

A Season of Happy Events



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What's Now! - Costas Wows Annual Spring Lunch Crowd

By Dan Grabel

In a one word review of the Sunday, May 23 annual PN luncheon at O'Neals' Restaurant, I'd rate it "Boffo!!!"

Crowd: almost maximum.

Lunch: delicious.

Guest speaker Bob Costas: hilarious

Second Generation directors Marilyn Altman, Lenny Stucker and Joel Spector, assisted by Jim Marshall, brought 130 Peacock North members and spouses/companions to the popular Lincoln Square watering hole. Of course, the crowd included a few who are still working at 30 Rock.

With pleasant weather, midtown New York was packed. And with the excellent lunch turnout, PN had exclusive use of O'Neals' main dining room.

For many retirees, this is the once-a-year chance to renew friendships and catch up on the "family" gossip. As might be expected, Stucker reported that 19 members of the fold had passed away since January 1st, 2010.

By my reckoning, it's the 23rd year of the event, which has been held mostly in Manhattan, but there were gatherings in New Jersey and White Plains.

Young Marilyn is among those still at NBC News. Stucker runs TalentWorks, an organization that imports foreign programming and produces some domestic tv shows. And Joel fills his time as PN mag's editor and as an audio consultant at the Tony Awards and Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Life goes on and things change. There was no announcers' table: in fact I did not spot any of the silver-voiced crowd. In past years we could depend on Don Pardo, Vic Roby, Harry Fleetwood, Mel Brant, Arthur Gary and "The Silver Fox." Pardo, living in Arizona, still flies in to do those intros for Saturday Night Live!

In earlier years the "Today" show table was usually filled by Marie Finnegan and Lilly Russo, Win Welpin among that show's veterans. Mamyie Smith and Bob Hickey, along with Judy Friedman, Carol Aerenson and Joyce Werney represented "Today" as well as Research. There was a News and Writers table that brought in Ken Donoghue, Gene Farinet, Ed Gough, Gloria Clyne (still number one in longevity at NBC), Danne Almirall, (originally with the old Visnews syndication) and your's truly. Ed is in his fifth year of regaling visitors with New York stories as he rides around town as host on one of those huge City Sights red tour busses.

Gloria, by the way, is going to attend, next October, a gathering called "Friends of Old Time Radio," to be hosted by Joe Franklin. Boy! That's going back to Memory Lane. Gloria had a full-page spread in the NYPost, retelling her life story from the days when she was the first female on the Guest Relations staff. [See pp 22-23 in this edition of PN —Ed.]

And now, bits and pieces about other guests (and don't flog me for missing you!): What are the odds against two NBC-ers ending up in the same small town in upstate New York as their favorite retirement hideaway? Henry Makrin (News Dept audio engineer and before that, radio,) and John Thomas, (a videotape engineer). They live in Cambridge, NY, near Saratoga Springs. Henry is still skiing and golfing.

Bob Rizzo (EJ) was in with fiancée Jean Ackerman. Bob lives in Kingston, NY. He does volunteer work at a public access tv station.... Director Enid Roth divides her time between NYC and Amagansett.... Director Dave Handler, our favorite phrase-maker, renewing friendships at his table. ... Here, too, Correspondent Bob Hager who gave such a great talk in '08.... Sports' Ginny Seipt does gardening in Central Park! Well, not the whole park -- but parts of it, as a volunteer working alongside the pros as they take care of shrubbery and flowers..... Kindly giving advice and job counsel to new Summa Cum Laude Miami University communications graduate Amanda Grabel was John Fider, spouse of Marilyn Altman and a producer with the Bravo cable network..(Amanda is my granddaughter)....On the dais with guest speakers, Ted Nathanson's widow, Edith...Young Herb Oxman, well he's younger than me at 85, is still skiing, golfing and flying his Piper Warrior airplane. Never landed in the Hudson, says Herb, but he's flown over it many a day....Meeting old friends, René Alair and Gary Iorio...Bernie Braun (EJ Editor) has 17 grandchildren....correct 17 ...and he volunteers at a hospital in Queens. (Probably in the Obstetrics Dept!)...Ann Taylor is still a newscaster on NPR out of Washington, to which she commutes each

week.....Newswriter Beryl Pfizer says she's doing the same old stuff....Billy Freeda (EJ Editor) continues, in retirement, with NABET-CWA. Other EJ Editors Otto Pfeiffer, Lou Fallot, and Arthur Finklestein, who is also with CWA . And Noel Engler, who worked advertising and promotion in L.A. and N.Y. Here, too, Frank Kennedy.

Not able to make the day --but still around: newswriter and clubman Joe Coggins who spends his time on the Jersey shore at Pt Pleasant, and former PN publisher Frank Vierling who already is ensconced at his place in Raymond, Maine.

Two of the speakers -- Marilyn and Michael Weisman of Sports.-- recalled their early days at the network and spoke warmly of how NBC people who had "made it" gave them opportunities that put them on the track to great careers. Marilyn, getting her break as a female TD in 1980 and then started to work many of the important sports events thanks to Weisman. Michael, she said, provided similar first steps to many women.

Weisman, who eventually earned 24 Emmy Awards, was equally grateful for help he got from producer Chet Simmons, who after his days at NBC created much of the greatness of ESPN. Simmons passed away a few months ago. He had hired Weisman's father in the 1960s. And later, Michael himself.

In her introduction, Marilyn quoted Dick Ebersol on Weisman, describing him as a "person who gets the best out of people." And "He's an incredible producer and a 'real mensch.' "

Weisman relished his intro of the speaker of the day, Bob Costas, who joined NBC Sports in the 1970s. While Bob was a great reporter on baseball, football and basketball, Weisman said there was a problem. "He looked too young!" Sitting nearby, Costas piped up "Not any more!" (With good makeup and lighting, I think he still looked like a kid doing his studio spots in Vancouver a few months ago.)

As a solution, it was suggested , "Maybe Costas should grow a beard to look older," Costas' reply: "I'd be five years older because it would take that long to grow one!"

Weisman concluded "Here is the pre-eminent Sports host of the past 25 years...N-B-C -- No Better Colleague, Bob Costas!"

Bob started the crowd off with a howl. He's of modest height, so he approached the lectern, found the mike positioned very low, and said "This is a memorable moment for me; it's the first time I've approached a mike and had to raise it!"

His face is among the most recognizable in the nation, but he said there are times when people notice him but don't make the right connection. As when he was getting off a plane recently and the pilot, greeting departing travelers, said enthusiastically, "Thanks for flying with us, Marv!"

He then went on to recall endless tales -- "inside baseball stuff"-- dropping names like Vin Scully, Joe Garagiola, and Tony Kubek. Also anecdotes about actors Jack Palance and Billy Crystal. And even a chilling one about the fearsome underworld don -- John Gotti.

Bob is an avid fan as much as he is a sparkling reporter. One time on assignment in Beijing in the 1980s -- Ginny Seipt was on that trip -- Bob was anxious to get World Series results but, as you'd expect, baseball was not an important event for Chinese news coverage. Costas phoned a friend back in the States who was watching the game on TV. Bob asked him to put the phone near the tv speaker, so he could hear the action. He stayed with it, too, and wound up with a \$640 phone bill!!

Costas has the ability to build wonderful word pictures, anecdotes full of descriptive terms to create a rich, total environment..

He held that audience in the palm of his hand for perhaps 30 or 40 minutes. It was a great performance --- great, that is, until we see what Marilyn, Lenny and Joel have for us next time.

(Costas anchored NBC's coverage of the last five summer Olympics --Barcelona 1992, Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000, Athens 2004, and Beijing 2008. He also hosted the winter games in Salt Lake City 2002, Torino 2006 and Vancouver 2010. He is scheduled to host the 2012 London summer games for NBC. He has won 20 Emmys.)

Marilyn's Page



For those of you who were able to join us for the annual spring luncheon, THANK YOU! It was joyful to look out over the restaurant and see so many people enjoying each other's company. The laughter and warmth were everywhere. It was truly a wonderful gathering of old friends and colleagues.

As for the keynote speaker, Bob Costas, and his opener, Michael Weisman, they were a dynamic combo. Michael both touched our hearts with a warm story about Chet Simmons and then regaled us with Bob Costas' attachment to Mickey Mantle. Bob then took the dais and just held the audience in the palms of his hands with his masterful story-telling...the crowd was in love!

As for me, I got to see so many of my old pals from across NBC. The table in front with some of the old hard-core Sports crew was a sight for sore eyes...lots of history, lots of fun.

Every spring this gathering brings us together as a sort of team, celebrating our common history at NBC. This year's luncheon was a raving success. Many people have asked me how I am going to top this year's luncheon; all I can say is, "Stay tuned..."

And now for the memories.

This Just In

As we go to press we have learned that Deacon Jim Blaney has just passed away in Florida. His wake and funeral will be in Palm Harbor, FL on July 9th and 10th. Burial on July 14th in Holy Rood Cemetery in Westbury, NY.

Memorial Mass Saturday July 24th, 10:30am:
Our Holy Redeemer Church
37 South Ocean Avenue
Freeport, NY 11520

Mary Blaney can be contacted at
4943 New England Boulevard
New Port Richey, FL 34652-4508
(727) 848-4207
deakjib@verizon.net

Jim Jr can be contacted at
4225 Headsail Drive
New Port Richey, FL 34652-4419
(727) 849-0116
jtblaney@gmail.com

**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.

We Get Letters

Many people have asked me about how Peter got into NBC. Well it all started when Peter was a senior at DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx. His favorite subject was the Morse Code class. Three months before he graduated from Clinton his teacher had to leave for health reasons and would be gone until school ended. The teacher went to the principal and told him he had to have an operation and he would not be back by graduation. But, he said, not to worry – you don't have to hire another teacher or even pay for a teacher because "There is a 'kid' in my class who is so good he can teach the class." So Peter spent the next three months teaching the Morse Code class.

