have to kill you!”

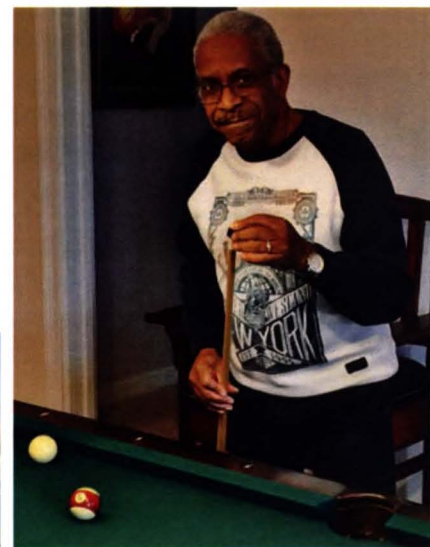
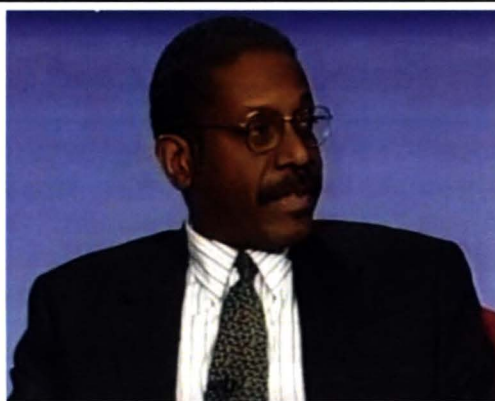
Peacock Profile



GERAUD PRINCE
... on NBC news staff in
Cleveland

NBC Names Trainee to WKYC-TV

The appointment of Geraud Prince as an NBC News Trainee has been announced by William Leeds, Director of the NBC News Bureau in Cleveland. Mr. Prince joined WKYC-TV on Monday, January 27, 1969.



Left, Rod joins NBC in 1969.

Above Center, Rod at a Brigham Young University 2012 panel discussion
“Is America Turning Inward?”

Above Right: “...preparing to earn some additional income
to supplement my pension (lol)”.

About the Author

Allison J. Davis is a former writer-producer for NBC’s *Nightly News* and *Today Show*. She also led the team that produced arguably the first original journalism online and was part of the team that established MSNBC and MSNBC.com. Allison continues to write and produce for her production company owned with her husband Robert G. Wright. She also is the Acting Executive Director of Arts Horizons, a regional arts education organization. The couple have two grown sons and live in Teaneck, NJ.



Marilyn Altman’s Memories of Rod Prince

Every once in awhile you meet someone whose name portrays their “essence”; such is the case with Rod Prince. A gentle, savvy and jazz-cool guy who was the Executive Producer of *Weekend Nightly News* during one of my stretches as Technical Director of that show. He brought a different range of sensibilities to the playing field. Always open to new ideas and a variety of stories, Rod broke ground with the diversity of subjects his show covered. My favorite was when Rod agreed to have *Weekend Nightly* cover the Broadway opening of *The Vagina Monologues*. This edgy, feminist play was causing a great deal of buzz in the theater world. He allowed the story to run but said that the word “vagina” could not be used; after all, *Weekend Nightly* was a family show. That story aired according to his parameters. Tricky to say the least, but he committed to it and saw it through. Pretty gutsy!

What's Now!

Bill Wheatley on Elections Past and Present

I have had the privilege of having a seat to history during the past 35 years of political coverage. In honor of the upcoming 2016 race for the White House I have tapped seasoned Producer Joe Alicastro to interview our very own Bill Wheatley. Bill's historical perspective is both as an eyewitness to events as well as an executive who made editorial decisions about NBC coverage. Here now is the first installment of our political column.—Marilyn Altman

Joe Alicastro: What are your some of your memories from elections you have covered?



Bill Wheatley: Some memories pop to mind immediately: In 1976, being on the 8H election-night set at 3:30 a.m. as NBC called the presidential race for Carter over Ford; at the 1980 Democratic Convention, watching Carter chase Ted Kennedy around the stage trying desperately to get a “unity” shot after he had beaten back Kennedy’s attempt to be nominated; in 1992, the “town-hall” presidential debate in which NBC director John Libretto called the now-famous shot of George H.W. Bush looking at his watch as if he’d rather be somewhere else; in 2000, Tim Russert prophetically writing “Florida, Florida, Florida” on his whiteboard in what would turn out to be one very strange election night; in 2004, heading home at dawn after finishing our election-night coverage without knowing with certainty whether George W. Bush or John Kerry would be elected.

What are the most dramatic changes you have seen in how election campaigns are run and how they are covered by the media?

Many of the biggest changes go hand-in-hand with the digital revolution. For the candidates, the new technology has changed everything from raising campaign funds to getting out the vote. And social-media services like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have permitted them to take their messages directly to the voters without having to go through the news media. At the same time, high tech has led to a huge increase in the number of media outlets, exposing the candidates to additional scrutiny. Not only that, but thanks to the development of the smartphone camera, almost everything that a candidate does these days is captured by someone on video, a big plus for TV news.

How has the 24 hour news cycle on Cable TV and in “New Media” effected the editorial process in covering elections?

It’s certainly speeded it up. At any given moment, something may be said or done that almost instantly changes the political conversation. It could be a controversial statement a candidate makes on the campaign trail or a just-posted scandalous revelation on a political website, or any of a thousand other things. The flow of information is continual, putting enormous pressure on responsible news outlets to determine what’s true and what’s not, what’s important and what’s not. For these organizations, the old editor’s admonition “Check it out” has become more important than ever.

Are the public and the electoral process better served today with the abundance of information available as opposed to years past when most political coverage came from the network broadcasts and major newspapers?

I think that it is. Better a thousand voices than only a few. But with all those new voices comes a caution for news consumers: be sure that what you are ingesting has real value. Does the information come from trusted sources? Is it verifiable? If a point-of view is expressed, is it based on facts or emotion? Let the buyer beware.

(Continued)

*What's Now!***What role does the partisan political coverage we see so often on cable news contribute to the political process? Does it amplify partisan politics?**

Partisan news channels and also many websites have certainly turned up the heat, playing into – and stoking — public anger over the state of American politics. Especially in prime time, cable hosts sometimes seem to exist only to castigate those who disagree with them. Still, America has a long history of partisan politics, and the media has always had a role in this. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it would be hard to argue that all the new stridency has raised the quality of political debate.

What is the impact of money in the political process, especially after the recent Supreme Court decision on political contributions from corporations?

Money drives the political process, more so than ever. Much of it flows from interest groups and corporations that deal with the government, and an increasing amount comes from wealthy individuals who are pressing favorite issues. Lawmakers and candidates who take the money say, as they always have, that it will have no influence on how they govern. You'd have to be pretty naïve to believe that, but most elected officials would prefer to maintain the status quo than risk reforms that might threaten their reelection.

Decision 2000 was like no other election night. Tell us from your perspective what went wrong with the process? What steps were taken to improve exit polling?

It was the night on which the networks got it flat-out wrong, a huge setback for the credibility of network news. Not once, but twice, the networks projected the result in Florida (first for Al Gore, then for George Bush) when they shouldn't have, then had to withdraw their projections and suffer eternal embarrassment. As Tom Brokaw put it, "We not only have egg on our faces, we have an entire omelette." Part of the problem was inaccurate vote reporting by some Florida counties, but the bigger fault was the inability of ordinarily reliable network computer models to correctly project a winner when the vote was so close. To this day, I can't understand how we at NBC - I was part of the decision - and the other networks went ahead with the second Florida call, thereby projecting Bush to be the next president, after being burned on the first. In the wake of all of this, computer models have been improved and projections are handled somewhat more conservatively, and everyone involved has been reminded that, when it comes to projections, it's far better to be last than wrong. But it was a very tough lesson to have to learn.

As you look ahead this summer to the GOP convention in Cleveland, can you see a scenario in which a brokered convention happens?

