

Steve Capus to be Guest Speaker at PN Spring Luncheon New Location is Sardi's

**This year's gathering will be held
at famed Sardi's Restaurant
at 234 West 44th Street
between Broadway and Eighth Avenue.
The fun happens from noon to 3:00 pm
on Sunday, May 19th.**

**We're pleased to announce that Steve
Capus, outgoing President of NBC News,
has agreed to be our Keynote Speaker.**

**The entire second floor will be ours.
The space is fully accessible.**

**Full details will be mailed
to all members very soon.**



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Marilyn's Page



This issue is where I get to announce the details of the Spring Luncheon and the keynote speaker, both of which are exciting! This year's luncheon will take place at the venerable New York icon, Sardi's. We will have the entire 2nd floor to ourselves.

I hope you will enjoy this change of venue from the Atlantic Grill at Lincoln Center. Due to some extenuating circumstances Atlantic Grill could not accommodate our needs, so Sardi's stepped up to the plate. It is fully accessible by elevator, and is convenient to public transportation and of course by car.

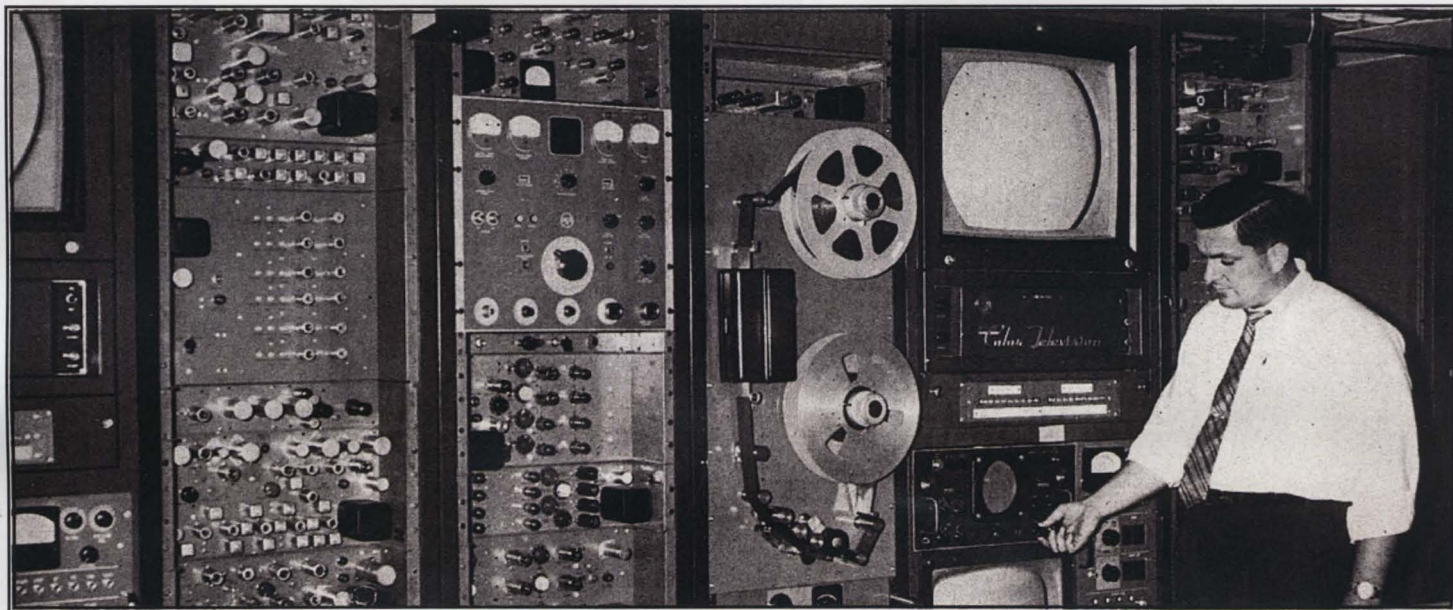
Full details including menu and parking options will be mailed to all of our members very soon. I look forward to seeing all of you at our annual gala.

The BEST news, however, is that Steve Capus will be our keynote speaker! I have known Steve since his Nightly News producing days and watched him rise to the top with great admiration. It will be a real treat to have him with us.

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

It's Not Exactly Portable....

**Here's a look at one of the first RCA TRT-1B Color Video Tape Recorders at 30 Rock.
Now we can make High Definition Live Video Recordings with our mobile devices!
Can you recognize the engineer? We have no info on him.**



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

Current E-mail Addresses

REMINDER—When you change your e-mail address, please remember to notify us at peacocknorth@yahoo.com. This is a great way for us to help members keep in touch with each other.

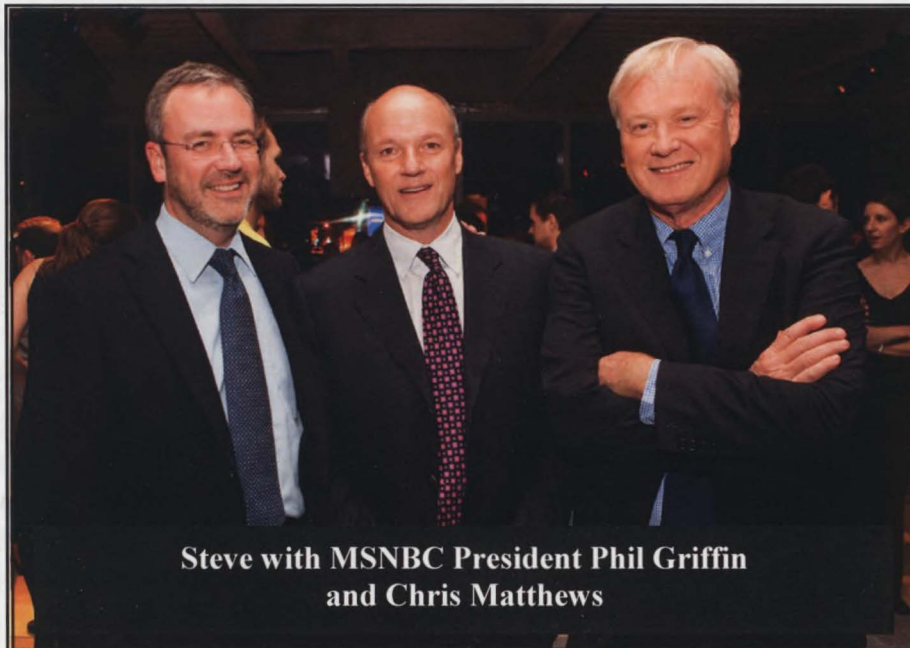
*What's Now!***Guest Speaker NBC News President Steve Capus**

Steve Capus began his journalism career in radio and print, and worked at several stations and daily newspapers in the Philadelphia area. He worked as a writer at WCAU-TV in Philadelphia in 1986 and then joined KYW-TV in 1987 as a writer and newscast producer. In 1990, at the age of 26, Capus became an executive producer at KYW-TV where he was responsible for the overall day-to-day management and coordination of the correspondents, production staff and on-air production for the station.

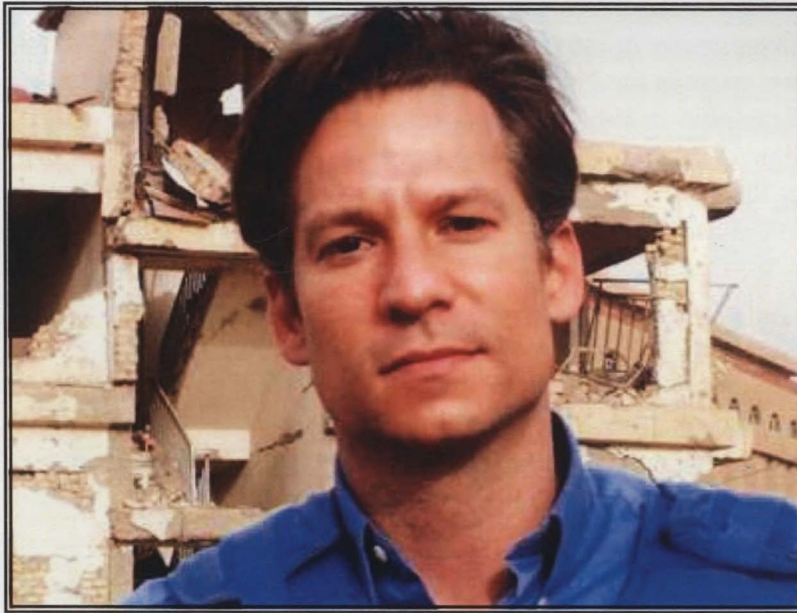
Capus joined NBC News in January, 1993. He served as executive producer of the following broadcasts: "NBC Nightside," "NBC News at Sunrise," MSNBC dayside, "The News with Brian Williams" on MSNBC, and "NBC Nightly News" with Tom Brokaw and Brian Williams. He was also a supervising producer for the "Today" show and senior vice president of NBC News.

He was named president of NBC News in November 2005 and is responsible for all aspects of the network news division, as well as MSNBC Cable and NBCNews.com. Capus is also the arbiter of issues involving ethics, style, standards, safety and other matters that affect the Division's journalistic bearing. He serves as Director on the Boards of The Weather Channel and The Newseum.

Capus, a Bucks County native, graduated from Temple University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. He has served as a member of Temple's School of Communications and Theater Board of Visitors since 2008. Capus has also received numerous awards, including four Emmy Awards, eight Edward R. Murrow Awards – including the Overall Excellence for the 4th year in a row, one Alfred I. duPont and six National Headliner Awards. In 2007, he earned the Ida B. Wells Award from the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), which is presented annually to a media executive who has demonstrated a commitment to diversifying the nations' newsrooms and improving the coverage of people and communities of color.



**Steve with MSNBC President Phil Griffin
and Chris Matthews**

*What's Now!***NBC's Richard Engel and Crew are Freed in Syria**

Richard Engel, the chief foreign correspondent for NBC News, and his crew had sneaked into Syria before. They knew where to go, where not to go; what to say, what not to say. But [on December 13th], in a demonstration of the perils of reporting from the war-torn country, Mr. Engel's crew was taken hostage by an unknown group and told they would be used to secure the release of hostages being held by Syrian rebels.

On Monday night [December 17th], the men were freed when the hostage-takers were stopped at a rebel checkpoint. The crew's return to Turkey on Tuesday highlighted once more the unpredictable nature of covering the conflict in Syria, which is said by the Committee to Protect Journalists to be the world's most dangerous place for the news media. The journalists were physically unharmed. NBC, which sought to keep the crew's disappearance a secret until they were freed, released a statement that said, "We are pleased to report they are safely out of the country."