It was wartime and Peter wanted to enlist in the Navy, Army Air Corps or Marines but he was disqualified because he wore glasses. His heart was broken. All his friends had enlisted except him. Then someone said to him, "Try the Merchant Marine." Peter went downtown to the Merchant Marine headquarters and said he wanted to apply for Radio. They said "You have to take a test." He took the test which happened to be a Morse Code test and he got 100% on it. They said that "No one gets 100% on a Morse Code test; you must have cheated. You have to take the test again and we will watch you." He took the test again and he got 100% again, so they said "Send the kid to Officers Candidate School." Peter spent the next couple of years as an Ensign Radio officer aboard an old World War I vessel. He wore his brand new officer's uniform, carrying his duffle bag up the gangplank where the ship's Captain greeted him with the immortal words "I am not sailing with this kid!" But sail he did – up and down the East Coast and the North Atlantic until the war ended.

Now he had to find a job and he sent out résumés to broadcast stations. He got one very interesting one in Richmond, VA, which he took, and spent a year in the sunny South. We were engaged by then. His father got very ill and his family wanted him to come home, so he had to resign and go back to the Bronx. His father passed away, so he found a position as a broadcast engineer in Newark, NJ. By this time we were married and had a cute little 3-room apartment in North Arlington.

One day coming home from work there was a pile of mail on the steps of our apartment. One of the pieces of mail was a post card from NBC telling him to come for an interview at the NBC offices. Peter jumped for joy. Off he went and sat for an interview with a nice man who was so impressed about all the things he had done. They spent a long time talking. The interviewer said he was also in the Merchant Marine. Peter said "Sir. I am very happy that we are talking about the Merchant Marine, but I really came here looking for a job." "Hey, you got the job – now let's keep talking!" Peter worked as a radio engineer for about five months when he heard through the grapevine about a new medium called television. When he applied for a job in television, everyone said not to leave radio – television will never make it. But Peter said "I am going to try." And thus began forty years at NBC.

- Peg Peterson

We Get Letters and Pictures

“H” and Me



I joined the NBC mailroom on January 12th 1961. About a year later, I moved to TOPS, in room 670, across the hall from the network Unit Managers. It was there I encountered all the studio folk, including Heino Ripp.

I became a Stage Manager in November 1964. Shortly thereafter I was assigned to work with Ralph Douglas (with his approval) on “Hullabaloo.” The crew for that show was the “Como” crew - thus I became a part of that crew, and through the years regularly worked with “H” and that crew: the last season of the Como show, taped in Brooklyn; five years on Kraft Music Hall (also taped in Brooklyn); and finally, SNL.

Speaking of KMH, I believe it was one of the last, if not the last, single-sponsor regularly-scheduled TV shows. I worked the last taping of Kraft commercials along with Ed Herlihy and Jimmy McKearnin, in 3K in March 1972 – end of an era, to be sure.

In the late ‘70s Ripp, Gene Martin and I bought condos in Secaucus, as did Unit Manager Klaus Heys. Later, news-folk Jack Cafferty and Jane Hanson also resided there.

Over the years we (including Gene Martin, Dave Wilson and their wives) occasionally gathered socially until the Rippes departed for Arizona in **December 2002**. This picture is of a farewell luncheon in Parsippany. Seen left to right are Gene and Jenny Martin, Roberta and Dave Wilson, Van Ry, and Heino and Christina Ripp.

As a friend and colleague for nearly forty years, “H”, it was a pleasure. (Can you think of another person identified by an initial?)

Rest in Peace “H” .

– Feb 20, 2010, Bob Van Ry, Class of 2000

What's Now!

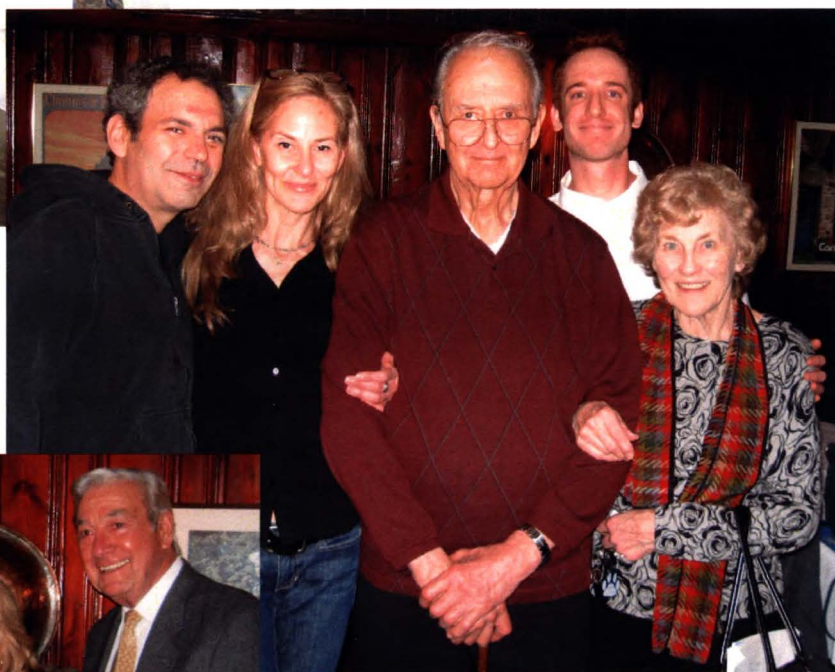
"H" and Us Christina Ripp and Family Remember Heino

Christina Ripp invited about 20 relatives and friends to a luncheon at La Petite Auberge in Manhattan on Saturday, March 13th, for an afternoon of sharing good food and good memories of Heino Ripp. PN had a small but significant presence there, and we present some photos for your enjoyment.



Top Photo:

Christina Ripp, John Parker standing behind his Mom, Joycie Ripp (H's daughter), and H's surviving brothers Bruno and Rudy.



Center Photo:

Lee Solomon, friend of Janice Lynn Sokota who is the daughter of Joe Sokota and H's sister Oie. John Parker is in the b.g.



Bottom Photo—The NBC Group:
Joel Spector, Enid Roth, Beryl Pfizer,
Christina, Bob Van Ry,
Roberta Wilson (Dave's widow), and
Frank Gaeta.
Phil Hymes left before this photo was
taken.

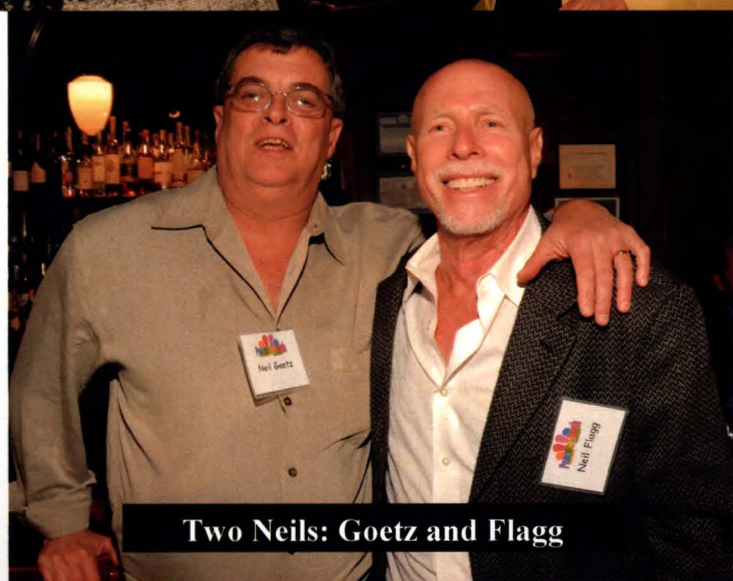
Spring Luncheon Photos By Karl Rivenburgh