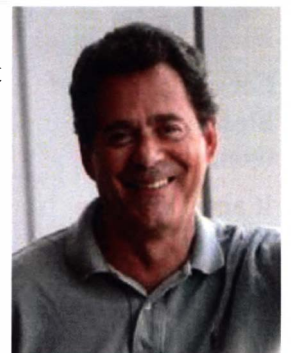
Well, there's a chance, but recent history tells us that it's not a very big one. You'd have to have a situation in which none of the candidates has enough pledged delegates to win on the first ballot; after that, the rules permit horse swapping. Such scenarios are now rare, but this campaign season has already defied a lot of odds. So who knows? Wouldn't it be something to return to the days of wall-to-wall coverage when the outcome is in doubt? Journalists can only dream.

Joe Alicastro comments:

This conjured up so many memories of so many "Decision" years. I started at NBC in '78 but my first election night was in '84 as one of Chancellor's bay producers.

In '88 I got my chance to be one of the "boys on the bus" covering Senator Gore's run, winning it all on Super Tuesday, only to drop out after receiving 10% of the vote in the New York primary.

In '92 just after returning from Rome you gave me the opportunity to work in Studio 3A on the remotes for election night. From that point on it was every election until 2008.



What's Now!

Live from Cleveland: First Televised Parkinson's Brain Operation

Peacock North members Joe Michaels, Howie Strawbridge and Mike Mathews participated in an historic broadcast on October 25th. Here is the background and their comments.

From © CNN.com prior to the event:

The deep brain stimulation surgery taking place at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio will be shown for two hours in a special called *Brain Surgery Live With Mental Floss*. The procedure will be captured with two handheld cameras and several robotic cameras in the doctors' surgical equipment.

Deep brain simulation is an elective surgery used to treat essential tremor in Parkinson's Disease. The patient is awake and able to speak during the operation, which allows the doctors to know if they have accessed the correct area of the brain. Journalist Bryant Gumbel will host the show and neurosurgeon Dr. Rahul Jandial and neuroscientist and podcast host Cara Santa Maria will provide running commentary.

The neurosurgical team includes Dr. Jonathan Miller, UH Case Medical Center's director of the Center for Functional and Restorative Neurosurgery, Dr. Benjamin Walter, director of the Parkinson's & Movement Disorders Center and medical director of UH Case Medical Center's Deep Brain Stimulation Program and neurosurgeon Dr. Jennifer Sweet.

Lighting Director Howie Strawbridge:

The event was extremely interesting and exciting. The doctors were very confident in the procedure because of the condition of the patient, who was just a wonderful guy. In fact the team performed the same operation on the back-up patient the next day.

Many of the hand-picked crew were top network people, including Host Bryant Gumbel, Executive Producer Bob Wheelock, Producer Antoinette Machiaverna, Director Joe Michaels, Associate Director John Coleman, Audio Engineer Alex Cimaglia, Cameramen Jim Corgan and Robert Lieberman, and so many others.

We set up the NEP mobile unit outside the front doors of University Hospital in Cleveland on Thursday and had to separate the gear we were using into two groups for sterile and non-sterile areas. Strong fumes from cleaning fluid like a cross between ammonia and those cleaning wipes you get for the house - very, very potent. The biggest challenges were sterilizing the gear and then going back and forth from the operating room to the truck. Each time you had to put on new clothes, either "bunny suits", which were only valid for 20 minutes, or complete "scrubs". I had to tell my guys what I needed from them in the operating room and be able to leave them alone while I returned to the truck. It was just impossible to make that trip in less than 10 to 15 minutes. As you can imagine that just isn't any way to work on either a rehearsal or live show when you need something done immediately. Very much a hassle but very necessary.

We set up and then broke down and then set up again on Saturday and we did a dress rehearsal with a live body... Hoooot. Then we were able to leave everything in place until Sunday evening for the actual event.

Director Joe Michaels:

For us the challenge was to get cameras into the operating room without interfering with the procedure. I used a Steadicam, a handheld and two robo-cams in the operating room. We also had direct feeds from all of the equipment the doctors had, including a microscope that actually showed the area of the brain they were working on.

It aired in over 171 countries on the National Geographic Channel and has been repeating on demand and will be released on DVD.

—Edited by Joel Spector

What's Now!

In the O.R.:

Top Left, Joe Michaels.

Above, patient Greg Grindley, post-op, holds iPad in now rock-steady grip as he sends an email to his wife in a nearby waiting room.

Below, Mike Mathews, Howie Strawbridge, Jim Corgan.



What's Now!

Jeff Samaha Hits 50 Years at NBC



Jeff Samaha brings with him 48 years of theater and choral conducting experience as well as directing and music directing many of the hottest Broadway shows for community theater in Brooklyn including *Miss Saigon*, *Les Miserable*, *The Producers*, *West Side Story*, *Mary Poppins* and more.

His day job includes stage managing and directing for NBC, currently assigned to *Nightly News with Lester Holt* and *Dateline* TLC and Discovery. Some of the shows he has stage-managed include *Concentration*, *Jeopardy*, *Late Night with David Letterman* and many news and sports programs.

Jeff writes to PN:

Ok, so I couldn't remember what day the 25-Year Dinner (as it's called) was supposed to happen. I was on standby for *Nightly News* in Studio 6E that day which really didn't require my presence. After the fact, Directors Steve Lucas and Brett Holey both said I should have gone to the dinner and I would be covered. But I didn't realize it was that day so I missed it. I did hear though that one table chanted, "Vito! Vito! Vito!" when my name was mentioned as having been with NBC for 50 years. Nice to hear, as Steve Burke looked at his watch and said, "Of course Jeff is not

here, he's on the air with *Nightly News*" Some might wonder what the deal is with "Vito." A former *Nightly* EP named Jeff dubbed me that when he got tired of turning around when my name was called. So he declared, "Just call that guy Vito," and it stuck. Even my family calls me Vito now.

Of course, the best story was when they sent Tom Brokaw to Washington leaving me here in NY. He was at News Channel alone in a studio with just a Robocam, no stage hand, no stage manager...nobody. About a minute before his crosstalk with WNBC, the director alerted him to the fact that he was a minute away from the cross talk. Historically, Tom didn't respond, but that was normal. He continued typing. Ten seconds before, the director warned local was coming to him; he turned around and faced the camera. Sue threw to him saying, "What do we have on *Nightly News* tonight, Tom?" Tom leaned back, reached to his left for a sandwich and took a big bite. He then turned back to his computer and continued typing. A few minutes later, he asked, "Was I just on?" From then on I went to Washington, but nowhere else because those things only happen in Washington. Only in America, folks.



*What's Now!***Bob Dotson Speaks to New York Film Academy Journalism Students**

Bob spent a recent morning talking with NYFA students, staff, and Department Chair Bill Einreinhofer about finding and creating memorable video stories. Following screenings of many of his *Today Show* features and an intimate Q&A, Bob was interviewed by visiting journalist Pavlina Osta, who, at age 17, is already hosting a syndicated radio program.



What's Now!

Marv Albert Inducted into Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame



Syracuse University alum Marv Albert, one of the most accomplished sportscasters of all-time, will be inducted into the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame. CNN founder Ted Turner and long-time figure skating analyst Dick Button join Albert as the headliners of the 2015 class. The induction ceremony will take place on December 15th in New York City.

Albert's career is defined by his trademark "Yes!" call heard during basketball telecasts. He was given the Curt Gowdy Award by the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1994 and has won several Emmy, National Sportscaster of the Year and New York State Broadcaster of the Year Awards. Albert was inducted into the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association Hall of Fame in 2014.

Albert is currently a lead NBA play-by-play voice for Turner Sports.

Albert also spent 22 years at NBC Sports and 37 years calling New York Knicks and Rangers games. Albert was also the play-by-play voice for the New Jersey Nets (now the Brooklyn Nets) on the YES network from 2005-2011.

"This year's class once again shows the depth of leadership, skills, and talent that have made the sports broadcasting industry so vital to our nation's culture," Ken Aagaard, chairman of the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame

said in a statement. Albert's son, Kenny, is also a sports commentator who calls baseball and football for Fox, New York Rangers games on the radio and play-by-play for NBC Sports' NHL coverage.