Mr. Engel said Tuesday on NBC's "Today" show that the captors talked "openly about their loyalty to the government" of President Bashar al-Assad. "We were told that they wanted to exchange us for four Iranian agents and two Lebanese people who are from the Amal movement," Mr. Engel said, referring to the Hezbollah ally.

NBC declined to specify the number of crew members who were with Mr. Engel. Two of the crew members, John Kooistra and Ghazi Balkiz, appeared with Mr. Engel on "Today." A third crew member, Aziz Akyavas, spoke at a news conference in Turkey. Two others were seen in a YouTube video apparently posted by the hostage-takers last week. Mr. Akyavas said in an interview on the Turkish television channel NTV that one of the other two, a technician who traveled with the crew, was still missing as of Tuesday. NBC did not respond to a request for comment about that report. [Ed. note: Technician Ian Rivers crossed the border into Turkey where he received a medical evaluation, as reported by Alex Weprin of TVNewser.com on December 19th.]

Mr. Engel was last seen on television last Thursday in a taped report from Aleppo, Syria's commercial capital, where he reported that "the Syrian regime appears to be cracking, but the rebels remain outgunned." In order to transmit their report in safety, Mr. Engel and his crew crossed into southern Turkey. They were captured trying to cross back into Syria on Thursday. About 15 men, Mr. Engel said on "Today," "just literally jumped out of the trees and bushes" and "dragged us out of the car." The kidnappers killed one of the rebels whom the crew had been traveling with, he said. NBC's Web site said there was "no claim of responsibility, no contact with the captors and no request for ransom during the time the crew was missing."

The crew members were freed when the captors “ran into a checkpoint manned by members of the Ahrar al-Sham brigade, a Syrian rebel group,” NBC’s Web site reported. “There was a confrontation and a firefight ensued. Two of the captors were killed, while an unknown number of others escaped.” The rebels then helped escort the crew to the border with Turkey. “We are very happy to be back in Turkey,” Mr. Engel said, speaking in front of cameras at the Cilvegözü border gate in southern Turkey. He added, “The last five days are the days that we want to forget.”



“Team Engel” on December 20, 2012 at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in New York: David Verdi, Ghazi Balkiz, Richard Engel, Aziz Akyavas, John Kooistra, Steve Capus, Ammar Cheikh Omar, Stacy Brady, Geoff Tofield. Not pictured here, but also safe and sound, is Ian Rivers.

NBC’s television competitors and many other major news organizations, including The New York Times, refrained from reporting on the situation, in part out of concern about endangering the crew even more. In 2008, news outlets similarly refrained from publishing reports about the kidnapping in Afghanistan of David Rohde of The New York Times and a local reporter, Tahir Ludin. The two escaped in June 2009 after seven months in captivity.

In the case of Mr. Engel, Gawker and a number of other Web sites reported speculation about his disappearance on Monday. After he and his crew members returned safely to Turkey, Peter N. Bouckaert, the emergencies director of Human Rights Watch who has been involved in efforts to free captives, criticized the decisions made by those sites. News blackouts, he said, go “against the journalistic instinct to report the news, but in many of these cases it does save lives.”

While none of the crew members suffered any physical injuries during their five days in captivity, there was “psychological pressure,” Mr. Akyavas told NTV. He said they were blindfolded, handcuffed and “every now and then had guns pointed on our heads.” “It was not pleasant,” he said. On “Today,” Mr. Engel said: “They made us choose which one of us would be shot first, and when we refused there were mock shootings. They pretended to shoot Ghazi several times.”

Mr. Engel, who declined an interview request Tuesday via NBC, pointed out on “Today” that others in Syria have not been as lucky. His detention was a reminder that Austin Tice, a freelance reporter for the McClatchy News Service and The Washington Post, has been missing since August.

Susan E. Rice, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, wrote on Twitter that she was relieved for Mr. Engel and his colleagues, but added: “The situation for Syria’s people remains dire. They, too, deserve to be free.”

Mr. Engel is perhaps the best-known foreign-based correspondent on television in the United States. He has worked for NBC since May 2003, two months into the Iraq war. He was promoted to chief foreign correspondent in 2008.

The anchor of “NBC Nightly News,” Brian Williams, has been among Mr. Engel’s most ardent fans. Without referring to his disappearance, Mr. Williams brought up Mr. Engel while being interviewed onstage at a charity fundraiser in New Jersey on Sunday night. “What I know about Richard Engel is, he’s fearless, but he’s not crazy,” Mr. Williams said. The mention of Mr. Engel’s name spurred spontaneous applause from the crowd.

© The New York Times - Brian Stelter reported from New York, and Sebnem Arsu from Istanbul. Bill Carter and Robert Mackey contributed reporting from New York. Published on December 18, 2012.

*What's Now!***Sandy Destroys PN Members' Home**

Hurricane Sandy destroyed PNers Steve Jambeck and Joan Flynn's home in Rockaway Beach, NY. They have been environmentally conscious and concerned about climate change for decades. They see the event as a wake-up call about the climate change that fuels extreme weather events like Sandy. As they and their family pick up the pieces and figure out how to rebuild, Joan took a few minutes to share her story, and what she would say to the politicians she charges with tackling global warming.

This material was posted at Greenpeace.org on November 4, 2012 by David Pomerantz



Joan Flynn: Our decision to stay in our house during the storm was influenced a lot by Hurricane Irene, the last hurricane that hit us. That turned out to be nothing, and it lulled a lot of people into complacency about Sandy.

On Monday, A neighbor of ours went down to the ocean with his two kids and put sandbags at the seawall, thinking that would make a difference. All of a sudden we see him on the run with his kids, and I asked him what was wrong, and he said "the seawall broke" and behind him was a rush of water. We live 1,000 feet from the ocean and it wasn't just a little flood, it was a rush of water coming down the street.

We and our neighbors camped out on our second floor, and when it started getting really bad, we tried to go to another neighbor's house with a higher second floor. It was dark already, and we were like a train holding each other's shoulders to get to his house. When we went to step out across the street, the current was so strong that we had to get back, because it would have taken us. The rush of the water coming in from the ocean up the street had nothing to slow it down, and we would have been dead. So we all went back to our house and went upstairs.

We got Marie, our neighbor on chemo who was with us, settled into bed. From our second story we can see east and west, and at one point I looked out west and I could see this amazing glow of light. Usually if there's a fire in Breezy Point you hear the fire siren and then you hear the city fire engines coming from 40 blocks away. I looked at Steven and I said "I haven't heard any fire engines. None." So we realized that was going to be a pretty outrageous hit. Maybe 20 minutes later, we started smelling smoke. We looked out to the east and there were fires there as well.

The thing I realize now is that both Steven and I were illogically calm. I felt ready: I had people to take care of, because Marie was sick, and her husband was beside himself because her immune system was compromised. I didn't think about being afraid, I thought about staying calm and what we needed to do next.

The damage to the house is bad enough that we need a new house. I never realized how much I really loved my home. I didn't have a single breakdown moment until Thursday, when I was standing by the stove and thinking "what am I taking" of all the pots and pans hanging above the stove. And I saw these little



ceramic ducks on the stove that I remembered that my daughter and I had gotten when we took my youngest son to college. And I totally lost it. And I was standing outside with my frying pan in my hands sobbing. There are bright sides: after the kids moved out, I got new rugs. My daughter never liked them, so as we hauled them out I said "I bet you're really happy about that." So we had a laugh or two.

I've seen Fire Island in the Long Island Sound get hit by storms a number of times over the years... and they say "we're going to rebuild." I thought they were out of their minds. But I'm 64 years old, I'm not going anywhere, I'm going to rebuild and I'm going to stay here, because this is where I live. I put roots down here and you can't just tear them out. I think if I were a young parent, I would consider not staying, because this isn't going to stop happening. And that's the thing more than anything that has me pissed, is that it didn't have to be this way. During the Carter admin, we put thermal solar panels on our roof for hot water, and it seemed so sensible, just like what you've got to do. I thought everyone would be doing it. But politicians and oil companies just put a stop to that and gave us more coal and wars for oil instead.

I'm 64 years old and I have lived in Rockaway for 40 years and have seen the weather change. Even though they're not huge storms that spread a million miles, we've had tornadoes, outrageous storms – storms that come out of nowhere and knock trees down, all of this – so many more just in the past three years than in the preceding 37 years I lived in Rockaway. That's climate change.

I would say to President Obama or Gov. Romney, or any other politicians – go against the forces that are paying you and do what is necessary to save the environment for future generations. Just stop the b.s. and say what you're going to do about it – efficient and safe, clean renewable energy. Nuclear power plants were compromised up and down the coast, so let's stop talking about that as a solution to climate change, since climate change is already happening and those power plants are in danger. They need to say it's real and say that we have to do something about it. Because I'm afraid if we don't act now it will be too late.



*What's Now!***Into the vault: the operation to rescue Manhattan's drowned internet**

At Broad Street, near the tip of Lower Manhattan, the situation is far from normal. Many streets in the area are closed off and packed with trucks, equipment, and generators. Manhole covers are open everywhere. Verizon's Broad Street central office, which routes local phone, DSL, and FiOS data, resembles a military field base. Walls of sandbags remain around the building, and the constant hum of generators and pumps bounces down the streets. The lobby of the building is covered in plywood to protect any decorations it may have, and the entrance has become a type of checkpoint lit by a string of incandescent bulbs.

On Wednesday, two weeks after the storm, I met with Verizon's Executive Director of Operations, Christopher D. Levendos, who showed me the extent of the damage and repairs. Levendos tells me the 90,000 cubic foot cable vault has suffered a "catastrophic failure," far worse than the damage done to a similar, but much larger vault at Verizon's West Street headquarters near the World Trade Center.

I'm told that an estimated 100 people are working here — a collection of contractors, power utility, and Verizon crews — and there seems to be a realization of how much work is left to be completed. As Levendos and I walk past the workers and squeeze between cables into the underground vault, I don't know what to expect.

A two-day pumping operation has left the cable vault mostly dry, but it doesn't look right. Cable insulation has been stripped back in areas, cords are cut, chunks of cables lie on the ground, and splice boxes have been torn open. The 90,000 cubic foot cable vault has suffered a "catastrophic failure."