Carol Weisman, Lauren Fishman, Edith Nathanson



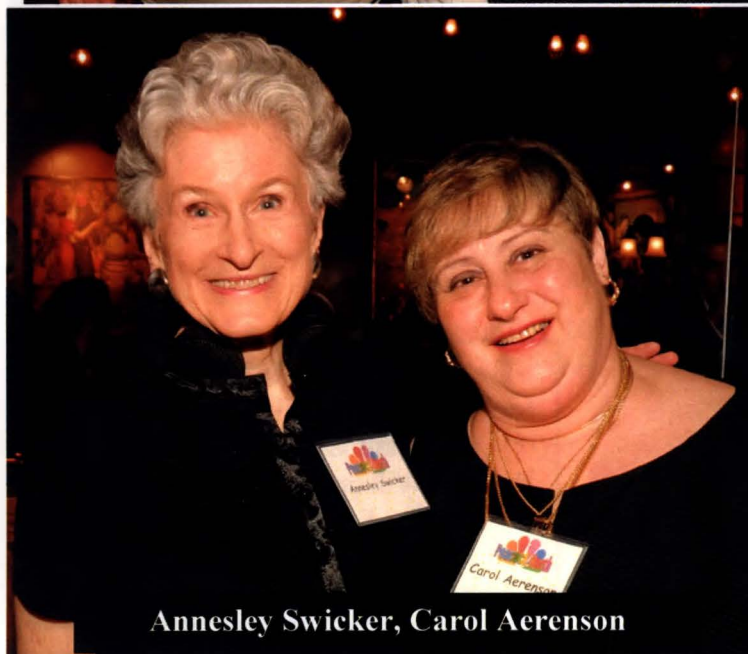
John Thomas, Jack Weir, Joel Spector



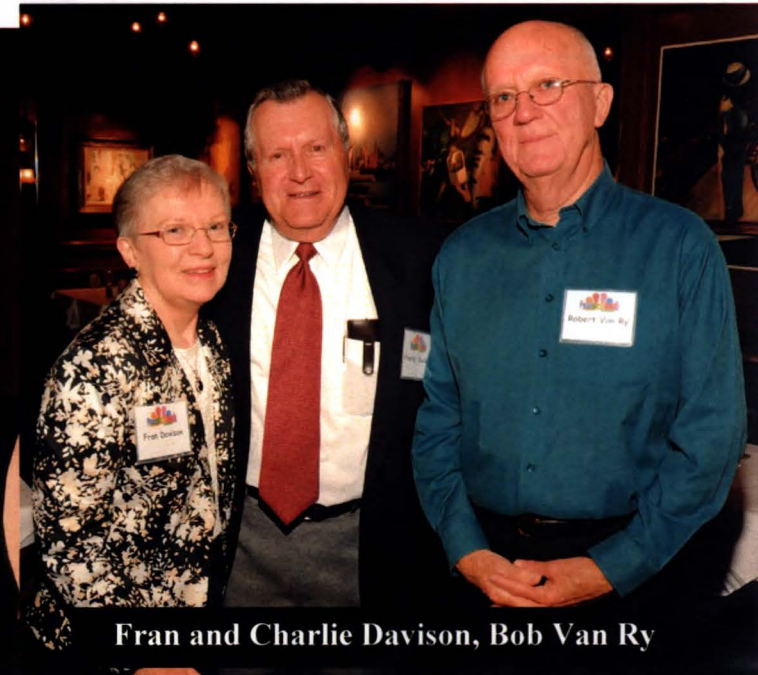
Two Neils: Goetz and Flagg



Mark Smith, Jay Markowitz



Annesley Swicker, Carol Aerenson



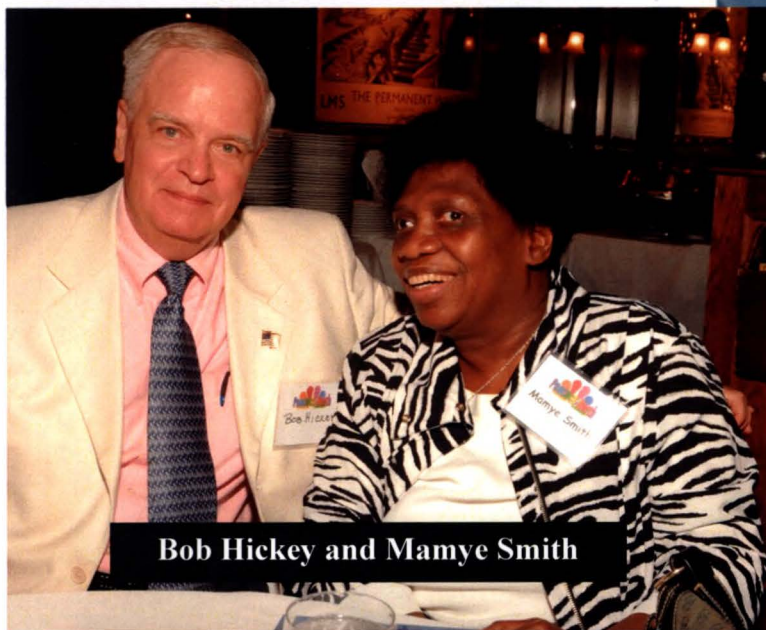
Fran and Charlie Davison, Bob Van Ry



**Ann Taylor, Mary Muzina, Beryl Pfizer,
Enid Roth**



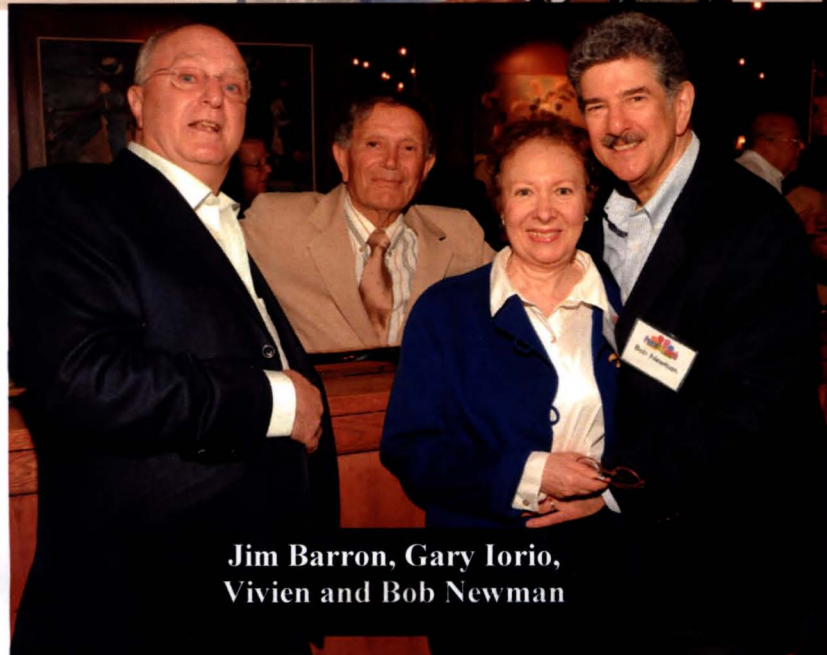
Terry Ewert, Peter Magelof



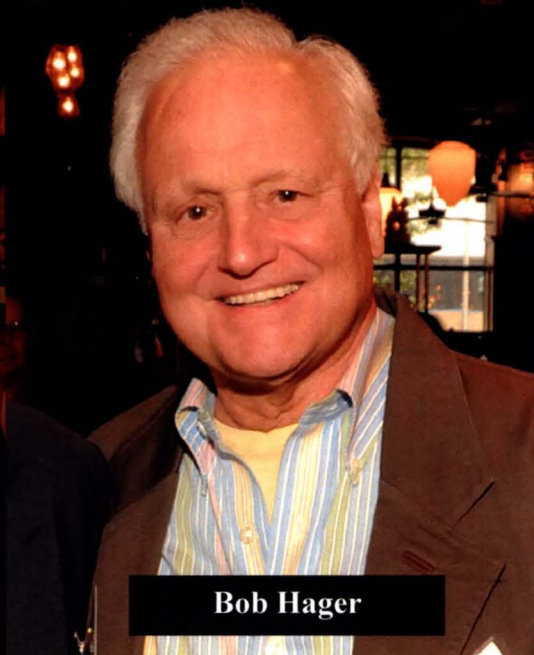
Bob Hickey and Mamye Smith



Jean Ackerson, Bob Rizzo



**Jim Barron, Gary Iorio,
Vivien and Bob Newman**



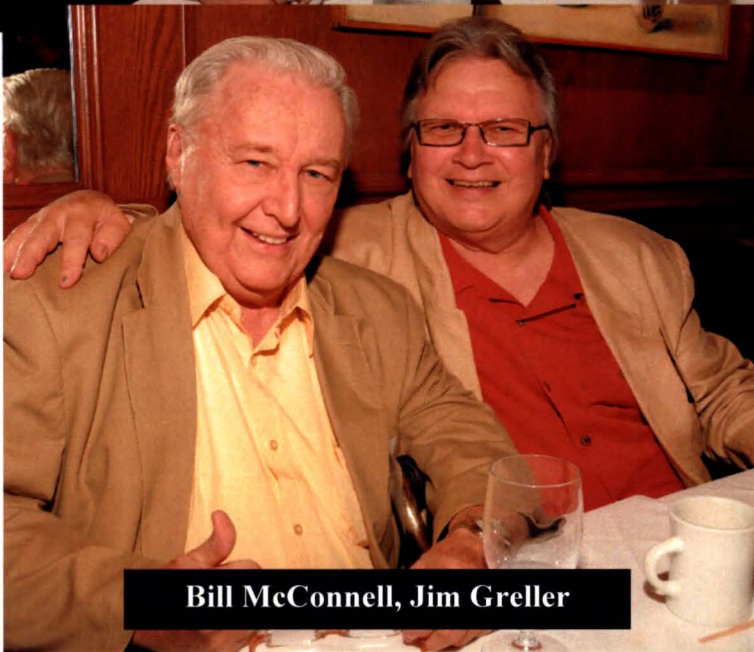
Bob Hager



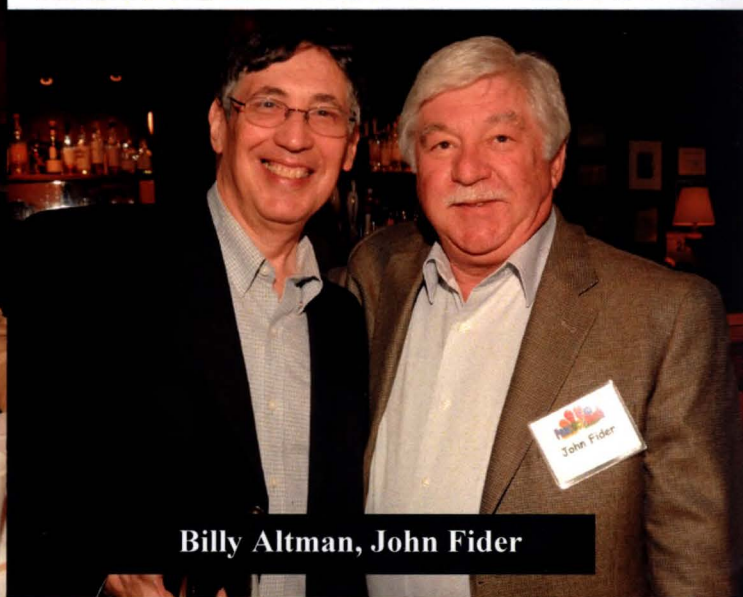
Lou and Doreen Fallot



Noel Engler, Lucien Fallot



Bill McConnell, Jim Greller



Billy Altman, John Fider



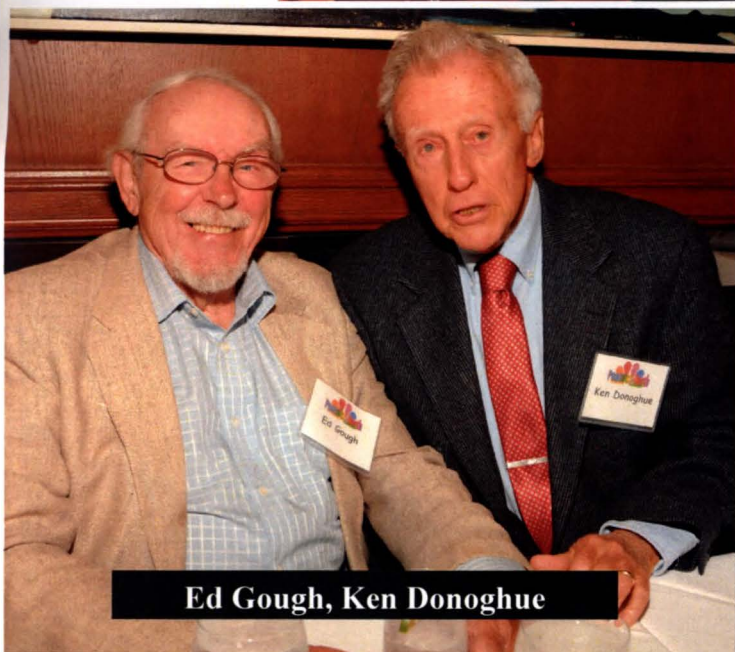
Stu Wolther, Susan Kramer,
Art Finkelstein



Renée and Herb Oxman, Gary Iorio



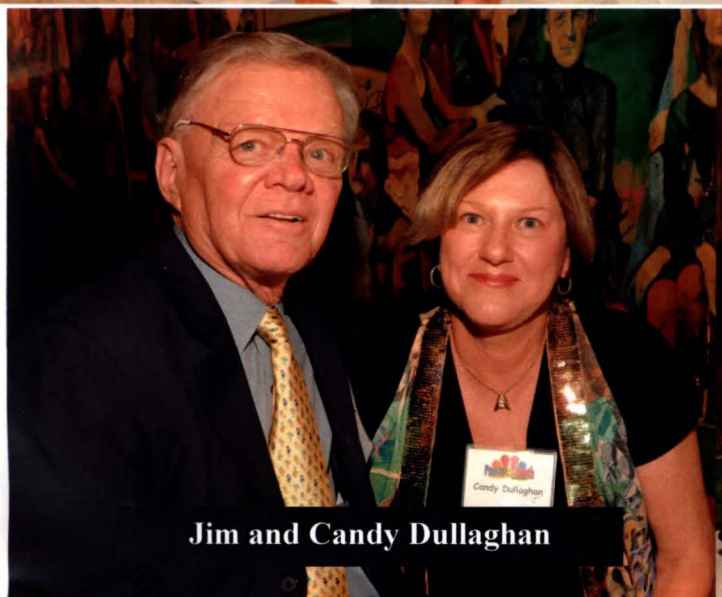
**Ferdinand Jay Smith, Christine Glidden,
Donna de Varona**