Other Hall of Fame inductees include Fox Sports audio consultant Fred Aldous, NFL directing legend Sandy Grossman, producer Mike Pearl, retired Fox Sports operations executive Jerry Steinberg, and Game Creek Video President Pat Sullivan.

—By Brent Axe © Syracuse.com August 20, 2015



Top:
Marv at work
last month.

Left: Kenny
and Marv.

Right: Marv
at the "ticker"
in his early days
at WHN
in New York.



*What's Now!***NBCUniversal to Team with Data Trackers to Study Olympics Viewing**

NBCUniversal's research chief has called the Olympics his "billion-dollar research lab."

The Games offer a perfect opportunity every two years to analyze how media habits are changing, said Alan Wurtzel, president of research and media development at the company, because they deliver a large audience that tunes in to hundreds of hours of coverage across a proliferation of screens over a 17-day period.

For the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro in 2016, NBCUniversal plans to team up with the television tech company TiVo and RealityMine, a research start-up, to track how people watch the Games on television, mobile and digital platforms. The partnership is intended to provide insights into the daily habits of Olympics viewers and the interplay between watching coverage on television and using tablets and smartphones. It is also expected to deliver clues to how people watch outside the home, as well as the effect of social media on viewership and the effectiveness of advertising during Olympics coverage.

The deal is part of a growing push across the media industry to better understand how vast digital changes are transforming the way people consume entertainment. Industry executives have said that they are seeking alternatives to Nielsen, the dominant measurement company for user engagement, which they complain has been slow to adapt.

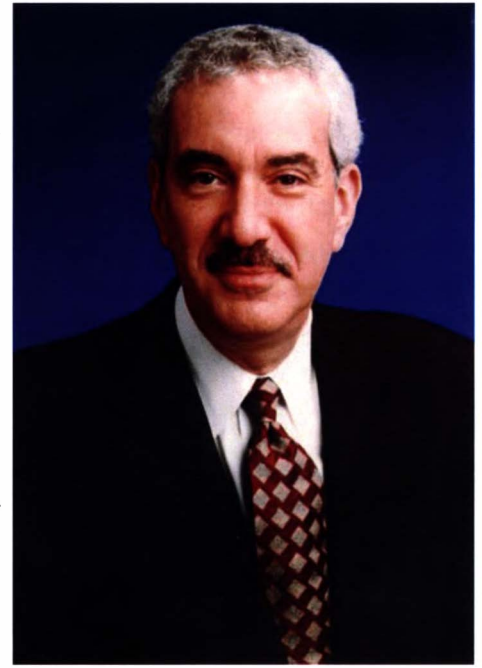
As Nielsen has introduced new offerings to track digital media, rivals also have pushed ahead. In September, two smaller measurement companies, comScore and Rentrak, announced plans to merge, seeking to create a stronger challenge to Nielsen. "More competition is always healthy," Mr. Wurtzel said. "Frankly, it is a good opportunity to see whether or not there are some other players out there that can contribute to the TV measurement industry."

TiVo, which introduced the first digital video recorder in 1999, has built a research business based on proprietary TiVo set-top-box data and partnerships with cable and satellite companies. Its panel now includes 2.3 million households. RealityMine was founded in 2012 and tracks digital media activity, offering the ability to measure how people watch programming across platforms. (RealityMine also plans to announce on Monday that it has landed a \$16 million investment.) Noting that TiVo places software in homes that captures every second of television viewing, Tom Rogers, the company's chief executive, said, "We know what actual homes are doing, what they watch, what they buy."

Mr. Wurtzel said getting the research right was crucial to NBCUniversal, which in 2014 agreed to pay \$7.75 billion for exclusive broadcast rights to the six Olympic Games from 2022 to 2032.

The research helps dictate programming decisions. During past Olympics, for example, one major concern was that live-streaming a sporting event during the day would cannibalize viewership of the same event when it was shown later on tape delay. Mr. Wurtzel said the research showed that the live stream actually served as a promotional tool to drive viewership for the prime-time event. "The notion of ubiquity is not cannibalization," he said.

Mr. Wurtzel said that research around the Olympics is also valuable because it can accelerate the adoption of new media habits. His prediction for the 2016 Games is a surge of mobile viewing among broader audiences. "During those three weeks," he said, "you get a glimpse into the future."



We Get Letters and Pictures

George Newell's Musical Bookends

As a 1955 graduate of Ohio State University, where I played drums in a big band, I got a call to go to Germany for a six-week summer tour of military bases. The trip over there was my first airplane ride – and in a DC-6, to boot. In the middle of the tour we got another call: “You are all going to North Africa to be Billy Eckstine’s Backup Big Band.”

After a stint as stage manager or occasional director on the original *Mr. Rogers* in Pittsburgh, I came to NBC in 1958 as an executive trainee, then program coordinator on *Loretta Young Theatre*. On my very first day, July 1st, the main hall elevator uniformed page was Ted Koppel.

There had not been a staff operations AD position open for years until late 1959, whence three of us were “tapped” on the same day:

Bobby Quinn - 5H AD, then *Jack Paar*, thence to direct Johnny Carson’s *Tonight Show*,
Dave Wilson - 5H AD, then variety shows, and eventually the original director of SNL,

and myself - 5H AD, plus long temporary upgrades & travel as a full director, including six countries, more than 30 locations stateside, 6 political conventions, AD on John F. Kennedy’s funeral day in DC, and outside pool director on Robert Kennedy’s funeral in New York City, and on several Papal visits.

Years later, on the early morning Studio 5H shift (which had local and network starts at 5:00 a.m.), I could arrive at the RCA Building’s Florida Showcase 49th Street secret door, greet a typing “Bobbie” Walters, pour 2 coffees, and elevate to the 5th floor “action center” a/k/a 5H. This shift would accommodate an occasional (new) Chris Wallace, Ed Newman, Mary Alice Williams, etc.

I resigned and departed 30 Rock in June of 1981.

As for my musical career...

While working on several outside freelance projects, I had uncovered a former deputy from my Army TV days, who was by then a station manager looking to build on Tampa’s Channel 28. As a “single mother” then, my son and I moved there, but after only a year the program operations manager position became too routine. Thus “cometh” a 1982 contract settlement, and we were again home in NJ.



With but a few freelance directing gigs out here, there was mucho time to re-ignite my lifelong avocation in music, especially Big Band. I’ve always been established as a drummer and tympanist, but also becoming more proficient on piano; hence by 1985 I had begun simply “arranging” for 10 pieces to sound like 16, plus vocalist. This plot had substantial success over time, and necessarily grew to the present 13 players, plus a very fine vocalist. Sadly, perhaps our most notable appearance turned out to be the last actual Big Band to perform at Windows on the World, months prior to September 11,

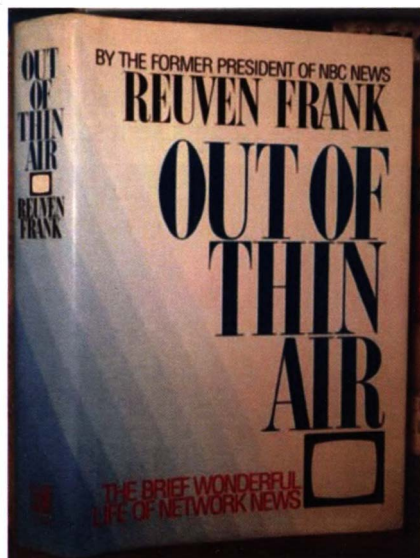
**George is seen at upper left,
and conducting
the band at bottom right.**

We Get Letters and Pictures

Reuven Frank C-SPAN Interview and Book



The Brief Wonderful Life of Network News: Inside Story of the Making of the Mainstream Media (1991)



News Junkie? Welcome To Nirvana...
An Hour with Reuven Frank.

I just watched a wonderful guided tour of television's news history, as told by a man who created much of it at NBC. He covers all the great names and takes us into how and why the news changed. One insight is that in the early days, NBC News was not at 30 Rock, but instead at NBC's Uptown Studios at 106th Street.