Levendos explains to me that before crews could even begin removing water, they needed to repair ground-level fuel pumps to feed backup diesel generators on the upper floors. Two mobile generator trailers were brought in, and they remained in use when I visited, as local power utility Con Ed worked to reconnect the building to the grid. Workers then used trucks to pump dry air through the copper wiring — a job that's typically handled by air pumps in the basement that were rendered useless by the storm surge. It was too late for the decades-old copper wiring, which was submerged for the better part of two days. After crews sent test signals into the copper, Levendos says he was "left with the conclusion here that much of what is around me has been destroyed."

Miles of copper is ruined not only in the cable vault at Broad Street, but also at 20 or so manholes around the area. Even worse, paper insulation in the copper wiring sucks water through the cabling from capillary action, destroying cabling even in dry areas. Levendos says it's "far too tedious, time consuming, and not effective of a process to try and put this infrastructure back together," so Verizon's taking the opportunity to rewire with fiber optics instead. Service has been restored to FiOS customers for over a week — unlike copper, fiber optics aren't damaged by the water. As part of this process, crews have already pulled fiber up the major corridors — including Water, Broad, and Pearl Streets — to ultimately connect the fiber network to buildings.

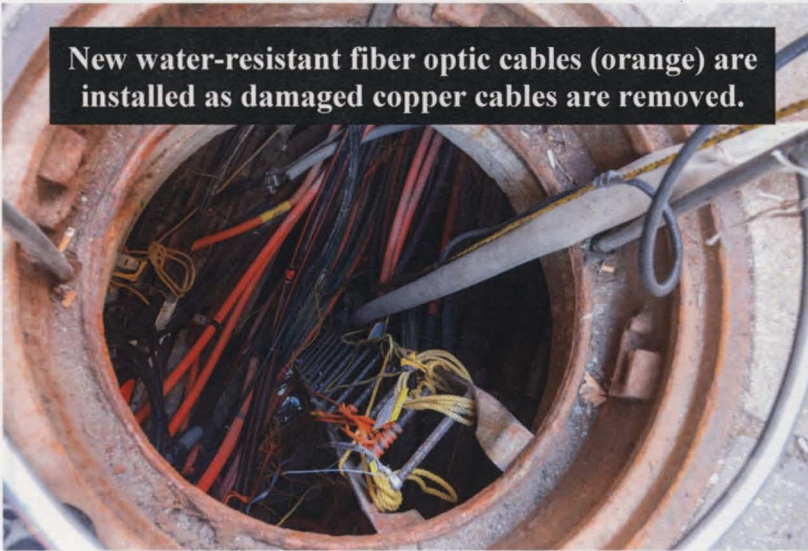
Despite the progress, huge challenges remain. While fiber optic cabling weathered the storm, the electronics that send light through them are vulnerable to water. Verizon has to analyze the extent of damage done to equipment in buildings they serve and see how much work remains to hook up areas without FiOS. Once fiber is brought to a building's doorstep, workers still must bring service to each and every unit. Verizon wouldn't give me a number, but thousands served by copper-based phone and DSL remain without service to this day in Lower Manhattan. For them, the wait will surely continue as the process of bringing fiber up floor by floor progresses.

—By Dante D'Orazio on November 17, 2012 – The Verge.Com

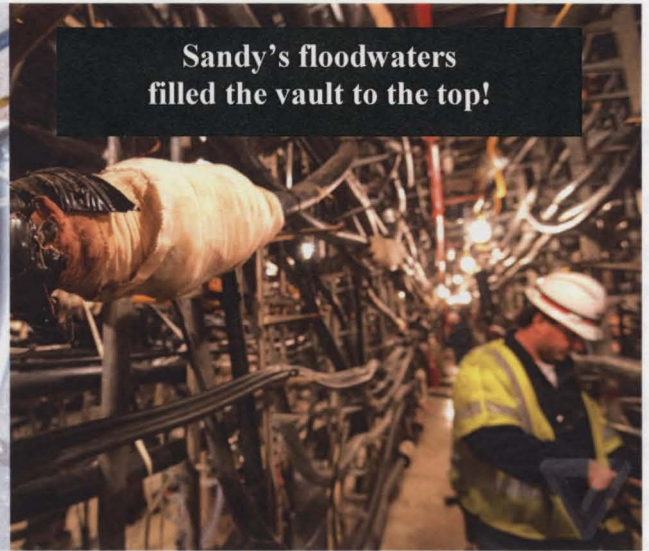
Personal Note from Marilyn Altman:

I would love to note that Verizon's Chris Levendos helped me (NBC) get fiber connectivity for the Education Nation Summit at the New York Public Library Main Building to 30 Rock. He is a native New Yorker from Inwood (Upper Manhattan) and really cares about this city and his customers.

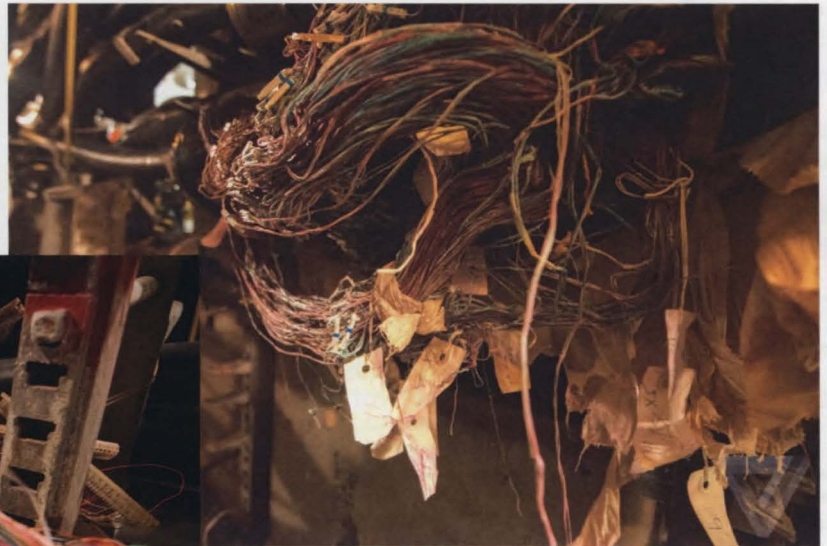
New water-resistant fiber optic cables (orange) are installed as damaged copper cables are removed.



Sandy's floodwaters filled the vault to the top!



**Right and below:
Two views showing old multi-pair copper
cables with waterlogged hand-written
paper i.d. tags.
All these cables will be replaced.**



**Right: New fiber cables (in orange jackets)
are shown with black-clad copper
cables at the vault entrance.
As the old cables are removed from
service they are terminated with end caps.**



*What's Now!***Joe Coggins, Artist!**

Announcing a new website for retired newswriter and artist Joe Coggins:

His art work, along with the work of some other artists, will have a grand opening at **Coggies Corner** on April 1st. The site is in the final stages of development, thanks to The Photo Center. You can have a pre-debut peek by simply visiting the link <http://www.coggiescorner.com>.

All of the works have been made into photocopies and depending upon your monitor, intensities will vary.

See you soon.

Joe Coggins
(732) 551-8306

About the artist:

Studied at the Art Students League and National Academy of Design in New York for more than forty years.

Studied Impressionism at the Hermitage in Leningrad and general art at the Uffizi in Florence.

Several visits to London, Louvre and Rodin Galleries, in Paris, plus visits to Barcelona galleries, pen in hand.

Conventional journalism studies at Harvard and Columbia.

Forty years with New York radio networks and stations as a reporter, writer, on air performer, and producer.

**Gary Iorio, Golf Champ!**

On October 16th, 2012, the NBC Long Island Lunch Bunch got together and thanks to Frank Gaeta and Joel Spector I was contacted and was able to attend. Now that I am pushing 90 I want to attend any future ones.

The guys always share interesting happenings in their lives. I once wrote that there should be a column called "Toot Your Own Horn," so here goes...

Some of the men are golfers, so I shared with them that I won the award for playing in the Presidential Cup tournament held in Eisenhower Park.

It is a prestigious tournament because it is a two-day scoring affair. Being in the "C" class I was proud to win. I was informed that it was a contest including the A, B and C classes, and I bested them all. That made it become a "most prestigious award."

Gary Iorio

What's Now!

Bambi Reports on The "Ollieites"



September 11, 2012, saw the latest periodic gathering of "old newsies" at Empire Szechuan. Luncheons were originally held at "Ollie's" (pre-moi!!)...but the gang's name is the "Ollieites" started by Sy Pearlman. Photo includes (left) Bob Jamieson, Pat Lynch, Bambi T., Bill Chesleigh, Sy Pearlman, (right) Bill Wheatley, Sid Feders & Dennis Sullivan.

Other "Ollieites" not in attendance in the September photo: Bert Medley, Gerry Solomon, Peter Poor, Rick Davis, Lew Allison, Ron Steinman, Stan Bernard, Marc Kusnetz and when he's not covering stories in Israel- Martin Fletcher!

An SNL Reunion at Sea



Your editor and his lady Rhonda Hansome recently caught up with premier saxophonist/producer David Sanborn on a *Smooth Jazz Cruise* to the Caribbean.

David and I first met on *Saturday Night Live's* second-ever show in October of 1975, when he played the sax solo on Paul Simon's "Still Crazy After All These Years."

Some years later David and bassist/producer Marcus Miller (the other music host on this cruise) were regular members of the SNL house band.