Ed Gough, Ken Donoghue



**Curt Block, Annette Hassell,
Hope Thompson**



Jim and Candy Dullaghan



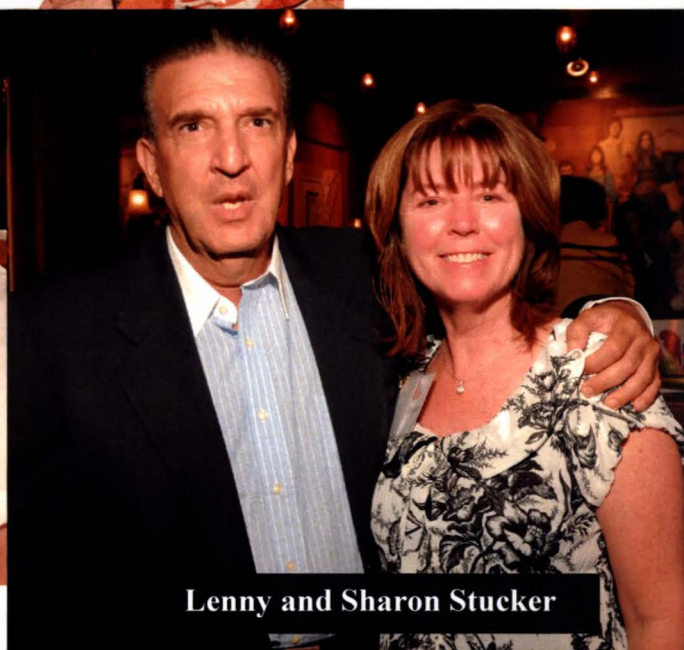
Margaret and Joe Gianquinto



Ken Donoghue, Peggy Chane, Gloria Clyne



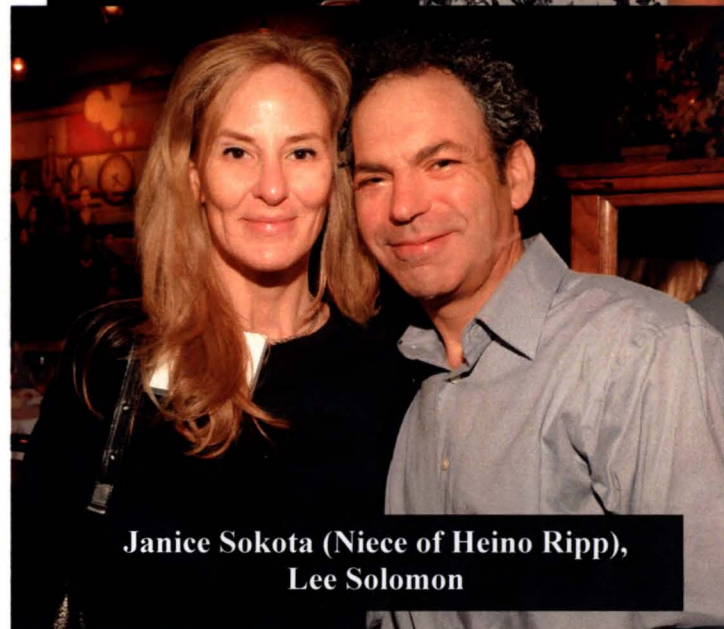
Karl Kaessler Twice:
Senior and Junior



Lenny and Sharon Stucker



John Thomas, Henry Makrin



Janice Sokota (Niece of Heino Ripp),
Lee Solomon



**Peter Magelof, Lauren Fairbanks,
Jon Jones, Stu Wolther,
Susan Kramer**



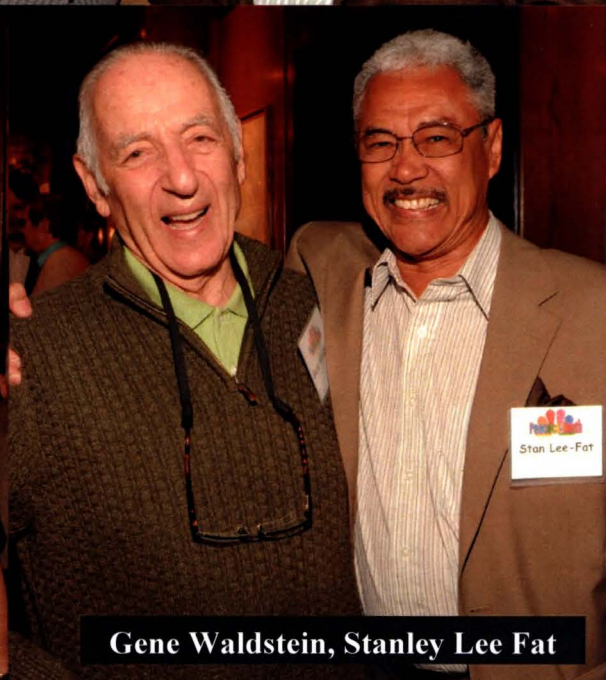
Lou Del Prete, Mary Muzina



Bernie Braun, Hank Huestis

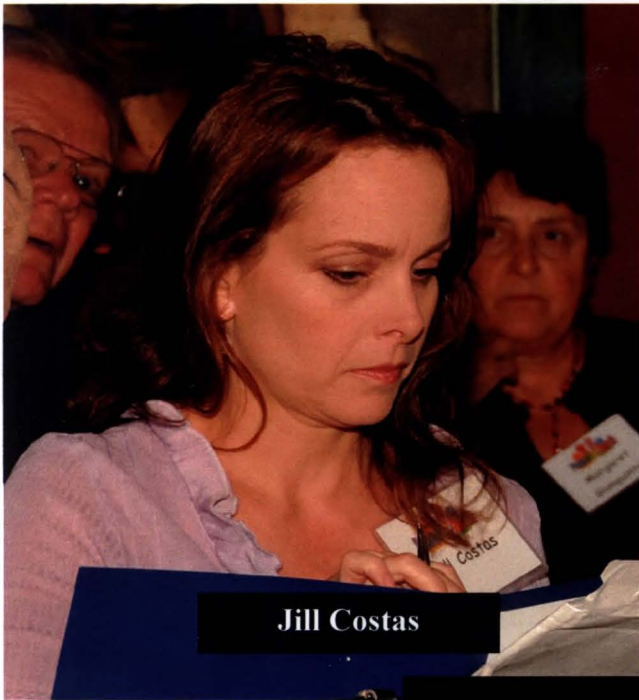


Bambi Tascarella, Gene and Judy Farinet



Gene Waldstein, Stanley Lee Fat





Jill Costas



Mike Weisman
and Bob



Bob, John Wendell, Ginny Seipt



Marilyn congratulates Bob



Bill Vaccaro, John Wendell, Joel Spector, Steve Alper



Lenny Stucker, Neil Flagg, Murray Vecchio



Sunny Carmel, Lee Solomon



Standing: Carol Aerenson, Joyce Werney
Seated: Mamye Smith, Judy Friedman



Neil Flagg, Francine Winiker, Steve Gonzalez



John Thomas, Steve Gonzalez, Bill Vaccaro



Allison and Mark Smith



Ginny Seipt, Lou Del Prete



Maria de Cunha, Ed Hinch



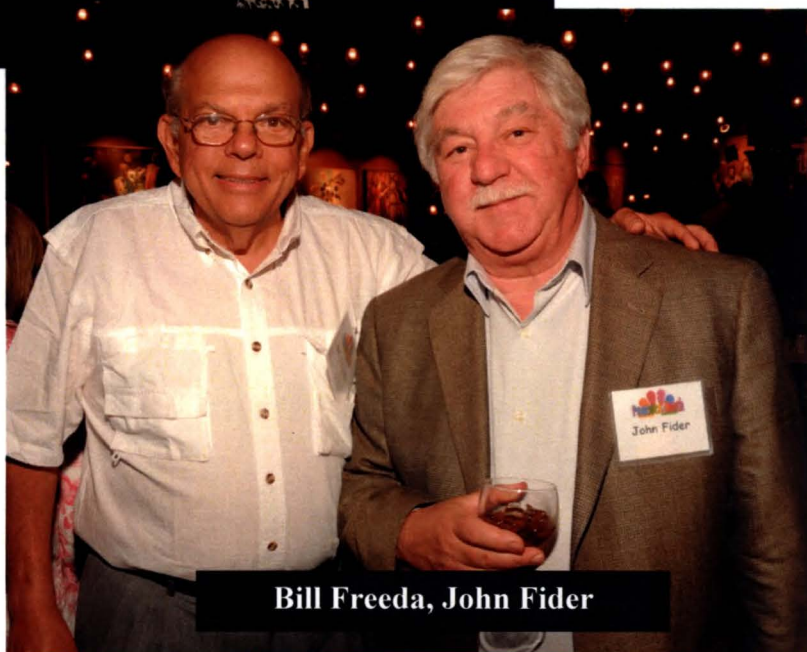
Joe Alicastro, Bambi Tascarella, Jim Barron



Edith Nathanson, Lauren Fishman, Gigi Harold



Gloria Clyne, Joel Spector



Bill Freeda, John Fider



Joe Alicastro, Henry Makrin



Fran and Brian Wickham



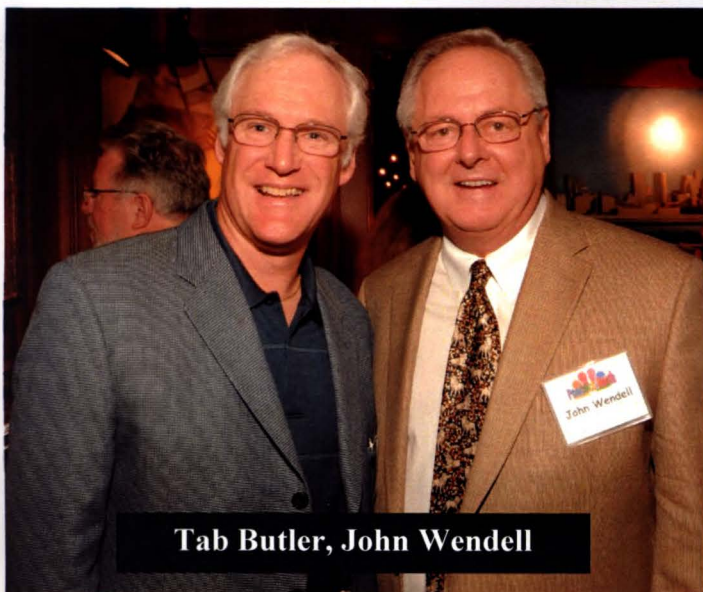
Susan Kramer, Bruce and Mariel Morin, Stu Wolther, Lauren Fairbanks



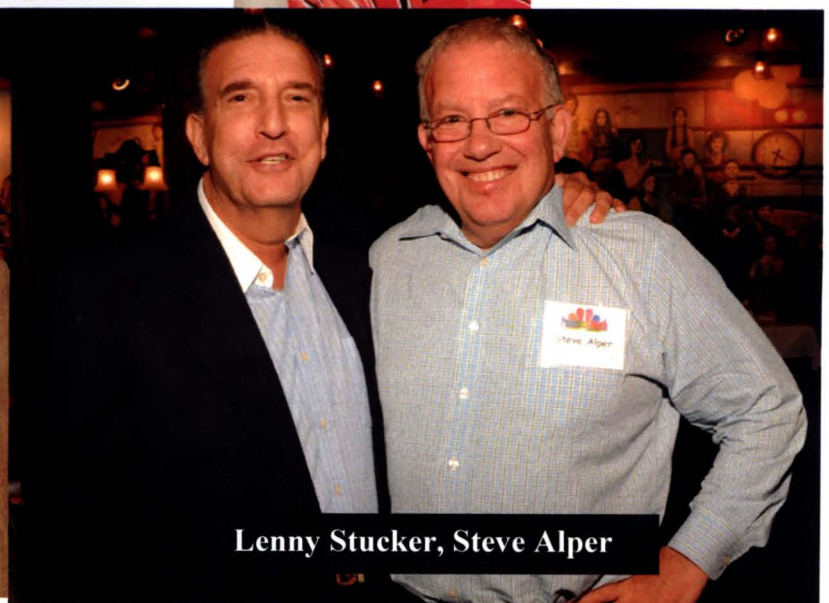
Alyson and Steve Vogel



Kathy Babiak



Tab Butler, John Wendell

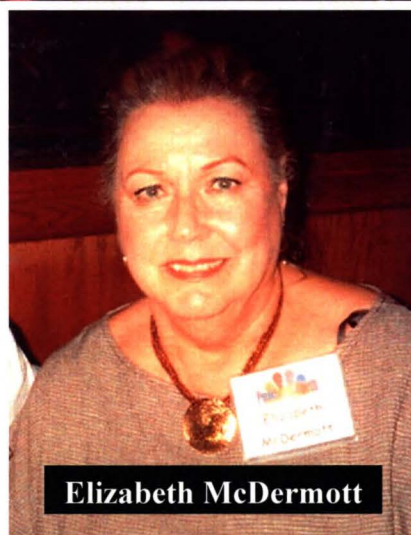


Lenny Stucker, Steve Alper

Photos on this Page are Courtesy of Carol Aerenson



Carol, Gloria Clyne, Mariel Morin, Bambi T., Danne Almirall, Rita Sultana



Elizabeth McDermott



Pat Mauger, Jim Barron



Lenny Starts the Party



Marilyn at the Mic



At Left:
Gloria Clyne became the
“Mystery Voice” of NBC’s
News Program Service,
and was otherwise known by
numerous NBC affiliates
as “Tokyo Rose.”

At Right:
In a hilarious act of lunacy,
Gloria pours castor oil down
the throat of Milton Berle,
manic host of NBC’s Texaco
Star Theater (1948-55), and