Enjoy!

—From Bobby Ellerbee—© Eyes of a Generation.com



The clip is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCu9N9vfjAs>



*What's Now!***Library of Congress Acquires Early Ernie Kovacs Collection**

The Library of Congress has acquired a collection of early TV recordings of comedian Ernie Kovacs and his wife, Edie Adams. The collection comes from Adams' son, Josh Mills, president of Ediad Productions.

Adams was part of a public hearing in 1996 at the Library about the loss of early TV programs—Kovacs died in 1962. Adams said that “truckloads” of videotapes of that era were destroyed as refuse. The Library issued a report the following year that concluded that the historical record of the first decades of American television and video were either non-existent or fragmentary.

“[Kovacs] influence can be seen in the work of Monty Python, David Letterman, Pee-wee Herman and on such shows as *Saturday Night Live* and *Comedy Bang! Bang!*” said the Library in announcing the acquisition. Chevy Chase could also be notably added to the inheritors of Kovacs' brand of humor.

Kovacs' offbeat sense of humor translated to such iconic characters of the day as “artiste” Percy Dovetonsils and the Nairobi Trio.

The sultry Adams may be best known to older Boomers from her Muriel cigar commercials.

The collection, of over 1,200 items, comprises kinescopes, videotapes, 16 mm and Super 8 home movies and includes various specials and a quiz show for ABC, Kovacs NBC morning show, episodes of an Adams series, *Here's Edie*, on ABC.

“The Ernie Kovacs and Edie Adams Collection is an especially welcome acquisition for us,” said Mike Mashon, head of the Library's Moving Image section, of the new addition to the TV family. “We're very proud of our humor collections and we're always looking to expand our holdings in early television. With Ernie Kovacs and Edie Adams, we accomplish both.”

The Kovacs/Adams collection joins those of TV funnyfolk Bob Hope, Groucho Marx, Danny Kaye, Johnny Carson, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, among others.



—By John Eggerton © Broadcasting & Cable, December 3, 2015

What's Now!

The Biff and Jerry Show

On December 3, the Directors Guild of America New York boardroom hosted a special conversation between Stage Manager Biff Henderson and Director Jerry Foley. Following a welcome from DGA official Joyce Thomas, the two friends took a look back at Henderson's career and their roles on the long-running program, *Late Night with David Letterman*, a show Biff had stage managed for its entire run. The conversation was illustrated by clips of the many memorable on-screen appearances he made on *Letterman* during his tenure of over thirty years. "Tonight is really about you, Biff", said Jerry. Among those at the event were your editor as well as Biff's former NBC DGA colleagues Enid Roth, Marilyn Jacobs and David Herz. Audience questions rounded out the evening. Henderson's NBC résumé includes working as a Stage Manager on the original (Daytime) David Letterman Show; as well as the *Today Show*, *Sunrise*, *NBC Nightly News*, *NBC Sports*, *Saturday Night Live*, and *Later with Bob Costas*.



James "Biff" Henderson started his life journey in Durham, NC. He received a Bachelor's degree in Business from Hampton University, where he was "never in a class with white students or [had] a white teacher", and soon had a position in charter sales with American Airlines. He found himself at 30 Rock one day and to his great surprise met NBC Building Maintenance employee Gene Sanders. After a brief conversation, Gene took him to meet Peter Tintle, Manager of Guest Relations, who in turn introduced him to Lud Simmel, Manager of Radio Network Sales. He was hired and placed on a committee charged with developing a way to monetize the overnight hours on NBC radio and television. His two-part plan was to offer advertisers free commercial time for six months, followed by a one-year commitment. NBC Radio Network Administration Vice-President Marian Stephenson thought the idea was imaginative but was impractical. She then advised Biff to go into the production side of the business. These early NBC days also included a tour of duty in Vietnam for Army Lieutenant Henderson.

Tom Smiley, Manager of TOPS (Tech Ops Personnel Scheduling), hired him as a scheduling clerk, a position he described as "really tough". However, he was also able to work for several cycles as a vacation relief Stage Manager, then returning to his TOPS spot. He worked on David Letterman's NBC morning talk show, where he made his first on-camera appearances. That show was eventually cancelled, but, due to NBC's "90-Day Policy", he was then made a permanent employee. David called on Biff to join him when *Late Night* began in 1982, and the two were together for the next 33 years, the majority of them at CBS.

Jerry Foley, TD on *Late Night* at NBC and eventually the Director of David's CBS show, asked Biff if he was ever nervous when appearing on camera. "What is there to be nervous about when you don't know what you're doing?" replied Biff. He told us that his "secret" was simple: "Be honest with yourself and those you are guiding through their time in the spotlight." "It's a question of faith and destiny", he recalled.

His career took him to assignments in such places as Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. "Who could have imagined such a life?"

As for his nickname, he told us that his mother's friend once had a dream that her child would be called "Biff", and the name became his!

--Portions adapted from © DGA Magazine December 15, 2015

*We Got Letters and Pictures***Super Bowl Memories**

It was Super Bowl XV in New Orleans January 25, 1981. The Eagles against the Raiders. I was the second unit director behind the great Ted Nathanson. What made this game memorable was the Raiders won 27 - 10 with quarterback Jim Plunkett winning the MVP. The year prior to the game, owner of the Raiders, Al Davis had wanted to move his team to Los Angeles and Pete Rozelle, head of the NFL at the time, lead the other owners in blocking the move. Davis filed a law suit against Pete and the NFL. When the Raiders made it to the Super Bowl, Rozelle was embarrassed enough, but then to have them win the Championship made it a classic situation.

On the telecast, Teddy had a camera near the locker room to catch the awarding of the Lombardi trophy to the game winner. There it was, the shot of Pete Rozelle handing the trophy to none other than Raiders owner and legal enemy, Al Davis. The irony of the situation made it a television moment football fans would never forget. An enlarged copy of a photo taken of the same moment hung behind Al Davis's desk in his Oakland Raiders office until he passed away a few years ago.

Ken Fouts

What stands out for me personally, and aside from the thrill I experienced as being selected as the Production Manager for Super Bowl XI, was the fact that I made it my business to get to bed early the night before the game, taking great care to give the hotel telephone operator specific instructions to wake me with ample time for me to shower, dress, etc.

On Super Bowl morning, before driving to Pasadena in ample time for the "crew call", I never got the wake-up call. I overslept too long and to say I panicked was a great understatement! To this day I still don't know how I was able to avoid being arrested for speeding as I arrived at the Rose Bowl about 10 minutes later than I had planned.

What a relief when I finally got there!

Barry Black

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Jim Simpson

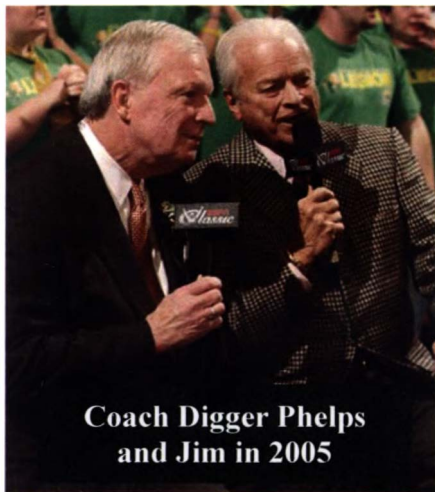
Jim Simpson, a versatile television sportscaster who began his career in Washington and covered the Olympics, the World Series and the first Super Bowl before becoming ESPN's first play-by-play announcer when the sports cable network made its debut in 1979, died January 13th in Scottsdale, Ariz. He was 88. His death was announced by ESPN, which did not cite a specific cause.

For decades, Mr. Simpson was a handsome, smooth-voiced presence on sports broadcasts from around the globe. He covered his first Olympic Games in 1952, appeared on the 1961 premiere of ABC's *Wide World of Sports* and remained an occasional presence on ESPN into the 21st century. For most of his time in the network spotlight, he made Washington his home, often working during the week as the host of sports broadcasts on local TV stations from the 1940s to the 1980s.