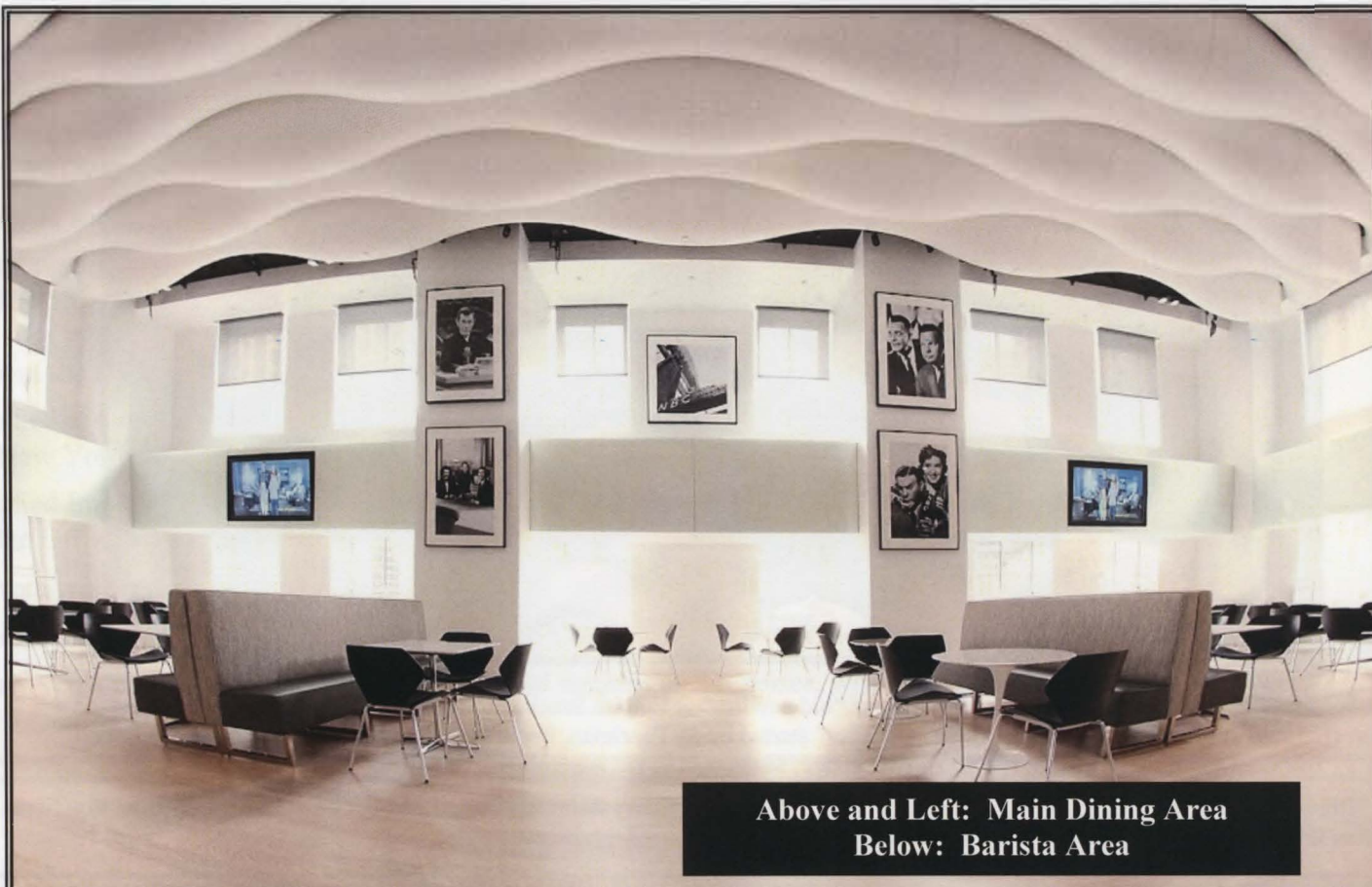
Rhonda was a Muppeteer on the very first SNL.

It's truly a small world.

What's New!

STUDIO 9C

New Commissary is Ready for its Closeup



Above and Left: Main Dining Area
Below: Barista Area



The new 30 Rock commissary opened on January 8th. Located in the East (tower) building it occupies space on both the 9th and 10th Floors and overlooks Rock Plaza and the Rink. The new commissary is part of a \$190 million upgrade to 30 Rock and other New York City NBCU facilities.

In Studio 9C employees and their guests will find an expanded variety of food options, a breathtaking dining area and even a barista. The commissary offers a broad selection of high quality food, fast service, a variety of “grab and go” options, fast and convenient cashless payment with special employee accounts, 245 seats, beautiful ambience with plenty of natural light from the 67 windows, and easy to find healthy “Eat Smart” food options.

Other features are new seasonal options including items to highlight local flavors grown and produced with a 150-mile radius of 30 Rock, eco-friendly “to go” containers, a living wall that improves air quality and reduces traffic noise, reusable dishes and silverware, terrazzo flooring made from recycled content, modern banquette upholstery made from 100% natural fiber and with 100% post-consumer recycled content, and millwork countertops made from stone that was extracted and manufactured locally.



Jason Giagrande, Director of Global Dining Services for NBCUniversal, says, “Studio 9C has exceeded our expectations. Our senior leadership asked us to create a dining experience where employees could enjoy a great meal in an inviting atmosphere. Whether employees spend quality time with coworkers or simply take a break from the day, Studio 9C has delivered. We have 50% more employees dining in the new space compared to the former 30 Rock Commissary and the feedback is great. Employees love the new food options and the space. Most of all, Studio 9C has helped spark a new energy at 30 Rock.”



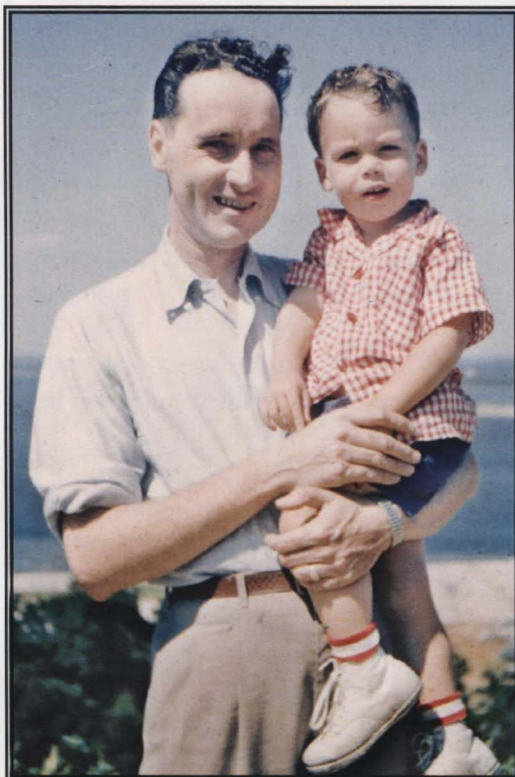
The “Living Wall”



Side Seating Area

Peacock Apples
Frank and Cort Snell

With this Profile we inaugurate a new feature in which we highlight multi-generational NBC families. We invite members to submit their memoirs and photos for future editions.



The earliest recollection I have of my father Courtney (Cort) and his job at NBC was while our family was vacationing at our summer rental at the Jersey Shore in Lavallette, and watching him leave to go work at the NBC coverage of the political conventions. At the time, he worked in the Field Department in LIC where all the mobile units were. I went out there a few times when I was probably about 7 or 8 years old, and went inside those incredible trucks (with very close supervision!).

When the operation at LIC was closed down, a new field location opened up in Fairview NJ. I remember some of the guys that worked with my father there. They would show me around “the garage” where there were mountains of cable and lots of other “tv stuff”, including the fleet of mobile units. The crew was really a nice bunch of guys, and I got the distinct impression that they really liked working with my father. I can remember feeling pretty proud of my father.

I guess from these times I spent around the tv people and the tv stuff, and the stories my father would tell, I wanted to someday work at NBC. I got my wish one day while I was on summer break from Villanova University, where I was working on my EE degree. My father said there was an opening for vacation relief in the 3G stock room at NBC. I jumped at the chance, was hired as a vacation relief, and was introduced to the 3G crew

who included Lew West, Ray Glendon, Wes Conant, John Diehlman, and Doug McIntosh. I learned a lot from those guys, and after working summer relief for 2 summers, and after graduating from college, I got my shot at a staff job in the Engineering Department.

I started there in July 1973 and was in awe of the group of engineers with whom I was going to be working. At this time, my father was the Manager of Studios in Studio Field in 30 Rock. It was nice with both of us working in the same building. Most of the engineers knew my father and, again, I could tell he was a well-liked and respected person. Our careers overlapped for only five years, when he ultimately decided to retire in 1978 after 44 years. I suppose it was because of his legacy having been one of the NBC pioneers that started his career in 1934, and having had the privilege to work with him and his many friends, that led me to want to follow in his footsteps with a career of my own at NBC.

NBC “Pioneer” Cort on remote ca. 1940



Peacock Apples

Now, having completed forty years of my career at NBC, I still think back to those early days. So much has changed in the Company – not just the technology, but the nature of the business, and the mindset of the people working in it. In my office area, I have many pictures of my father in the very early days of NBC, to remind me, and anyone else who sees the pictures, to remember NBC's history and the people who helped build the Company.

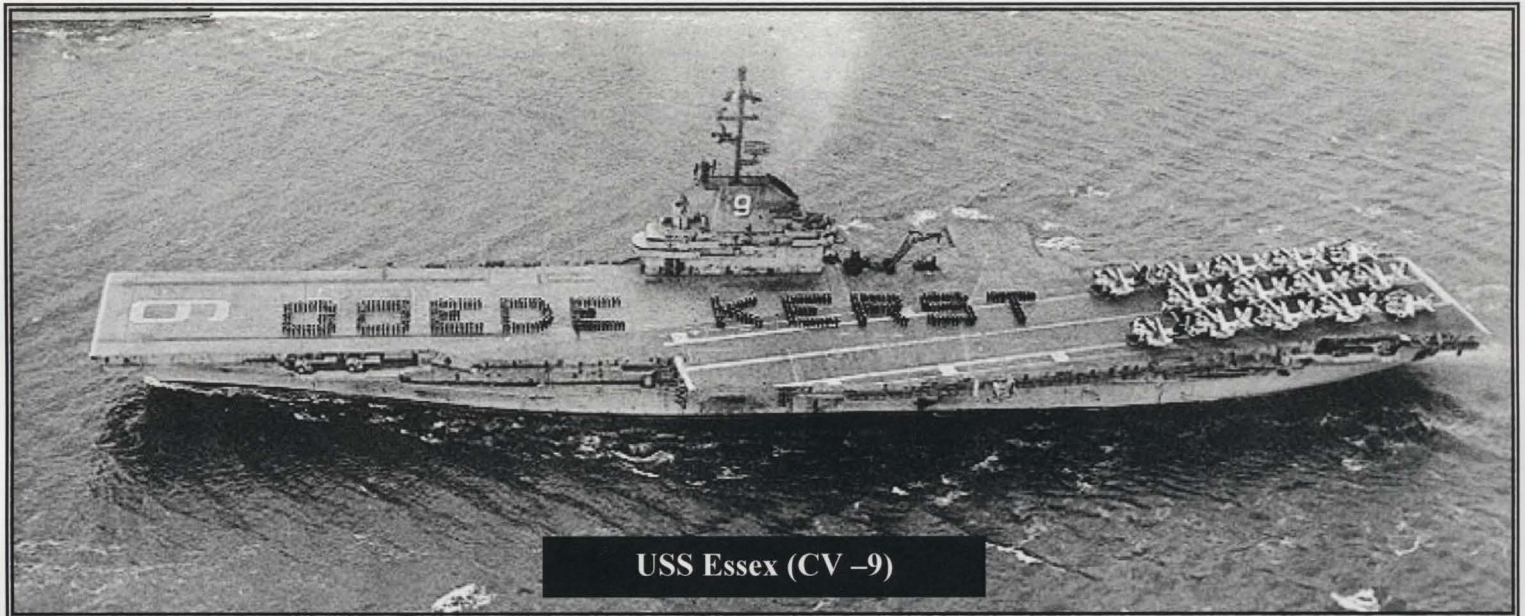
The first large scale project I worked on was re-designing the communications system for Studio 8H in 1975. This was prior to the debut of SNL later in 1975. At the same time my father was the Studio Tech Manager assigned to 8H/SNL. My wife and I attended the dress rehearsal for the SNL opening show with George Carlin as guest host. After that, there were two other occasions that I worked on upgrades in Studio 8H. I did project work in just about every studio, including Brooklyn, which was upgraded for the Cosby Show. When the Engineering department was decentralized many years ago, I no longer did project work in the studios, but was assigned to do projects in the "On-Air engineering" group. I've worked on the NY side of the Olympics coverage since the 1996 Atlanta Olympics for Sports, and also for the News Olympics coverage for most of those Olympics. I primarily do project design work now for Transmission and Skypath, as well as News distribution.