the first major star of TV’s
Golden Age.



What's Now!**First Woman NBC Page Tells All**

If the walls of NBC's 30 Rock headquarters could talk, here's what they'd say. News anchor David Brinkley was a gossip. Milton Berle was just as funny in person. And one-time NBC page Eva Marie Saint was barely allowed out of the house growing up.

At least those are the memories of Gloria Clyne, the network's first female "guidette," who gave tours and worked as a Gal Friday at Rockefeller Center for 55 years. The 83-year-old was only 18 when NBC first decided to hire female pages in 1944 as temporary replacements for the boys off fighting in World War II. But like fictional "30 Rock" page Kenneth Parcell, a love of all things NBC-related kept Clyne around.

Once she was called upon to help legendary comic Milton Berle with a gag for one of his radio shows. Clyne posed with Uncle Miltie reclining over her knees while she poured make-believe castor oil down his throat. She rubbed shoulders with the likes of Eddie Cantor and Jack Benny in the heyday of radio, when people flocked to NBC to watch studio [broadcasts]. The Bronx-born Clyne fetched coffee, answered phones, even carried famous guests' coats as she worked her way up from page to "floor wash girl" to "script girl" and finally to production assistant as TV replaced radio inside NBC.

She spent hours gossiping with David Brinkley, the co-host of the network's premier news show, who often kvetched that co-anchor Chet Huntley earned more than he did. She bumped into charismatic Johnny Carson, host of "The Tonight Show," and later in her career was a segment producer for an up-and-coming weatherman named Al Roker.

She was hired for \$65 a month -- current pages earn \$10 an hour -- along with two other young "guidettes," including a pretty teen named Eva Marie Saint, who later won an Oscar for "On the Waterfront." "Eva didn't get to have much fun as a girl. Her mother kept a close eye on her," said Clyne.

Last week, standing in a page uniform in front of the iconic Art Deco building where she worked for half a century, she joked, "It feels good to be a page again. This jacket certainly fits." By the time she left in 1999, at age 73, she had a \$47,000 salary.