After beginning his broadcast career at 15 with a hunting and fishing show on radio, Mr. Simpson entered television in 1949 as the first sportscaster at Washington's Channel 9. After CBS bought the station and changed its call letters to WTOP, he shared a half-hour news program with another broadcaster just getting



Jim in 1969



**Coach Digger Phelps
and Jim in 2005**

his start in TV — Walter Cronkite, the future *CBS Evening News* anchor. “In the '40s it was the excitement of being in the business,” Mr. Simpson told *The Washington Post* in 1986. “To me, it was the glamour of the business. I was walking around in a daze, so happy to be in it, that doing a station break correctly was a World Series.”

Soon enough, Mr. Simpson would be broadcasting the World Series during the 15 years he spent with NBC Sports. He covered virtually every sport under the sun at the highest levels: 16 baseball all-star games, 14 Olympic Games, all the Grand Slam events in tennis and golf, 14 college football Orange Bowls, six Super Bowls and six World Series. In 1964, Mr. Simpson was the network host of the Winter Olympics from Innsbruck, Austria, and the Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

--By Matt Schudel – © The Washington Post - January 13, 2016

I worked with Jim so many times on baseball, tennis and football and there was no one any better. A class act as they say, but that does not even begin to describe the person he was. It was such a great time to see him MC our banquet at the last [NBC Sports] reunion a year ago. When he stood up at that podium, it was like a step back in time. He was the same prepared smooth announcer I had worked with so many years ago. He was the best.

Ken Fouts

Jim was “one of a kind” and big deal in the Nathanson household. Dad loved working with him and together they worked on the early days of the Orange Bowl, AFL football and studio World Series pre-game, among many others. Dad loved Jim as a friend and for how he worked. Always prepared, always thoughtful and always respecting what was going on in the mobile unit when on the air. He carried himself with poise and integrity. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. The flag is at half-mast in the Nathanson household.

Michael Nathanson

I first ran into Jim Simpson when he was doing local sports news at WRC in Washington, the beginning of an enduring personal and professional friendship. He often brought his wife Sara and his daughter Sherry to events and they too became part of the NBC family. When he “retired” it was to the very property in St Croix that hosted and donated housing to Monte Irvin's baseball clinic. Not surprisingly, he was elected Chairman of the condo tenants' association. And lately, helping out with the Harry Coyle project. Jim defined professional perfection and enduring friendship.

Bill Potts

What's Now!

The Olliettes II



This group of NBC News writers and producers and Bambi T used to meet periodically for lunch at Ollie's, near Lincoln Center. They called themselves "The Olliettes" and their ring leader was Sy Pearlman.

Your editor joined the group on November 5th as they continued this fine tradition at Empire Szechuan, following Ollie's closing.

Top Left: Rich Munde, Lloyd Siegel, Gerry Solomon.

Right: Bill Chesleigh, BT, Bill Wheatley, Stan Bernard, Bob Jameson.

Center: Frank Shanbacker, Cyndie Pearlman, Carole Kahn.

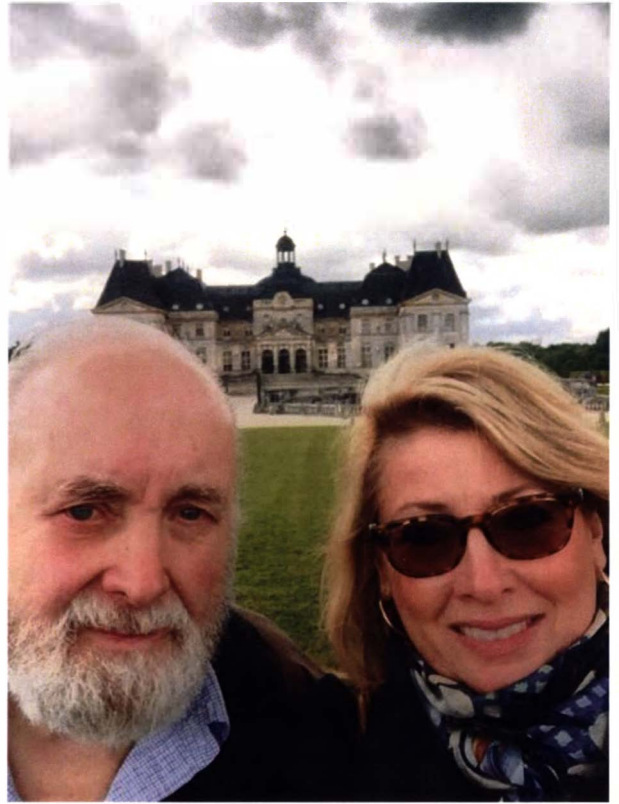
Bottom Left: Joel Spector, BT, Gerry Solomon. Right: Dennis Sullivan, Sid Fedders, BT

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Sy Pearlman Remembered by Cyndie**

Sy Pearlman, esteemed journalist and winner of every major television journalism award, died on October 20th at his home in New York after a short battle with pancreatic cancer.

He started as an editor for the New York Times foreign desk and Sunday magazine in 1961. During the Prague Spring of 1968 he was the voice of NBC Radio. During 30 years at NBC, he was bureau chief in Israel during the Yom Kippur War, and producer of three magazine shows for which he won multiple honors, including a Peabody, an American Bar Association and a Robert F. Kennedy Foundation Award for *Reports on the Sawyer Brothers* in 1976, which led to the release of two innocent men from prison.

From the Peabody citation: "NBC News producer Sy Pearlman is one of that rare breed of Americans who is never satisfied until he has satisfied himself that the full story has been presented. Such was the case when he raised serious doubts about the conviction and heavy sentences meted out to two brothers by the name of Sawyer, charged with a North Carolina kidnapping. Utilizing the forces available to him through the excellent staff of NBC News, Mr. Pearlman utilized two segments of the Peabody Award-winning *Weekend* program to outline the inconsistencies of the trial evidence and reveal evidence pointing to the possible guilt of two other suspects. Subsequently, the Sawyer Brothers received full pardons from the State of North Carolina. For his efforts in demonstrating the power of television to re-examine criminal justice—or injustice—a Peabody Award to Sy Pearlman of NBC News."



Pearlman was also executive producer of two weekly magazine shows, *Monitor* and *First Camera*, which won a DuPont, a Gabriel and four Emmy® Awards. He went on to produce two award-winning documentaries for NBC, garnering Humanitas and Christopher Awards, becoming head of Documentaries for the network in 1985. Before retiring, he covered both the Gulf War and the Israeli-Arab Conflict.

Mr. Pearlman, the son of Eastern European immigrants, was born in New York City in 1930. He received a B.A. in American History from Brooklyn College, an M.A. in Russian History and Government from New York University and a M.S. in Journalism from Columbia University.

Before his career in journalism, he was a counter-intelligence agent for the U. S. Army in Berlin, Germany from 1954 to 1956.

Mr. Pearlman spent the last 18 years of his life doing what he loved best, traveling the world for five to six months every year with his wife of 30 years, Cynthia Bernbach Pearlman. Since 1985 they kept a car in Europe with New Jersey license plates, which they used to visit every country in Western and Eastern Europe, Turkey and most of the Middle East. In addition, they also drove through every state in the United States, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, Australia and New Zealand. Between trips he fed his voracious appetite for movies, documentaries and books on 20th century history, as well as his interest in Jewish genealogy and history.

He is survived by his wife Cynthia; his children, Mia Bess Pearlman, Ted Louis Pearlman; his daughter-in-law Allison Pearlman; son-in-law, Albert Marques; his grandchildren, Aviva Mae Marques and Oscar Leroi Pearlman; his brother, Boris Pearlman; and his nephews, Sam and Jef Pearlman.

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Carl M. Henry, Jr Remembered by his Son, Carl III



Carl M. Henry, Jr of Baldwin, NY passed away on December 12, 2015, just two weeks short of his 90th birthday.