At the same time, I served on the NABET-CWA Local 11 Executive Board for 22 years from 1980 through 2002. The last ten years of that was as the Local 11 Treasurer.

Unfortunately, since my father and I were the "picture-takers" in the family, this is the only picture I was able to locate of us together in the later years.



**Cort's 1978 Retirement Party on the 30 Rock Mezzanine
Cort and his wife, Jane, and Frank's wife, Cheryl with Frank**

*A Today Show Memoir***"Cue The Carrier"**
By William Safire

USS Essex (CV -9)

Joel ,

I'm cleaning out old files and came across this article I saved. It was printed in the NY Times on January 17, 2002. I saved it because I went to college with Bill Safire and am proud to say that (despite our political differences) we stayed friends and kept in touch right up until the time of his death.

I also worked as a PA with Lenny Safire when I first came to NBC and he was producing things for the TODAY show, although this incident happened before my time.

Thought the PNers would get a kick out of it.

Enid Roth.

WASHINGTON— A half-century ago this week, my late older brother Len who was an associate producer of the brand-new television show "Today" -- pressed his NBC bosses to unshackle the show from the studio. He had this idea of using the latest video technology to do "remotes" -- live pictures from scenes as far as a few miles away.

One remote was a tone poem about dawn over Manhattan seen from a beautiful bridge over the Hudson. But Len overslept that morning; unshaven, he threw a robe over his pajamas and hailed a cab, shouting "Take me to the middle of the George Washington Bridge!" The cabbie took him to a police station instead; that nutty incident became TV legend, recounted in Paddy Chayefsky's movie "Network."

At that time in 1952, I was a buck private in the U.S. Army, spending a couple of months in a Manhattan public information office between basic training and shipment overseas. My lieutenant thought it would reflect well on the Army if the new "Today" show, to commemorate the Fourth of July, televised a medal presentation.

A Today Show Memoir

I pitched it to Lenny at NBC, who started to turn it down but then thought of a live remote: "Could you do it on Bedloe's Island? With the Statue of Liberty in the background?" I said sure. He told me to get a general to pin the medal on a war hero at 7 a.m., repeating it at 8 and again at the end of the show just before 9.

But the lieutenant pointed out that that couldn't be done. When a medal was presented, that was it; you couldn't take it back and present it again, even for TV. So we looked for a couple of other heroes scheduled to receive medals that month. He found them and two other generals eager to make the award, and we set up three ceremonies.

Trouble was, one of the recipients was to get the Distinguished Service Cross. The brass at Governors Island said that required an honor guard, and where that guard went, the First Army Band followed.

I told my brother we would need NBC to spring for a ferry to take a 30-man honor guard and a 40-piece band and three generals and their staffs from Governors Island to the Statue of Liberty's island. Also, at the same ungodly hour of 5 a.m., we'd need another ferry to take the three medal recipients and the 20 or so members of their families from Manhattan's South Ferry slip to rendezvous at the statue.

Lenny said Pat Weaver of NBC could afford the troop movement. In the predawn Fourth, the announcer Frank Blair, a flashlight in one hand and a mike in the other, was lining up the generals and the recipients in the dark. I was in the mobile unit's control booth with the director, and Lenny was with Dave Garroway in the Manhattan studio.

As the "Today" show began to televise the presentation of a Bronze Star, my lieutenant called. He put me on with a commander in the Navy's public information office.

"I don't want to horn in on an Army project," said the commander, "but I was watching this event on television and it so happens we have an Essex-class aircraft carrier in the Upper Bay at the moment."

On another line, I called Lenny and asked, "Can you use an aircraft carrier?" "Sure," he said. "Tell the captain to run it past the Statue of Liberty as we come up to 8 o'clock. We'll swing our cameras around to pick it up."

It was then that I, a private not yet first class, in a Thurberian voice like thin ice breaking, gave the command never before given either in naval history or in the new world of mass communications: "Cue the carrier."

On their small screens, "Today's" viewers saw the hero step forward. The band played the anthem; the general awarded the medal; the honor guard fired off its rifles; the proud families wiped tears from their eyes; the director superimposed the waving American flag over the massive torch of Miss Liberty, then dissolved to the 27,000-ton ship steaming majestically by, sailors lined up on deck, saluting.

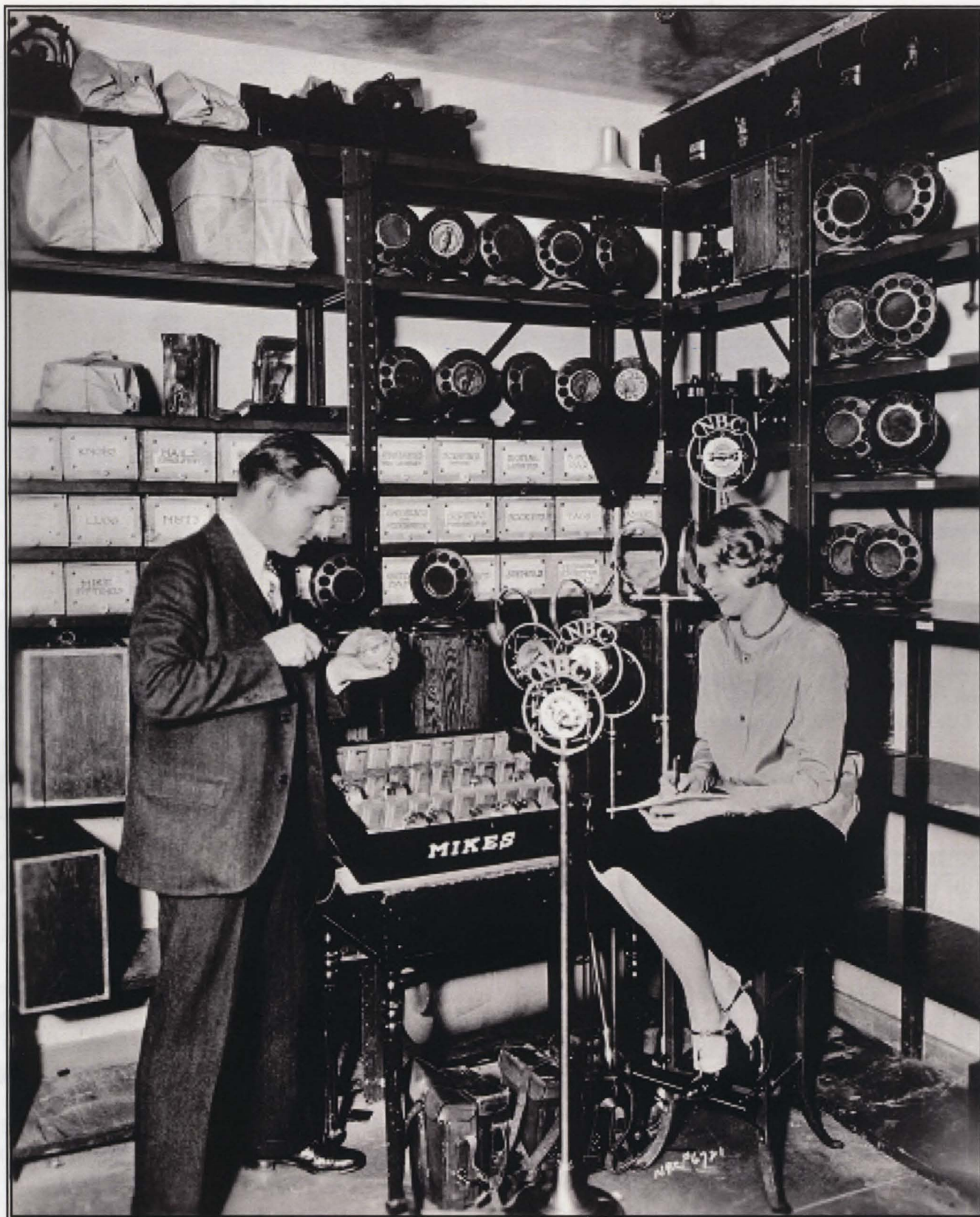
My brother and I were all choked up in the rush of patriotic fervor. It was a vivid lesson to everyone involved: Even when stage-managed to evoke an emotional response, coverage of a live event at the scene of its happening could take on a life of its own, surprising and stirring participants on both sides of the camera.

"This is some medium," Lenny breathed, those 50 years ago.

—January 17, 2002 – © The New York Times

We Get Letters and Pictures

In the NBC Microphone Storage Room



**This charming photo and story were forwarded to PN
by former NBC Tech Manager Terry Skelton.**

As a long-time collector of early microphones, I've always been intrigued by this image. It shows the microphone storage room at NBC at the company's headquarters in New York in 1929. Operating engineer George McElrath is checking out the microphones that will be used for the live broadcast of President Herber Hoover's inaugural. The one-hour broadcast required hundreds of hours of advance preparation.