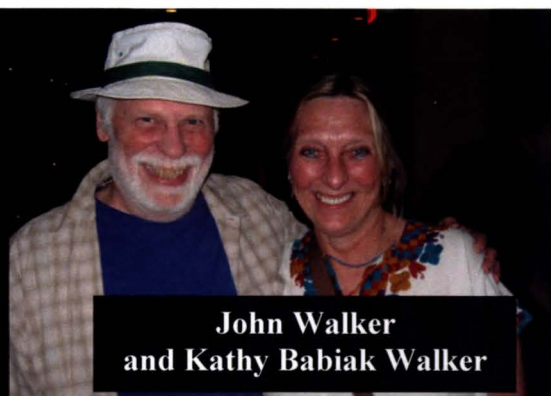
"I never got rich, but it was a priceless experience," Clyne said. "I spent my life there."

What's Now! - Neil Goetz Retires

Pig 'n' Whistle was the scene on April 30th for Neil's friends and family.



**Center: Sharon and daughter Kristyn
Seated: Neil with his parents Bill and Harriet**



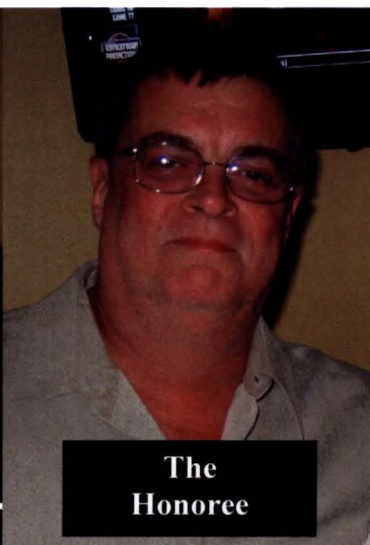
**John Walker
and Kathy Babiak Walker**



Donna and Kim McCarthy



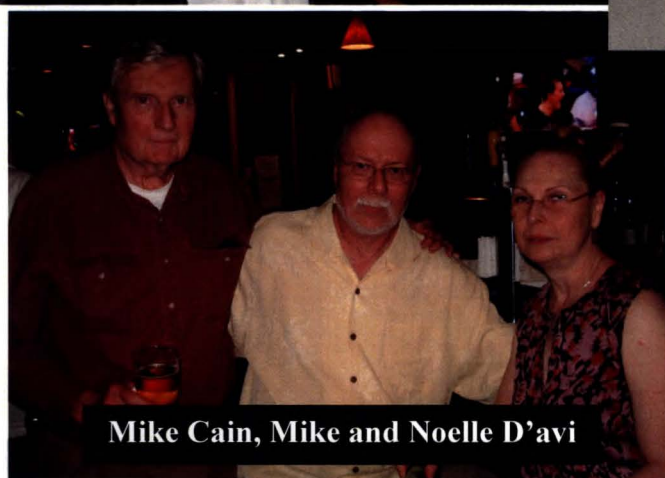
Howie Hirsch, Ed McEwan



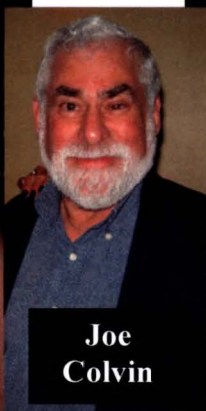
**The
Honoree**



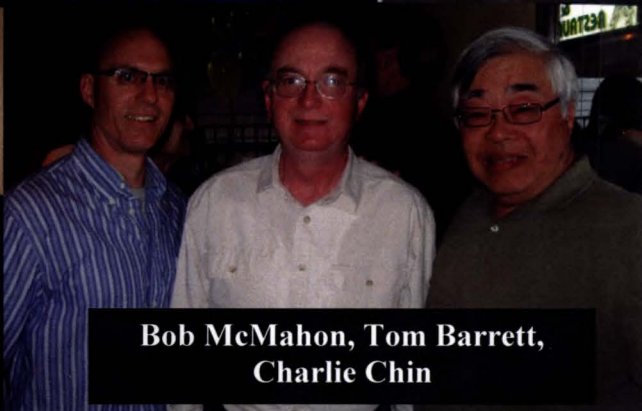
**Stu Wolther, Steve Vogel,
Steve Skroupka**



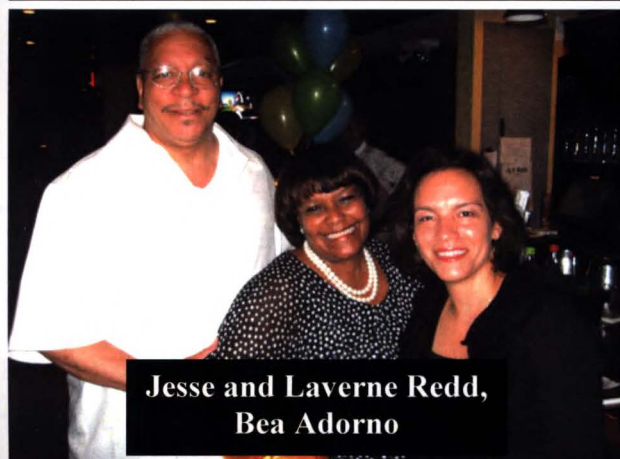
Mike Cain, Mike and Noelle D'avi



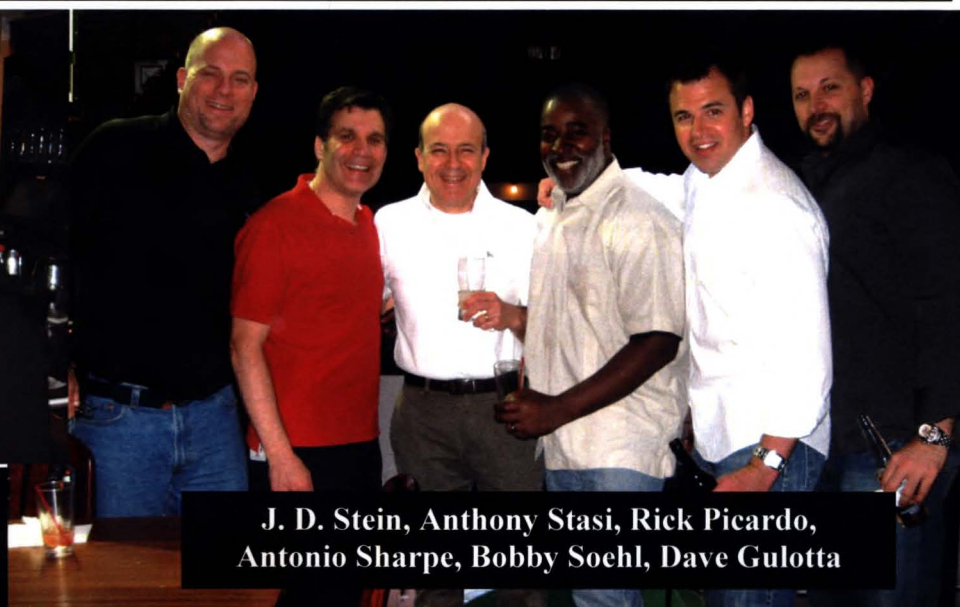
**Joe
Colvin**



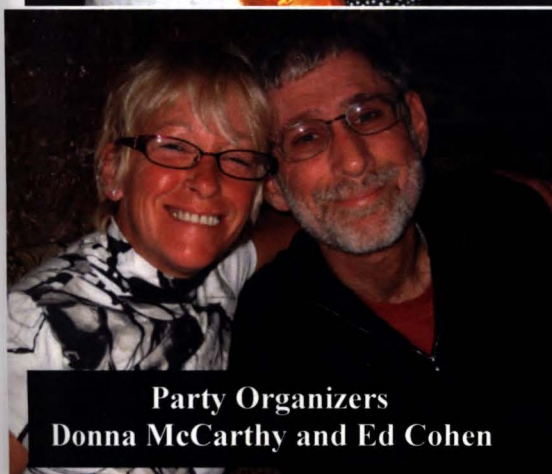
**Bob McMahon, Tom Barrett,
Charlie Chin**