Dad was truly one of the NBC Staging pioneers. He came from a showbiz family of vaudeville actors and stagehands. After returning home from the Navy in 1946 he got his first showbiz break on the Broadway musical *Oklahoma* as a stagehand. He started working at NBC on February 20th, 1948, landing a job as prop master on the first commercial network TV cooking show, *In the Kelvinator Kitchen*, starring Alma Kitchell. She was transitioning into television at the time. Best known as “the golden voice of the golden age of radio”, Alma personally requested dad because of his terrific attitude and love

of the business.

He later went on to work with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis on their first TV show, *The Colgate Comedy Hour*, where he was asked to appear on camera at the last minute, because they needed someone who knew how to perform a Navy semaphore routine. Dad also worked on such shows as *Kraft Music Hall*, *The Honeymooners*, *The Ed Sullivan Show*, *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, *SNL* and *Texaco Star Theater*. As children, my sisters and I were often on a local TV show dad worked on called *Birthday House*, starring Paul Tripp. Over the years dad was involved with most of the facilities that NBC used, but most current employees never knew existed: 106th Street; the Century, Colonial, Ziegfeld, Hudson, and Center Theaters; RCA Exhibition Hall (and Johnny Victor Theater on its lower level); 67th Street; Florida Showcase, McDonald Avenue, 18th Street, Rentar Plaza, and even CBS at 530 West 57th Street. Those were the golden years of television-- good television, combined with good business.

Irving Messing

Irving Messing, 96, passed away peacefully on November 4, 2015, in Plantation, Florida. He had previously lived in Fair Lawn, NJ, since 1955.

A veteran of World War II, he worked his entire career as a stagehand for NBC Television.

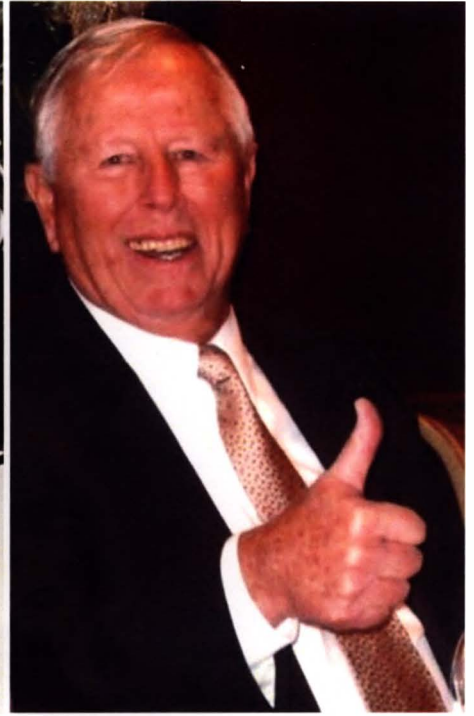
He is survived, remembered and cherished by his sons Charles and Scott, daughter-in-law Lissa, brother and sister-in-law Herbert and Marian Messing, brother-in-law and wife Bruce Jay and Pat Friedman, nephews Josh, Drew and Kipp Friedman, and niece Mollie Friedman Stout.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Fair Lawn Library or Jewish Family Services of Fair Lawn.

—Published in © The Record on November 8, 2015

Your editor found a YouTube video from the season finale of the Perry Como Show in June 1961. Irv is striking the props before Perry has finished the scene! See the clip at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzyC70WoR8A>



*Tributes to Silent Microphones***John C. “Jack” Shultis Remembered by his Family**

John Clinton Shultis, known to many as Jack, passed away peacefully on Monday, December 14th at home, surrounded by his family. Jack is survived by his loving wife, Patricia (DeLeo) Shultis; two sons, Christopher and Timothy; his daughter-in-law, Ann; and 6 grandchildren. Jack resided in Manahawkin, NJ with his wife, Pat. Jack was previously married for 30 years to Joan Lee Shultis, née Secker, who pre-deceased him in 1987. A celebration of life memorial service was held on January 23rd at the Church of Holy Innocents in Beach Haven, NJ.

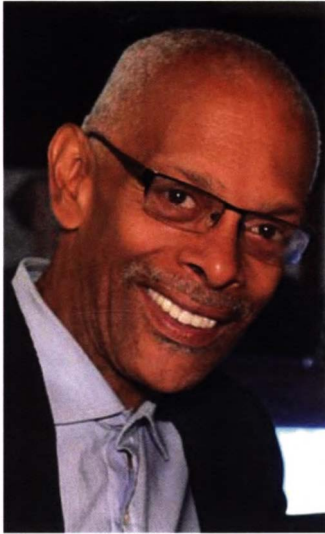
Jack was born on January 3, 1932 to Dorothy and DeWitt “Red” Shultis in Teaneck, NJ. He graduated from Northfield Mount Hermon School in 1949 and from Bucknell University in 1953 with a degree in Physics. Jack served in the US Army Signal Corps from 1953 until 1955. He then followed his father’s footsteps and began his career in television in sound engineering. He thereafter was a pioneer at the inception of videotape editing. Jack was known for unimpeachable credentials and was sought out by video houses throughout the industry.

He started at NBC, then worked for MGM Studios, EUE/Screen Gems and Nexus. Jack worked with some of the top directors in the industry, including George Schaeffer, John Llewellyn Moxie, Paul Bogart, Gordon Rigsby and Dwight Hemion. In addition, he edited shows such as the *Kraft Music Hall* series, *Hallmark Hall of Fame* series, *CBS Playhouse*, *The Belle of Fourteenth Street* with Barbra Streisand, and *Of Mice and Men*. He also edited *Damn Yankees*, the first TV show ever to use “reverse play” accomplished strictly electronically on quad tape. His work on *Kraft Music Hall*’s Sound of Bacharach won him a prime time Emmy® Award for videotape editing in 1969. Jack was known in the industry as the “Dean” of videotape editors.

In addition to Jack’s impeccable career in television, he was an avid golfer and a gifted woodworker. Countless beautiful examples of his woodworking can be found in the homes of his family and friends as a lasting memory of his talent. Most impressive is the room he built in the home he shared with Patricia.

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Although PN has only limited information about these wonderful people we want to note their recent passings in this issue.



Wayne Wright, a long-time NBC employee, passed away on January 4th. He finally succumbed to the cancer that made him leave NBC many years ago.

Wayne was our Chyron operator on WNBC's *Today in New York* for many years. He was the LIFE of the control room, so his death is especially surreal for those who knew him, even though we all knew it was coming.

Wayne had the gift of striking up and continuing a conversation with EVERYONE and ANYONE who came within the sound of his voice. It was a great pleasure to work with him. He was a GREAT guy to know. He is and will continue to be missed.

A memorial service was held at the Riverside Church on January 30th.

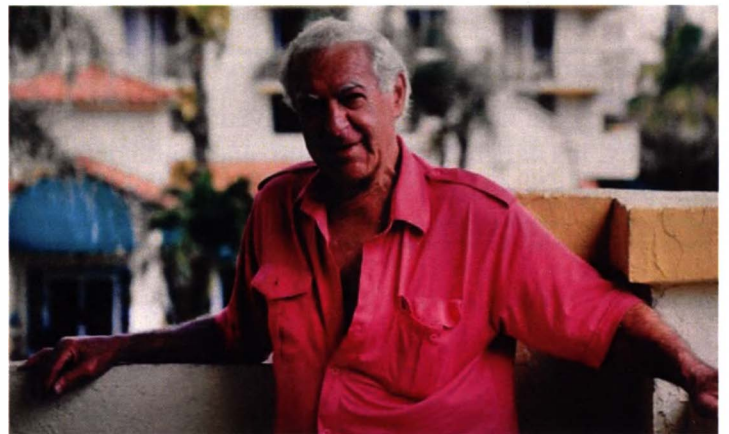
—By Keith Gardner, WNBC Audio.

Condolences may be sent to the family at
159 West 53rd Street - 29F
New York, NY 10019

My uncle **George Moyantcheff** passed away on November 27th, 2015 at the age of 92. He was born in Bridgeport, CT on July 22, 1923. He enlisted in the Navy on June 24, 1943 and was awarded the American Theater medal, Asiatic Pacific medal with five stars, and the Victory medal while serving on the aircraft carrier Bataan during World War II.