No recordings were allowed at NBC during these years, which meant that all audio originated from microphones. That fact would have made this an important and frequently used room in the RCA broadcast center at 711 Fifth Avenue. In the years before the development of the ribbon and dynamic microphone technologies, the only useful options were carbon or condenser microphones. Both systems required external DC power, typically provided by batteries. While offering better fidelity, condenser microphones were too fragile to be used outside the studio. So, the older carbon microphone technology was typically used for remote broadcasts.

In this storage room, we see dozens of Western Electric 600-A double button carbon microphones stored in the wooden box labeled "Mikes." McElrath is mounting them with suspension springs in both floor stands and the ubiquitous 1-B desktop enclosures. The parts storage boxes on the shelves behind him are artfully labeled as "Rheostats and Potentiometers," "Sockets," "Signal Lights," "Screws," "Washers," "Mike Fittings" and various other categories.

The original print of this early NBC publicity photo comes from the collection of Bill Newbrough.

John Schneider is a lifelong radio history researcher. Write him at jschneid93@gmail.com. This is one in a series of photo features from his collection. See past images under Columns/Roots of Radio at radioworld.com.

<http://www.radioworld.com/article/in-the-nbc-microphone-storage-room/216558>

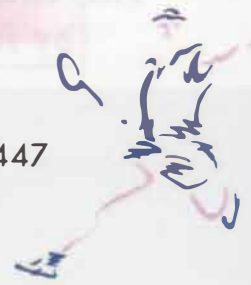
—by John Schneider, Radio World Magazine, 11/27/2012



*We Get Letters***WALTER BALDERSON**

2429 Ecuadorian Way #41 - Clearwater, FL 33763-3447

Phone: 727 791 4574 E-mail: walt@walterbalderson.com



Oct. 15, 2012

Dear Marilyn:

The Summer edition of Peacock North was forwarded to me by a member. I was very much distressed at the number of people in the Silent Microphones section.

I retired in 1985 and have been living in Florida ever since. Just before my retirement, I was a group 6 in the Video Tape Department and worked with you many times on Nightly News

Reading this past issue of Peacock North, surely did bring back some memories. I recall working with Julian Goodman and David Brinkley at WRC in Washington when they worked in the newsroom.

I have enjoyed good health, now in my 28th. year of retirement, and still manage to play tennis six mornings a week, doubles, that is.

The thing I miss most is New York City. I loved the Broadway Shows, the Village, Central Park and Times Square. No place on earth can compare.

Since I don't fly anymore, I am pretty much enjoying the west coast of Florida, which is bad either.

You guys do a great job on the newspaper. I am inclosing my check for membership.

Sincerely

Walter Balderson
(Olebaldy)



*We Get Letters***Memories of NHL on NBC**

I was the Unit Manager on NHL Hockey in those years with Scotty & Teddy, et al, and I really enjoyed being part of a great television team along with Ted Lindsay, Tim Ryan & Brian MacFarland. All great guys and I treasure the experience!

Barry Black

Late in the game, there was a face-off in the Boston end. Rick Leach got the puck, and fired a hard shot, right at our camera behind the Bruin net. It scored the winning goal, right at our low camera. The Flyers were the first expansion team to win the Cup. What a game, and what a great telecast. I'll never forget it.

George Finkel

40 years ago this year [is] when NBC acquired the rights to the National Hockey League. It was that acquisition that elevated this then-29-year-old into the world of pro sports after four years in the U.S. Army, the last three with AFRTS, the last of which was with AFVN in Saigon and Danang. Following my discharge came three years with the Associated Press, the last of which was right next door to 30 Rock, at 50 Rock...

While at AP Sports, I was introduced by AP deskman Dick Joyce to Til Ferdenzi, and, subsequently, to a career in pro sports that led me from NBC Press, where I worked on the NHL, on up to NBC Sports as administrator [thank you, Rex Lardner, who I hope reads these exchanges]. That led me, in turn, to the New York Cosmos, the North American Soccer League [NASL], Baseball Commissioner's Office, Chicago White Sox and PGA Tour. After that came 10 years at a "mom and pop" newspaper in Jacksonville Beach, Fla., and now into "semi-retirement"...

But back to the NHL. From 1973 on into 1974, I got to know the NBC Sports hockey team created by Scotty Connal that included, among others, Teddy Nathanson and Cory Leible and featured the announce team of Tim Ryan, Brian MacFarlane and "Terrible" Ted Lindsay and, of course, Peter Puck. Now, for anyone who's read this far, who was the voice of Peter? I, of course, might know the answer to that question...

But I did, most assuredly, appreciate having the opportunity to be part of the NBC Sports hockey team, at least from a distance...and also being at NBC Sports, or until I moved on to the great unknown, pro soccer, in 1978...

Chuck Adams

Nice reminiscences from several members of the NHL crew, 1972-1975.

Hand-picked by Scotty Connal and kept together (in the main) over the 3 years of the contract, it was the best crew I have worked with over my 52 year career. Ted, Brian and I got to know everyone by first name from producers to cable-pullers and the spirit was fantastic. There wasn't a dry eye when Ted Lindsay spoke to the group when the series ended in 1975.

I have often said when asked which have been the best times in my career, and even though there have been many good ones --later at CBS in many different sports and then after my return to NBC in 1998--those hockey years in the Golden Age were the ultimate because of the passion, commitment and camaraderie on the part of our whole group. Special hi-fives to George, Barry and Chuck for bringing back the memories.

Tim Ryan --NBC class of 1972-1977, and 1998-2013.



A newer NHL on NBC logo

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Tom Aspell Remembered By Steve Capus**

It's with great sadness that I report the loss of a longtime member of the NBC News organization. Veteran correspondent Tom Aspell passed away on February 12th... as cancer claimed yet another member of our extended family.

Understated ... selfless ... perpetually cool ... shrewd ... wry ... curmudgeonly ... and a damn good reporter, Tom Aspell joined NBC News in 1985 as a producer based in Cyprus. His career began as a scriptwriter and cameraman with Visnews in 1970. Steve O'Neil remembers Tom as a cameraman documenting the war in Cambodia who, while a fierce competitor was, "the nicest guy I knew."

When Saigon fell to communist forces in 1975, Aspell captured some of those iconic images of the rooftop escapes and was one of the few journalists who stayed behind to document the ensuing stories. In fact, Tom always seemed to be the guy running into the places that others were fleeing. He reported on what was taking place in Beirut from the late 70's through the early 80's first for CBS News and later for ABC News.

From Southeast Asia to the Middle East... to the Balkans ... to Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and dozens of other "hot spots," Aspell made his mark on behalf of NBC News for 28 years. To a person, all of his colleagues will tell you Tom was great company in the field who loved sharing stories at the end of a day spent documenting history.

Tom was a native of New Zealand whose last posting for NBC News was in Cyprus... where he lived with his wife and two sons. While Tom was an intensely private man, he forged extremely close relationships with many in our profession... his loss will be deeply felt.

Steve Capus – February 13, 2013

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Lou Gerard Remembered By Phil Mushnick**

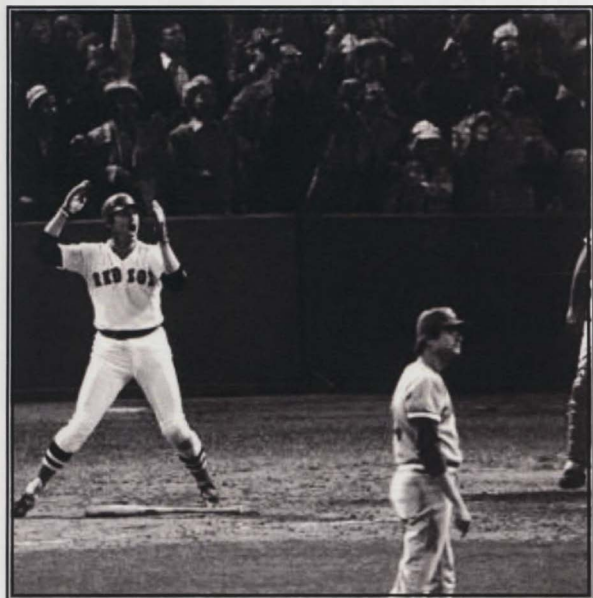
I Imagine Lou Gerard's funeral service, tomorrow on Long Island, will end with "Amen." But for the many millions who knew Gerard only by his work, a more appropriate close would be "Aw, rats!"

Gerard died February 8th at the age of 86. He was one of the great characters among many great characters within NBC Sports in its glory days, back when bosses such as Chet Simmons, Arthur Watson, Scotty Connal, Mike Weisman and Harry Coyle seemed eager to have fun trying to make good television.

Gerard and an unnamed rodent teamed in 1975 to capture one of the all-time great moving images in sports: Carlton Fisk's pleading waves to the ball, begging it to fly inside the foul pole in the final act of Game 6 of the World Series in Boston. If you don't know the video I'm referencing, well, you do.

Coyle, who trained to direct live TV as a World War II fighter pilot, was NBC's hard-bitten, encrusted but soft-on-the-inside lead baseball director. And his directions to Gerard, the cameraman placed low inside the Green Monster, were to direct his full, focused attention on the ball. Where the play went, Gerard's camera was to follow.

But Coyle's direction and Gerard's attention were radically altered by the appearance of a Fenway rat, sniffing about Gerard's shoes. When Fisk connected off Pat Darcy in the bottom of the 12th inning, Gerard's focus was so divided by that rat he wasn't sure where the play was headed, thus he remained focused on Fisk, producing some of the greatest reaction footage in sports history.



Seems wherever Gerard went on NBC assignment, stories followed — or at least travelled with him.

One young NBC operative recalled Gerard, before the 1987 AFC Championship — in Cleveland, won by the Broncos in overtime after they tied the score with what became known as "The Drive" (15 plays, 98 yards) — barking at a network executive because Gerard felt not enough had been done to protect NBC camera and audio crews from the freezing cold.