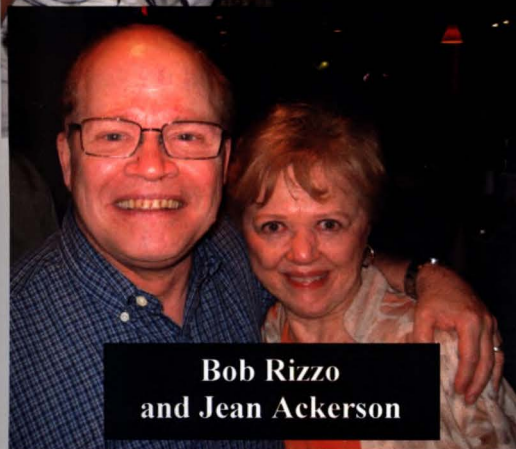
Jesse and Laverne Redd,
Bea Adorno



J. D. Stein, Anthony Stasi, Rick Picardo,
Antonio Sharpe, Bobby Soehl, Dave Gulotta



Party Organizers
Donna McCarthy and Ed Cohen



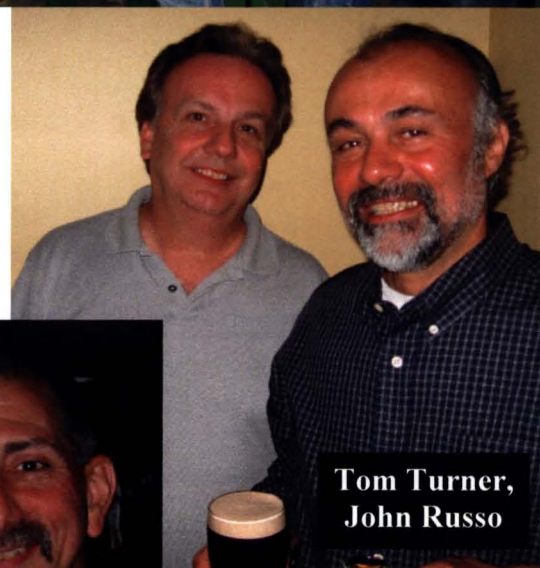
Bob Rizzo
and Jean Ackerson



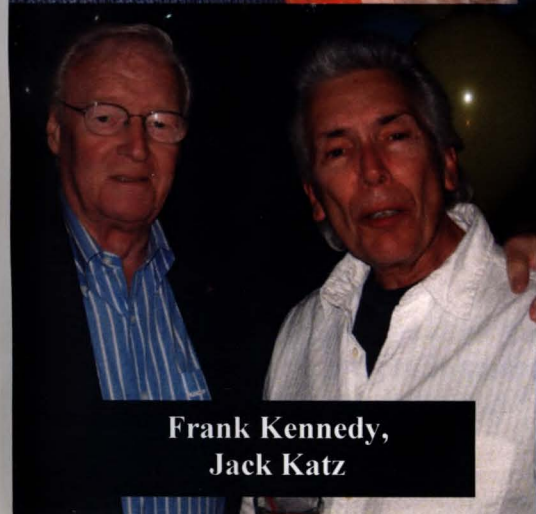
Jay
Markowitz



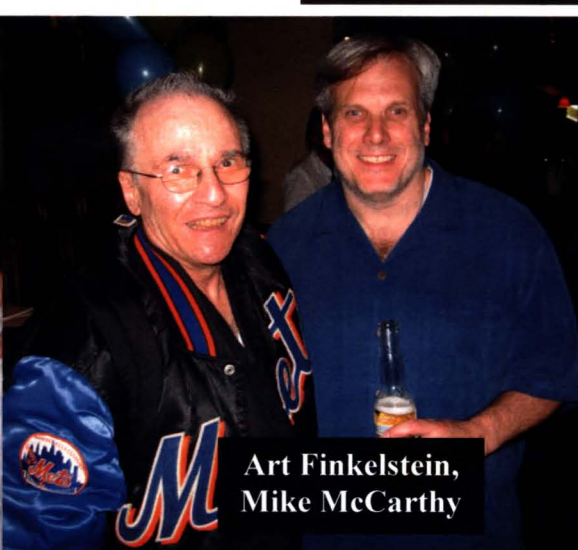
Bill Vaccaro



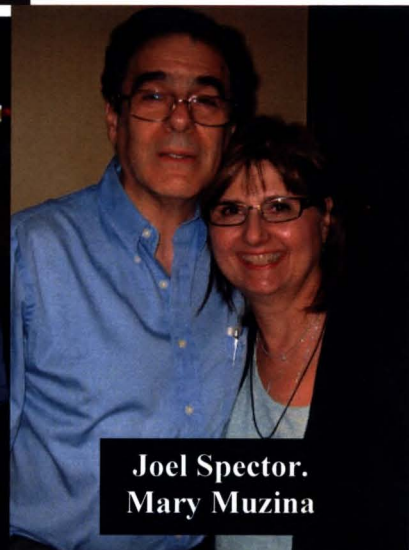
Tom Turner,
John Russo



Frank Kennedy,
Jack Katz



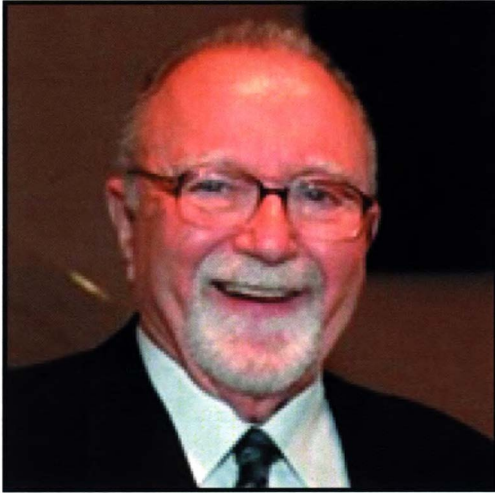
Art Finkelstein,
Mike McCarthy



Joel Spector,
Mary Muzina

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Chet Simmons



Sports broadcasting and cable pioneer, Chester R. "Chet" Simmons, who served as president of ESPN when it launched in 1979, died of natural causes March 25th in Atlanta. He was 81.

As a founding father of sports television, Simmons started in 1957 with Sports Programs, Inc., which soon evolved into ABC Sports, where he was instrumental in the development of Wide World of Sports. He became president of NBC Sports and later of ESPN, and was founding commissioner of the USFL.

Simmons was born on July 11, 1928, in New York City, and was raised in Ossining, N.Y., and Pawtucket, R.I. He earned a bachelor of arts degree in broadcasting from the University of Alabama, and did graduate work in radio and television at Boston University. He served in the Coast Guard after leaving BU.

Simmons had been living in Savannah and Atlanta, Ga., since 1986. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Harriet; his four children Pam, Jed, Pete and Nikki; his daughter-in-law Jana Simmons; his sons-in-law Randy Miller and Micah Goldstein; and nine grandchildren Ella, Zach, Claudia, Streeter, Ben, Zander, Jack, Reid, and Tyler.

It is with a very heavy heart that I pass on this news of a person who was, for many of us, a boss, a mentor and most of all a dear friend; Chet Simmons passed away today. Our thoughts and prayers are with Harriet and the family now.

Ken Fouts

Eileen and I are terribly saddened to learn of Chet's passing today, which based on the conversation that we had with Harriet this week, we knew was unfortunately inevitable, given his condition and personal wishes. Through the years we have remained close with Chet and Harriet and, since their move to Atlanta, we have seen and spent quality time with them and their family quite often, most recently in and out of the hospital and rehab facility. We were privileged to spend some wonderful time with them this past summer at Tybee Island, an experience that we will always treasure. Through all of his pain and major discomfort the past few years, Chet always maintained his wonderful sense of humor, as he enjoyed kidding all of those around him with such good natured warmth and affection. We all know that he was a great boss, leader, mentor and icon of the industry. More so to us personally, he was a warm, great and very dear friend, who will always be so dearly missed and so fondly remembered. Our deepest sympathies to Harriet and her wonderful family, as our thoughts are with you in this time of great sorrow.

Barry & Eileen Black

Chet was a man I admired, learned from and respected a great deal.
He was a true leader.

Jack Simmons

Dear Harriet & all the children,
I had the pleasure of working at NBC Sports during those years, and recently went to visit for the reunion a few years ago. He was a pioneer and had great vision and I have a lot of nice memories of him.

My thoughts and prayers are with you.
He will be truly missed.

Melody Iden Fleisher

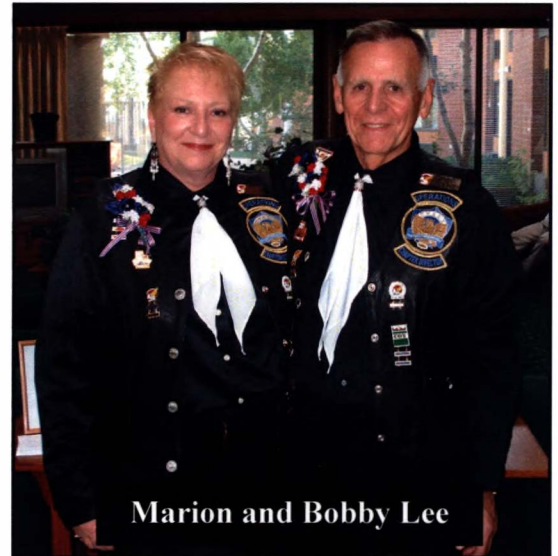
*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Bobby Lee Lawrence**

It is with extreme sadness that I write this to inform you of the passing of one of my dearest friends who was also one of your members; Bobby Lee Lawrence.

Bobby Lee was involved in a motor vehicle accident on May 9, 2010 and succumbed to his injuries later that day.

Mrs. Marion Lawrence is recovering from injuries received in that same accident. You can reach Marion via Bobby Lee's E-mail address which is sskyfrog@comcast.net, and of course you may contact me at the above E-mail.

Sincerely,
Ann Buckley
Las Cruces, New Mexico
abuckleyhere@yahoo.com



Marion and Bobby Lee

Leon Dobbin

Dear Friends and Relatives. . .

I am sorry to let you know that Leon's 92 years 9 months and 3 days finally caught up with him...His fall on December 18 took its toll, especially, I think, the knock on his head. He tried so hard to keep going but in the end just couldn't bounce back one more time.

I lost him this morning (April 8) at 4:25. . .comfortable and pain free in his own bed, alone with me at his side.

His funeral will be Sunday, April 11 at 11 a.m. at Temple Beth-El in Great Neck, 5 Old Mill Road, 11021.

Shiva will be at our home, 1 Kensington Gate, Great Neck, 11021.