He graduated from New York University and worked for NBC Television as an editor/producer until his retirement.

—By John Moyant



It is with extreme sadness that I must tell you we lost our dear friend and colleague **Danne Almirall** on January 16th, believed to be due to complications from Parkinson's. She was born in New York City on February 14, 1941 to Lloyd and Catherine Almirall. She was a longtime employee of NBC. We worked with Danne for decades through the Visnews years, Satellite Operations, and News production. She later worked for the Archdiocese of New York.

Danne is survived by her siblings Jan A. Olmer, Paul Almirall and Kiki Hobin. A private memorial service will be scheduled for the spring of this year.

She will be missed by many.

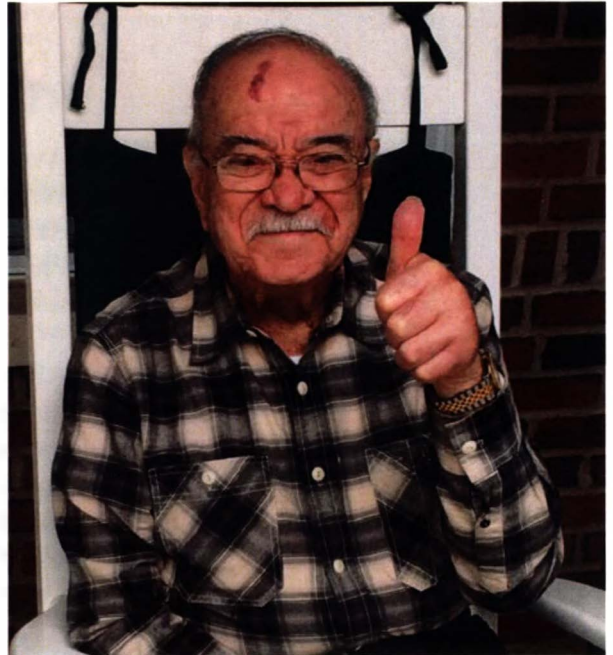
Danne would have been 75 next month.

—By Bambi Tascarella (and material from © The New York Times)

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Tony Nelle Remembered by his Daughter Maria**

Antonio "Tony" Nelle, 90, husband, father and brother, formerly of Dumont, NJ, passed away peacefully on September 10, 2015. Born in Manila, Philippines, August 21, 1925, he resided in Dumont for 58 years, raising his family, before relocating to Doylestown, PA in 2014. He moved into the Pine Run Community in February 2015 and truly enjoyed the Residents, their visitors and the Staff. He served with the US Army in the Korean War, receiving an Honorable Discharge.

Tony worked for NBC television as a Senior Video Engineer in NYC for 35 years, retiring in 1986. Beginning in the era of live television, his career took him around the country and the world. From the early variety shows of Jack Paar, Steve Allen and Johnny Carson to the birth of *Saturday Night Live*; from the dawn of manned space flight to the Super Bowl, Tony was a part of many historic and iconic productions. In the latter half of his career, he was often the envy of many during the winter months, sporting a healthy tan as a result of televising the PGA golf tour each week from around the country. Coaxed out of retirement in 1988, Tony received an Emmy® Award as a member of the production team for the Summer Olympics in Seoul, Korea, validation of a long and distinguished career.



Tony enjoyed the outdoors and spent many summers with his family camping along the East Coast. Whether boating, fishing or waterskiing, summer vacations took them to Canada, the Adirondacks of New York, Vermont, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Florida. Upon retirement, Tony pursued his love of sailing, becoming a member of the Keyport Yacht Club where he and Nancy could be found cruising and racing his beloved Nonsuch 30 in the Raritan Bay.

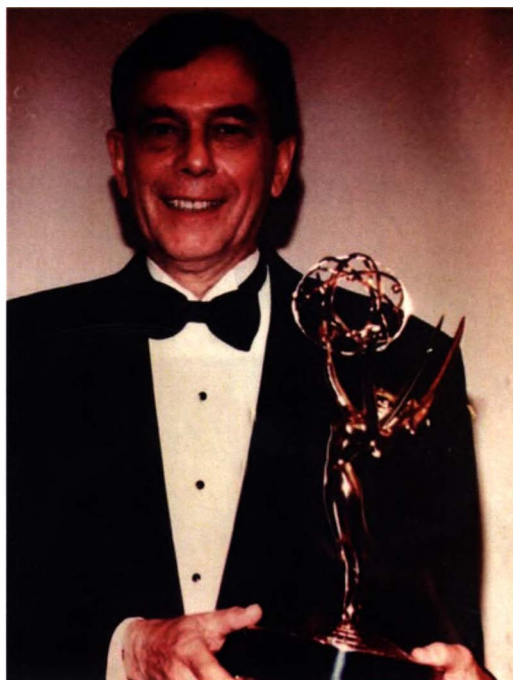
Predeceased by his wife of 59 years, Nancy (Barnes) in 2013, he is survived by his son, Jeffrey and wife Nancy of Redding, CT; daughter Kate Nell of Overland Park, KS; daughter Elizabeth Fiorelli and husband Robert of Wallington, NJ; daughter Maria Rafferty and husband Brian of Doylestown, PA; sisters Betty of Florida, Erlinda of Arkansas, and 7 nieces and nephews.

A great joy in Tony's life were his cherished grandchildren; Spencer and Jeremy Nelle; Mark and Kevin Fiorelli; and Brian, Erin, Andrew, Matthew and Patrick Rafferty.

Tony was an active member of the Dumont VFW and Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church, and was a member and Past Commander of the Saddle River Power Squadron. Prior to relocating to Doylestown, he was often seen at the New Milford Senior Center where he enjoyed socializing, taking photographs and playing shuffleboard.

A Funeral Mass was offered on September 18, 2015 at St. Mary's RC Church in Dumont, NJ.

In lieu of flowers, donations are appreciated in Tony's memory to The Wounded Warrior Project.

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Avrom Zaritsky**

Avrom Zaritsky, formerly of Dobbs Ferry, NY, died Tuesday, December 29, 2015, at age 80 in his home in Miami Beach, Florida. He was born in New York City, the son of Chaim and Libby Zaritsky.

Avrom earned a Bachelor's degree Magna Cum Laude from Brandeis University. He then completed two Master's degrees – one in International Relations from Yale University, where he completed requirements for a PhD degree, and a second from Columbia University's School of Journalism.

After that he worked as a writer for Newsweek magazine and then for 35 years for NBC TV News. Early in his career there he produced an hour-long documentary for *NBC Reports* titled *Sinai*, which aired in 1973.

He produced documentaries for such programs as *First Tuesday*; *Main Street*; and *Sunday Today*, which included *Suffer the Little Children*, about the orphans of L'Hôpital St-Julien in Quebec.

Some of his many *Dateline* pieces include *Elizabeth's Story*, about autism; *Breaking the Silence*, about sibling rivalry; *Family Focus*, on children's temperament; *A Better Deal*, about an alternative to prison for Miami drug addicts; and *Angel of Belsen*, for which he received a 1994 Emmy® award. He retired from NBC in 2001.

Avrom was a proud loving husband and father. He was married to Joyce Ship Zaritsky for 52 years and had two children, Joshua and Eve, both of whom graduated from Dobbs Ferry High School and then went on to pursue professional degrees as physicians. He lived in Dobbs Ferry for more than 40 years, loving every minute of it. Whenever he traveled and returned home, he would say, "This is a great place to live." He is also survived by his son-in-law Matt Hill, his daughter-in-law, Karie Zaritsky and four wonderful grandchildren: Sarah, Ella, Eleanor and Esther. He was predeceased by his sister, Maxine Todres. He was a member of Temple Beth Shalom in Hastings for 35 years.

A funeral service was held on January 3rd at the Edwards-Dowdle Funeral Home.