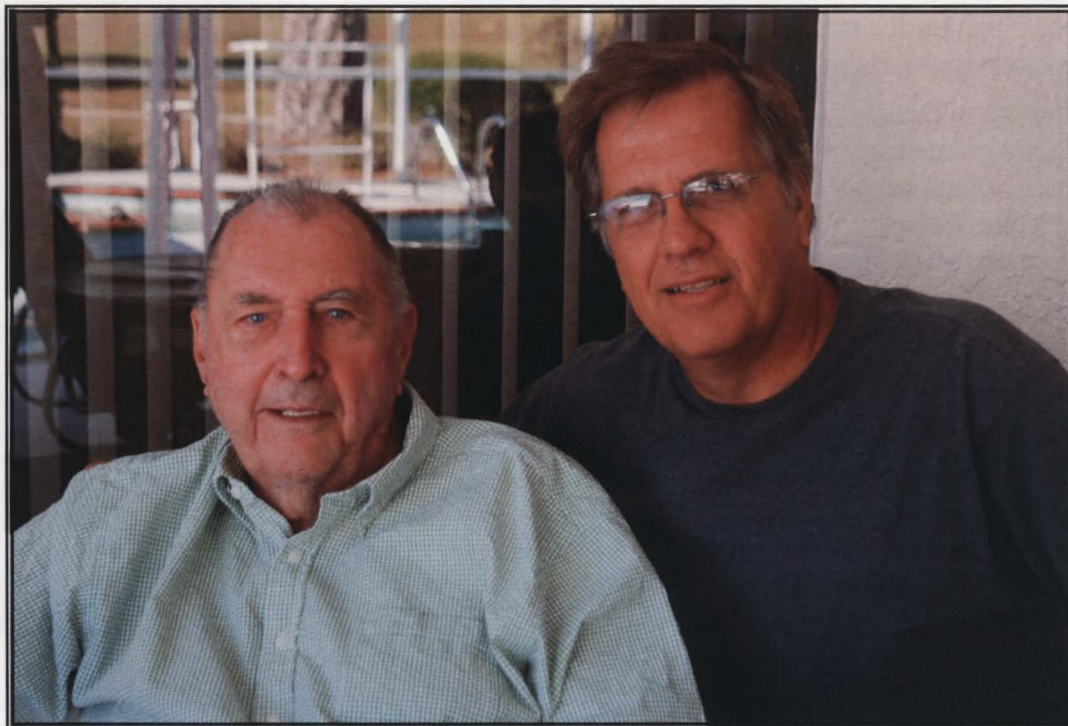
Gerard could get away with that because he was right and because he was better than right — he was good. That's why there were few big events on NBC that weren't, in some part, shot by Gerard.

And, as he, a rat and Red Sox catcher named Carlton proved, even when Gerard got it wrong — even when he didn't produce the shot he was directed to provide from left — Lou Gerard got it right. And let us say, "Aw, rats!"

—Used with permission - New York Post - February 11, 2013

Contact Julie Gerard at
25 Turn Lane
Levittown, NY 11756-4027

Walter Dresch Remembered By His Son Skip



On Wednesday, February 13, 2013, my father passed away in home hospice care with his family by his side. He was 85 years old.

He grew up in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, NY. After returning from Navy service in the Pacific Theater during WWII, he then attended and graduated from RCA Institute in lower Manhattan. NBC hired him in the late 40's to work in the Colonial and Ziegfeld Theaters for many black and white TV broadcasts. He was instrumental working with RCA to bring color to the Colonial Theater and the Brooklyn Studio. He was an electronics engineer on mobile units N2 and N3 when they went to color and produced the first color remote broadcasts. In the mid-60's, he was involved in the introduction of color video tape at 30 Rock. He traveled extensively for sports, news and entertainment for the next 15 to 20 years. The last 10 years of his 40 year career were spent in charge at the Fairview garage in NJ, the home base for all the mobile units and remote equipment.

Walter married his high school sweetheart, Ella, and they had two children: Linda and, 14 months later, me. We lived in Fairlawn, NJ. After my Mom passed in '75, my father married his second wife of 36 years, Harriet, and moved to New Fairfield, CT. In 1991, he and Harriet moved to Inverness, FL, where he lived for the remainder of his life. Dad loved to travel and he and Harriet saw much of the world.

Without his influence with the network, my own 38-year career there wouldn't have happened and I remain grateful for that and for all he taught me throughout this life. After retiring, Kimberly and I spent the last two years giving much of our time to Dad and Harriet, creating memories to last a lifetime. I loved my father and will miss him. Survivors include Harriet; my wife, Kimberly, of Port Charlotte, FL; step-daughter, Leah, and her husband Keith Majka of Bloomingdale, NJ; grandchildren Lauren and Erin Dresch and Keith Majka, Jr, and Stephen Majka. There was no wake, funeral or memorial service and in lieu of flowers, a request was made for donations to any hospice. His ashes will be buried this spring at George Washington Memorial Cemetery in Paramus, NJ.

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Bob Rooney



Robert R. Rooney of Breezy Point, NY, passed away on November 16, 2012 from a brain blood clot. He had been going through a real difficult time in the past 4 months with mobility issues which turned out to be bone cancer. He was in NYU Medical Center undergoing chemotherapy when Hurricane Sandy hit and totally destroyed his home in Breezy Point. NYU medical center lost power that day, and he was evacuated first to an old-age home and then to Mt. Sinai Medical Center to continue the treatment.

He was the father of Shannon and Caroline and brother of the late Patricia.

Please send donations to:

Rockaway Point Volunteer Fire Department, 204-26 Rockaway Point Blvd.,
Rockaway Point, NY 11697

I worked with him on the Letterman Show where he became a favorite of Dave's. I remember "Bob Rooney Night" and also how Bob would watch Dave like a Hawk whenever he made a phone call on the air. Bob would be just off camera and make sure that Dave dialed the correct amount of numbers. It was always a good laugh. He was a real sweetheart and great fun to work with. Thoughts and prayers to his family.

Melanie Rock

A fine NABET brother who always had a strong back to lend in the field. He was the lead Audio Assist for David Letterman's "Late Night" and numerous other shows, including a dozen years working with Tom Brokaw on NBC Nightly News, and the NFL studio shows. I remember when Carly Simon made her first television performance for the network, being taped at the Milford Plaza. She had terrible stage fright. He was easily able to get her to relax with all the lights and activity. He had a large presence and a booming voice that could be heard all the way down the hallways at NBC as he kept an eye on the situation with his newspaper and chair outside of his assigned studio. A former security guard, it was almost as though he felt most comfortable being in view and chatting with all who passed by his spot. Best to you, "Roon."

Charles Moore

Bill Denis



William Robert Denis passed way on November 13, 2012. He was hit by a car while getting into his truck in L.I. He died from bleeding in his brain. He was 68 years old.

The funeral was held on November 17th at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Huntington Station, NY

He leaves his wife, Ellen; son, Bill Jr., daughter, Debbie and five grandchildren.

Memorial donations can be made to American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association.

Contact the family at

Ellen Denis
84 Birchwood Dr
Huntington Station, NY 11746-3922

Jim Blaney Jr writes: Bill was a trusted and very competent fellow worker at NBC. When I was new to Field Audio, Bill was my A2 and helped me through on many occasions. He is one person I truly missed when I left on a disability at NBC.

award – The Silver Circle Award – for his contribution to the industry and community.



Robert Davis was born in Philadelphia on February 6, 1918. In 1937 at the age of nineteen he was awarded a scholarship to the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia and in 1940 a scholarship to Tanglewood. Although the country was not yet at war the Army Air Corp denied his request for an eight week deferment! After basic training he was stationed in Selma, Alabama and in 1941 joined the elite 50 voice chorus (conducted by Leonard de Paur) in Moss Hart's "Winged Victory." Following the war Mr. Davis returned to the Academy of Vocal Arts to continue his studies. While studying he performed with the Philadelphia Opera Company. He also appeared with the St. Louis Municipal Opera and toured with the Charles Wagner Opera Company. In New York he was part of the original company of "Carousel" both on Broadway and on tour. After "Carousel" he returned to New York to continue his studies and began working at the City Center. Among his many credits are "Robert Montgomery Presents", Dwight David Eisenhower's Presidential Campaign, the first "Opening Night Gala from the Metropolitan Opera" (closed circuited to 28 cities), "Peter Pan" with Mary Martin, the "Ford 50th Anniversary Special with Mary Martin and Ethel Merman," "Coliseum" (circus series), "Miss America Pageant" (both the stage and television show), "Bob Hope Birthday Special" aboard the Iwo Jima anchored in New York Harbor and "Live from 8H" (series of 4 music and dance specials), and "Horowitz Live" for which he won his Emmy. He was able to work with some of the greatest opera stars of the time as they appeared on "The Bell Telephone Hour," "The Voice of Firestone" and "NBC Opera."

During his career Mr. Davis with NBC's approval was Consultant to many educational television stations both for the Carnegie Commission and the Ford Foundation. In 1969 – 1970 he served as Lighting Consultant at WGBH, Boston. While there he was also the Lighting Designer for the first "Evening at Symphony" and "Evening at Pops" and two operas produced for NET Opera Theatre. Beginning in 1976 and for 15 seasons he was Lighting Designer and Consultant to the New Jersey State Opera- lighting over 25 operas including a world a world premier "Frederick Douglass."

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, of 45 years, a niece Ann Shewman of Naples, Florida, two great nieces and a great nephew of Philadelphia.

His funeral was held on January XX at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to The Academy of Vocal Arts, 1920 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-6685.

Contact the family c/o
Elizabeth Davis
27 West 86th Street, Apt. 7B
New York, NY 10024

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Cynthia Handler Remembers Her Husband David**

David Handler, my husband of 44 years and my best friend, passed away from a stroke on November 4, 2012. David had a 42-year career in television that began in 1951, when he was a 20-year-old page at the Toscanini concerts that NBC sponsored. Among a variety of assignments, he was an associate director and director for NBC sports, for the soap opera "The Doctors," and for Nightly News, with stints on the Merv Griffin Show, the Today Show, and Saturday Night Live. He loved the challenge and excitement that live television presented as the industry developed, and he had a wonderful store of "insider" tales that he doled with a delicious sense of humor.

David never lost the gift of curiosity or the ability to learn about new things. At a display garden in Amagansett one summer, he fell in love with a scarlet daylily aptly named Turned On. The lily wasn't for sale, but David found its source and ultimately created a wonderful daylily garden of his own. Predictably, he began to hybridize day-lilies – not for official registration, just for fun. One of his creations comes back faithfully every year. He named it Cynthia's Peach, and that's where his ashes will rest this spring.

Early in our marriage, a Scotland Yard mystery called "The Daughter of Time" introduced David to England's King Richard III. Membership in the American Richard III Society made David an ardent defender of the King against the charge that he'd murdered his nephews (the little princes imprisoned in the Tower of London) and usurped the English throne.