Donations may be made in his name to
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
Grand Central Station
P.O. Box 4777
New York, NY 10163-4777

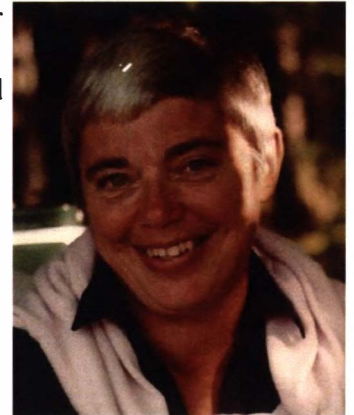
Condolences may be sent to the family at
2655 Collins Avenue, Apt. 1411
Miami Beach, FL 33140

---Compiled from several sources by Joel Spector.

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Laura Flynn Remembered By Her Daughter, Kelsey**

Laura Speers Flynn, 86, of Northampton, MA, died on January 12th at her home with her family by her side. Born in Montclair, NJ, July 21, 1929, she was the daughter of the late Wallace and Lila (Kelsey) Speers. Laura graduated from Montclair High School and went on to study at Western College in Ohio which later became part of Miami University of Ohio.

Laura's entrance into the working world was for the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in New York City where in 1952 she landed an administrative position in the Radio Network's Sound Effects Department. She was always making everyone laugh with her affectionate impressions of co-workers and sly jokes, a pastime that would be the hallmark of any time spent with Laura up until her final days. NBC was also where she met Peter Flynn who would become her husband of 56 years.



The two started their marriage on the upper east side of Manhattan but soon moved to New Jersey when their two children, Peter Robert and Kelsey Ann arrived. After spending time at home with the children through their elementary-school years, Laura walked into Burner's Stationery in Upper Montclair to inquire about the "Help Wanted" sign in the window. She went on to manage the store until her retirement 18 years later. She always managed to make time to cheer from the sidelines or the audience of her children's many games and productions.

Laura and Peter retired from New Jersey to what would become their adopted hometown of Durham, N.H. and a busy volunteer life. Thanks to Laura's natural curiosity, the two embarked on a day cruise of Great Bay and became active and passionate University of New Hampshire Marine Docents and volunteer educators at the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's Discovery Center. Ever the entertainer, Laura also found her home on the stage with Peter in the UNH Marine Docent Sea Chantey Singers, proudly exclaiming what you do with a drunken sailor.

No matter where she was or what she did, Laura's goal was to leave them laughing; whether it was a bunch of co-workers, a room full of relatives, or the nurses station during one of her many hospital stays as she struggled later in life with COPD.

Laura's favorite role of them all was Rara to her three beloved grandchildren, Hudson Rafael Flynn, Gram Daniel Olander Flynn and Lila Pearl Olander Flynn.

Laura also leaves her husband, Peter Robert Flynn Sr.; her son, Peter Robert Flynn Jr., and his wife, Andréa Burns Flynn; her daughter, Kelsey Ann Flynn, and her wife, Jaime Olander; and her "son-in-spirit" Dan Manseau. Also not to be forgotten, she leaves the best dog ever, Addie.

A celebration of her life will be held on February 13th in Northampton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to
Great Bay Discovery Center
89 Depot Road
Greenland, NH 03840

Condolences may be sent to
Peter Flynn
37 Coles Meadow Road, Apt 114
Northampton, MA 01060

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Chris Brown Remembered By Ronee Hoade**

Roy Christian Brown, Jr. passed away on January 13, 2016 at age 81.



I worked with Chris, a writer/producer on *TODAY*, for more than 25 years. He was a Southern Gentleman in cosmopolitan New York City. Chris was consummately professional, literate, cultured, witty and kind, a man of strong opinions and emotions. He was direct in what he needed for research--print or photographs, film or tape, and we often discussed and collaborated on special projects. He was one of my most favorite writers.

At Christmas, he would host a party that my husband Martin and I were privileged to attend. He prided himself on serving a ham from his hometown of Abingdon, Virginia, with all the trimmings, a delicious cider simmering on the stove, and lively conversation. His home was an eclectic mix of books, records and tapes, family mementos, paintings and prints, all evoking a warmth and cozy charm.

I will miss Chris, so saddened that he is here in my memory but not here. I will remember him fondly and with gratitude for all the time we shared as colleagues and friends. For us to have been both in the high-pressured *TODAY* environment was rare and wonderful indeed.

Chris' On-Air Colleagues—Today Show Cast in 1972

Hudson Theater Returns as Broadway Show Venue



The Hudson today. Photo by Chang W. Lee/©The New York Times

A British theater magnate has acquired a long-term lease to a onetime playhouse in Times Square and has begun refurbishing it as Broadway's next stage. The Hudson, owned by Millennium Hotels and Resorts and used in recent years for meetings and events, will become the 41st Broadway theater, joining the nation's most prestigious and lucrative dramatic marketplace. The project is being led by Howard Panter, the co-chief executive of the Ambassador Theater Group, which is the largest owner of theaters in Britain and also a prolific producer of musicals and plays on both sides of the Atlantic. Ambassador already runs six American theaters, two each in Louisiana and Texas, one in Brooklyn (the Kings) and one on Broadway (the Lyric, which, as one of the largest Broadway theaters, usually houses musicals).

The Hudson, which is on West 44th Street, just east of Broadway, opened in 1903 with a production of *Cousin Kate*, starring Ethel Barrymore. It was used for plays off and on until 1968; it has also been used as a CBS radio "playhouse", an NBC television studio [for Steve Allen's *Tonight* show and Sunday night variety show, as well as *The Price Is Right*], a movie theater and a rock club. The building was given landmark status in 1987, and it is well preserved, with emerald marble walls and a coffered ceiling in the lobby, a substantial space for theatrical rigging, and a long-abandoned duplex apartment upstairs that Mr. Panter hopes to convert into a nightclub.

The conversion of the building back to theatrical use comes at a time when Broadway is booming, and when producers regularly complain that there are not enough theaters to house the shows they have developed. "At the moment, there's more content chasing venues than there are venues chasing content," Mr. Panter said. He also said his company would spend more than \$10 million to renovate the building: modernizing backstage facilities for actors and stage crews, installing new seats and bathrooms, and adding lounge areas in what are now office spaces adjacent to the theater.

As a producer, Mr. Panter has invested in both hits and flops. His most notable success at the moment is as a co-producer, with Lincoln Center Theater, of the Tony-winning, and strongly selling, revival of "The King and I."

—By Michael Paul Sondec, © The New York Times, December 16, 2015



Spring Luncheon Returns to Sardi's.
Lester Holt will be our Guest Speaker.



Peacock North Spring Lunch Reservation Form

Sunday, April 24, 2016

12 noon to 3:00 pm

Sardi's Restaurant

234 West 44th Street - Second Floor (Elevator Available)

Between Broadway and Eighth Avenue

Please send this form and your check, payable to Peacock North, for \$45 per person to

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Rowayton, CT 06853

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Spouse/Guest Name _____

Your E-mail Address _____

Please check boxes below for one entrée each for yourself (and your guest)

You Guest

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☐

Sautéed Chicken Scaloppini

☐
☐

Teriyaki Broiled Salmon

☐
☐

Vegan entrée: Spaghetti al Filetto di Pomodoro

☐
☐

Kosher for Passover entrée

Menu

Sautéed Chicken Scaloppini with Risotto, Fine String Beans and Mushroom Sauce

*Orange Teriyaki Glazed Broiled Salmon with Caramelized Ginger Sweet Potato Purée,
 Sautéed Spinach, Sesame Seeds and Sweet Lime Sauce*

Vegan entrée: Spaghetti al Filetto di Pomodoro

Kosher for Passover entrée

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 with Freshly Brewed Coffee, Tea or Decaffeinated Coffee.*

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Rowayton, CT 06853

David Seger was an EJ videographer and field crew engineer,

and then a supervisor for

KNBC Electronic Journalism in Burbank

from 1981 until his retirement in 2013.

From 1973 to 1980 Jo Ann Rivituso Smith

worked at NBC New York as a secretary for Network News

and production assistant for *The Doctors*.

She was a stage manager

for NBC News and Entertainment programs from 1980 to 1983.

**At NBC Burbank she was an associate director and stage manager
from 2004-2009.**