On a visit to Windsor Castle, we saw a display of royal shields. David photographed Richard's, we had it transferred to canvas, and it came alive in our home as a work of needlepoint. His most gorgeous piece was an intricate pillow that required counting stitches to reproduce the design. A serendipitous plane ride from a football game he had worked on gave David an interesting seatmate who also did needlepoint: the football star Rosie Greer. David and Rosie – who, according to David, was nine feet tall and seven feet wide – talked about needlepoint for the whole flight as Rosie worked on a canvas in his lap.

One summer, when our daughter Allison didn't get to take her nursery class's goldfish home for vacation, David bought her a pair of her own. Allison soon lost interest in the goldfish, but David had discovered tropical fish. Nine fish tanks later, in our two-bedroom Manhattan apartment, David was breeding colorful African cichlids and selling the offspring to local pet shops. It took two floods from one of the 55-gallon display tanks to end the fish business.

Other interests, other passions awaited. In 1995, we took a vacation trip to Santa Fe, NM. We visited three more times in the years that followed, and David developed an enduring love for Southwest Native American pottery. He met some of the potters, hosted two of them at our home. He learned how the pots were made: all by hand, not thrown on a wheel. He watched them being formed, being decorated, being polished, being baked in an outdoor kiln. Sometimes he would sit with one in his lap, holding it, stroking it, appreciating it.

Finally, there was music, a constant in David's life from the age of fifteen. We used to say that in a choice between food and music, David would choose music any day. When CD's of Vivaldi and Bach, Haydn and Mozart began to be recorded on original period instruments, David fell in love with the sound and duplicated much of the music he already owned. At work, David was happiest when asked for a recommendation that required a search in the NBC record library. The Beethoven theme that introduced the Huntley-Brinkley news program each evening for years was David's suggestion. So was the Verdi Requiem that accompanied John F. Kennedy's funeral on the air.

From the point of view of those who loved him, David's life ended too soon. But it was a life well lived and well loved.

In addition to Cynthia, David is survived by his three children: Jonathan (Kim) of Fitchburg, MA; Allison (John Miller) of Portland, OR; and Adam (Jennifer) of Atlanta, GA. David also had the great joy of welcoming his first grandchild, Josie, in Atlanta last fall.

Contact the family at cdhandler@yahoo.com or
Cynthia Handler
15 West 84th Street, Apt. #10-G
New York NY 10024

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Audrey Marshall Remembers Her Husband Jack****Wedding Day 1984**

Jack Marshall, formerly a writer, producer and director in the NBC Advertising and Promotion Department, died in New York Presbyterian Hospital from complications following a stroke, on January 5, 2013. As his wife, I will try to summarize his life and career, but who can summarize a life like Jack's?

Towards the end of World War II, Jack joined the Army Air Corps (now the Air Force) and served in the military occupation of Germany for several years, including the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. He was present at the proceedings as a reporter for the Army newspaper, "Stars and Stripes".

Following his discharge, he attended Brooklyn College under the G.I. Bill and continued his love of baseball, as the star pitcher for the Brooklyn College team. He attracted the attention of a baseball scout when he struck out 23 batters in one game! He saved a newspaper clipping that read, "B C hurler signed by Browns". In those days St. Louis had two major league teams, the Cardinals and the Browns. He played for the Browns' farm team, touring the South and East for a few years in their minor league. Realizing he might never make it to the major leagues, he quit his baseball career for something more realistic.

Following his departure from baseball, Jack did some free-lance comedy writing for the up-and-coming comedian, Ernie Kovacs. From that brief introduction to show business, Jack got a job at NBC as a Guide, and after six months, was lucky to get a permanent job in the Advertising & Promotion Department where he wrote, produced and directed the promotional spots announcing upcoming NBC specials or shows like the Hallmark Hall of Fame, etc. He recalls stars such as Boris Karloff, Paul Newman, Judith Anderson and many others, doing brief skits taken from their shows which would air shortly. Everything was done "live" in those days, and frequently minor catastrophes would occur.

Jack was an expert at the game of poker. He made it his practice to remember every card that was picked up or discarded by the other players, and he became good at studying the "poker faces" at the table. Over the years he played with NBC announcers Dick Dudley, Wayne Howell and Arthur Gary. Some of his other poker-player friends were Gil Hodges, of the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Mets, and Sandy Becker of "Young Dr. Malone" fame. During one round of play, Sandy was sure he beat Jack with a royal flush, but when Jack put down his cards, he had 5 Aces (four & a wild card). Sandy never played poker with Jack again!

In 1972, I got a job in NBC Advertising & Promotion and it was then that I met the dashing bon vivant and man-about-town Jack Marshall. We developed a long-lasting friendship, which gradually turned into a romance and blossomed into love. We were married on March 24, 1984, the happiest day of my life!

Those of you reading this who knew him well will recall the kind of a guy he was: always ready with a joke or something funny to say. He was loved and admired by most, if not all of his co-workers and acquaintances. He will be missed.



Contact the family c/o
Audrey Marshall
160 East 47th Street
New York, NY 10017

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Buck Biggers**

W. Watts “Buck” Biggers, a Madison Avenue ad executive who co-created the iconic canine Underdog to sell General Mills cereal, has died at his home in Massachusetts on February 10th. He was 85. Derek Tague, a family friend, said no cause of death was immediately available.

Underdog parlayed the cereal game into stardom on TV, in the movies and in popular culture, where his catchphrase “There’s no need to fear, Underdog is here!” became part of America’s vernacular. Underdog, who habitually spoke in rhyme, was an animated reincarnation of Superman, with the same superhuman powers of strength, flight, X-ray vision and so on. He lacked Superman’s good judgment and common sense, and his resolution of crimes was often imprecise and messy, with considerable harm to bystanders. He had the same good heart, however, particularly when it came to rescuing Polly Purebred, a doggie damsel perpetually in distress.

Underdog ran in syndication from 1964 to 1969, then four more years on Saturday mornings on NBC. Sixty-two half-hour episodes were produced for the original syndication. Both Underdog and his mild-mannered alter ego, Shoeshine Boy, were voiced by Wally Cox. Underdog later starred in numerous comic books and a 2007 movie. Biggers created an Underdog radio show in 1999 to promote Victory Over Violence, an organization he created to discourage violence among young people.

William Watts Biggers was born in Georgia, where he attended military school and Emory Law School. He moved to New York when he was 20, determined to become a pianist and songwriter. Like practically all aspiring songwriters, he took a day job, in the mailroom at the ad agency Dancer Fitzgerald Sampler. He rose to vice president there, and in 1959 he took the General Mills assignment, which was creating cartoons that would keep children tuned in for the cereal ads.



With artist Joseph Harris and fellow executives Treadwell Covington and Chet Stover, he created a series of cartoon characters for the company, starting with King Leonardo in 1960 and Tennessee Tuxedo, a penguin, in 1963. After they unveiled Underdog and he became an immediate hit, the four creators left Dancer Fitzgerald to form Total Television, which produced the “Underdog” series. Total Television folded when General Mills left the animation game in 1969, and Biggers moved to NBC, where he became vice president of promotion and creative services.

He also wrote for publications that included Reader’s Digest and TV Guide. He authored two novels, “The Man Inside” in 1968 and “Hold Back the Tide” in 2001, and a 2005 memoir that recounted the story of Underdog.

In recent years he became a regular at television nostalgia conventions. Tague says Biggers enjoyed the enduring popularity of Underdog, including that former Vice President Al Gore once dressed as Underdog for a Halloween party and that Underdog became a balloon in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade.

Biggers’ wife, Grace, died in 1989 after 39 years of marriage. He is survived by his longtime companion, Nancy Purbeck; a daughter, Victoria; and a son, W. Watts Biggers Jr.

—By David Hinckley - NEW YORK DAILY NEWS - February 14, 2013

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Geoffrey Pond**

Plainfield, N.H. — Geoffrey Pond, a veteran newspaper, network television and network radio journalist, died on Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2012, of natural causes. He was 81 years old. He had lived in the Upper Connecticut Valley region since 1993. A native of Darien, CT, Geoff was a graduate of Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, and Columbia University, where he graduated cum laude, won the history prize and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He was in the Army during the Korean War as a second lieutenant in the field artillery, stationed in Augsburg, West Germany.

His journalism career began in 1954 at The New York Times as a reporter. The first day of a labor dispute that was to close all New York City newspapers for 110 days led him to NBC News in New York late in 1962. He was on the air with the network in the early days of field reporting, when television news organizations first had reporters on the scene of events, said Woodstock resident and former NBC correspondent Robert Hager, who worked with Pond in the 1970s.

In his 42 years as a newsman, Pond covered U.S. presidents from Eisenhower to Ford and world leaders from Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev to Charles de Gaulle and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. He was on the bus for the presidential campaigns of Barry Goldwater, Hubert Humphrey, George McGovern and Jimmy Carter. He interviewed Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, the Rev. Billy Graham and a long list of other news makers. He was friends with Muhammad Ali, was kicked out of the Beatles' hotel room and suffered the pain of Elizabeth Taylor's spiked heel driven into his foot after he asked her an uncomfortable question. He reported on the riots in North Miami during the 1968 Republican Convention and was tear-gassed during the Democratic Convention in Chicago that same summer. He almost died when volcano Irazu in Costa Rica erupted while he and a crew were filming at the lip of the crater, and he challenged authority in an investigative piece for NBC's Huntley-Brinkley Report on CIA training camps in Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

His last assignment at NBC was as Director of Northeast News, in charge of coverage of nine northeastern states, eastern Canada and the United Nations, with bureaus in New York and Boston.

Geoff, as he preferred to be called, was an assistant news editor at the Valley News until 2010, having come out of retirement to join the staff in February 1995. He edited local and regional news. Geoff regarded his return to print journalism at the Valley News as the most satisfying period in his career.

He is survived by his mother, Virginia C. Harris, of New York City; two daughters, Jennifer Pond Muckerman of Ramah, N.M., and Jamison Renning of Ballston Spa, N.Y.; his son, Gregory Pond and a brother, Robert Bell, both of New York City; a sister, Brenda Proulx of Cold Brook, N.Y.

Memorial contributions may be made to:

Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of VT and NH., 66 Benning St., Suite 6, West Lebanon, N.H.

Contact the family via son, Greg Pond at:

102 Diamond Street

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—Combined from material published January 3 and 28, 2013 - By Warren Johnston, The Valley News

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Peacock North Spring Luncheon

Sunday, May 19, 2013

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Full Details Will Be Mailed to You Soon.