Love,

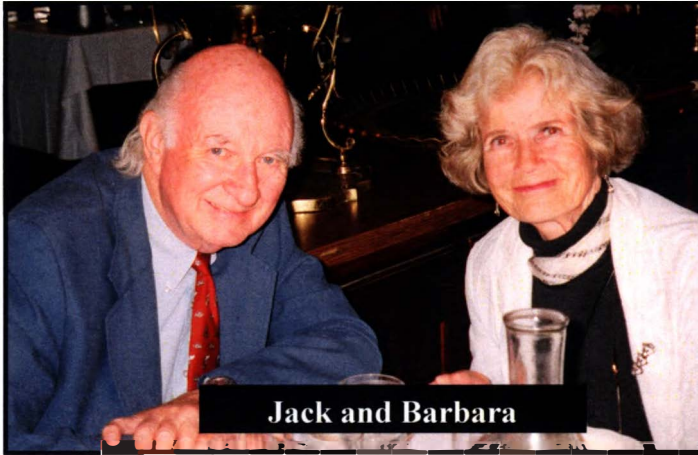
Mickey Dobbin
ddwotwo@aol.com



Tributes to Silent Microphones

Jack Weir

A Note from Barbara Weir...



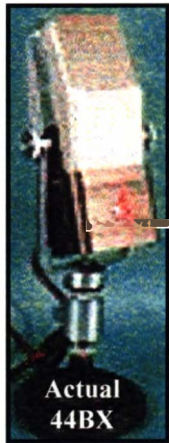
Jack, who worked in NBC's Broadcast Operations for about 45 years – the last 25 or so with the Olympic coverage in Moscow, Seoul, Barcelona, Atlanta – died suddenly of an aortic aneurism on May 28th, just two days after he wrote this piece for Peacock North. I felt it would be a fitting tribute to Jack for you to publish it.

Contact Barbara at
34115 Ann's Choice Way
Warminster, PA 18974-3385

***Editor's note:**

Jack was one of the developers of BOC in the 1950's, along with Don Kivell and Frank Badami.

CLASSIC MICROPHONE RETURNS TO ITS ROOTS



When it came time to try and locate a classic studio microphone for a theater production of 1940's radio programs at the retirement facility at which Barbara and I are now residing, I started by looking for the classic RCA mic of the period, the RCA 44BX. I soon discovered that many of these mics still exist, but to buy one in good working condition would cost three to four thousand dollars. Even one not working, and with the guts removed, would go for around a thousand dollars. What to do??? Here at our new retirement home, Ann's Choice in Bucks County PA, it occurred to me that at a wood-working shop available for the residents to use, many of the people using the shop were quite proficient at unusual projects. So, I printed out a picture and some dimensions of the mic and took them to the shop and asked if they could make a replica of a 44BX out of a block of wood. Guess what they said? "SURE." So I asked them to make two. About two weeks later, a call came - the mics were ready. What a job they did!

It was my plan, if it worked, to augment the replicas with a wireless lavalier mic clipped somehow to the replica. When I tried it in rehearsal, the small mic picked up the voices of the actors just fine while remaining hidden from the audience. The show went on without a hitch, and the audience - listening to the show on the theater P A system - never knew that those microphones were not real.

During my research for the project I found out a lot about the 44BX and its predecessor, the 44A. They were designed at the RCA Labs by Dr. Harry F. Olsen. The 44A was the first of a family of these "ribbon microphones" - a technology developed by RCA and Dr. Olsen starting in the late 1920's. The 44BX became the most famous in the line of these mics which were the first high quality directional microphones in manufacture. It became an enormously successful product for RCA starting in 1931 and lasting until it was discontinued in 1951. Through those years an untold number of these microphones were put to use nation-wide in radio and television studios - including, of course, NBC. Many of them are still hard working tools today and are prized by audio engineers world wide and are VERY EXPENSIVE to come by.



Prop "44BX-JW"

*Tributes to Silent Microphones***Norman Cook**

Norman William (Topper) Cook, 89, died on February 5. A graduate of Princeton University (1942), he was a television news director for NBC—chiefly the Huntley-Brinkley Report and NBC Nightly News. A longtime resident of Old Greenwich, CT, he retired to Pennswood Village in Newtown, PA in 1999.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, the former Nancy Burge, his son Norman of Osaka, Japan; his daughter Ferris of High Falls, NY; two grandsons (Alex Cook and Isaac Krabbenhoft), one granddaughter (Vanessa Longacre-Wilcox), and one great grandson (Daelen Wilcox). His daughter Sarah Longacre died in 2006.

—From The New York Times, February 10, 2010

From Bud Dancy:

Norm was a good man, and a real pro.

From Betsy Steuart:

I loved Norm. What a great guy.

From Sandy Goodman:

Thanks for the news about Norman. the bad news is he died. but I don't know anyone who didn't or isn't gonna. the good news is he lived 89 years and I think enjoyed most of it -- including a lotta good years of retirement. you can see how one's perspective changes with aging.

From Rod Prince:

Thanks for sharing.

Soooooooooooo many years ago, he was a grown-up and we were all wanna-bes.

From Lynn Flaster:

Very sad news. Lovely man.

From Andy Franklin:

Norman Cook was the first guy ever to yell at me here.

I had just started, and I was trying to tell a Vizmo operator how to properly display a graphic for NN. Norman stormed out of the control room, into the studio, and asked me who the hell I was and what the hell I thought I was doing. Despite -- or because of -- that altercation, Norman and I went on to become good friends. I'm sorry he's gone. And I'm still trying to answer those two questions.

Norman "Topper" Cook from Wallace Westfeldt/Executive Producer Huntley Brinkley-Nightly News:

We thought of Norman as "MR. CALM". He ran the calmest control room at NBC.

He had a close bond with his Princeton roommate George Shultz (former Sec'y of State); they both had tatoos of the Princeton "Tiger" on their butts (believe it was the left cheek!!) On Pearl Harbor Day, Norm and George went to New York City to enlist but no recruiting station was open that day. So, they decided to get drunk!! Then they decided to get tattoos!! That event endeared Norman to George and George to Norman for life. It made me feel much better about George Shultz!

From Marilyn Altman:

Norm was the first Director I worked with on Nightly News. He was truly a lovely man. "Gentleman" encompasses his description to a "T." He really did run a tight but kind control room.

From Joel Spector:

A typical Cook control room command sequence—from the all-film days:

"All right, Commissioner (John McGinty). Coming to The Colonel's (Bob Zweck) camera. Take it! Standby fill-um (sic) ...and **roll-er!**"



Tributes to Silent Microphones

Les Dennis

Les Dennis, 78, of Salem, WV formerly of Long Island, NY passed away Friday, April 30, 2010, at Sunbridge Care & Rehabilitation of Salem, WV due to Alzheimer's Disease.

Les was born in Brooklyn, NY on March 28, 1932, the son of the late Mortimer Dennis and the late Edith Lispenard Dennis. He graduated from Adelphi University. Les served in the U. S. Army during the Korean Conflict.

He was a reporter and producer for NBC News and Sports and he received a television Emmy Award.

He is survived by his wife Barbara Foote Dennis, and children, Richard Dennis and wife Bettina of Morgantown; Lynn Taylor and husband, Don of New Jersey, Neil Dennis and wife Teresa of Texas and Daniel Dennis and wife Janet Brightly of Virginia. Also he is survived by 10 grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made in Les' memory to the Alzheimer's Association, P.O. Box 96011, Washington, DC 20090-6011.

Send condolences online to hastingsfuneralhome.com.

Jack Keegan



Jack and Irene

I never knew much about Jack while employed at NBC. All I knew is if you had a problem in the control room or in the studio, you would call maintenance and Jack would appear.

I did get to know Jack over the last 15 years or so at our Long Island luncheons. When Howie Atlas passed away, Jack took over the process of e-mailing everyone about the upcoming luncheons. A thankless job at times. Who can make the next luncheon or who has something else to do that day. We would discuss what happened at NBC 40 or 50 years ago, or what shows we were doing at the time. I especially enjoyed the topic of politics.

I bet the blood pressure rate among the group at that table hit an all time high. We solved a lot of the world's problems at those luncheons.

Going to miss you Jack - **Frank Gaeta**

Jack was one of my mentors, and always had time to dive into a new project. One day I decided that we absolutely had to have a flashing cue light at the Saturday Night Live bandleader position during sound check.

I had roughed in what existing circuit we could use for such a box and mentioned it to Jack. In a flash we were in the Model Shop speaking to Rudy Gebhart, who stopped all activity to "take care of this young man's idea right away!" That was only one of many instances of his desire to "get it done right – the first time." In recent years Jack chaired the Long Island Lunch Bunch 'o Retirees with the same dry good humor as ever.

Having fun was always tempered with a gentle touch of organization. - **Joel Spector**

Tributes to Silent Microphones

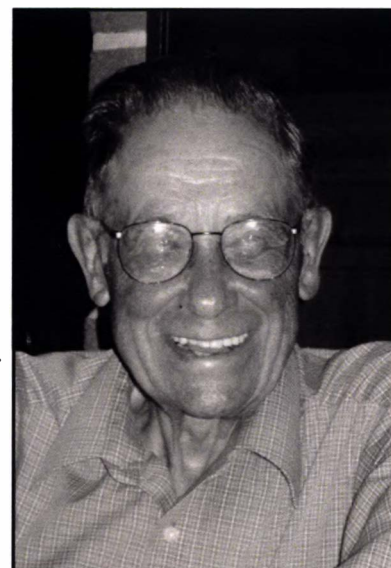
Walter Dibbins

Walter N. Dibbins, age 86, of Massapequa, NY died on February 1. Beloved husband of the late Thalia Elodie. Loving father of Diane Kretz (Bob), John (Susan), and the late Wendy DeFrancisco (John). Cherished grandfather of Jenny, Jessy, Johnny, Justin, Bobby, Cassie, and Johnny.

Retired Broadcast Systems Engineer from RCA/NBC. During his 40-year tenure, Walter held 2 patents. He was an Advanced Ham Radio Operator, and held a First Class FCC license. Former adjunct professor at Farmingdale College, and Suffolk Community College, he taught electrical theory and weather. A 30-year member of the LI Weather Observers Club, he helped the groundhog see his shadow this year.

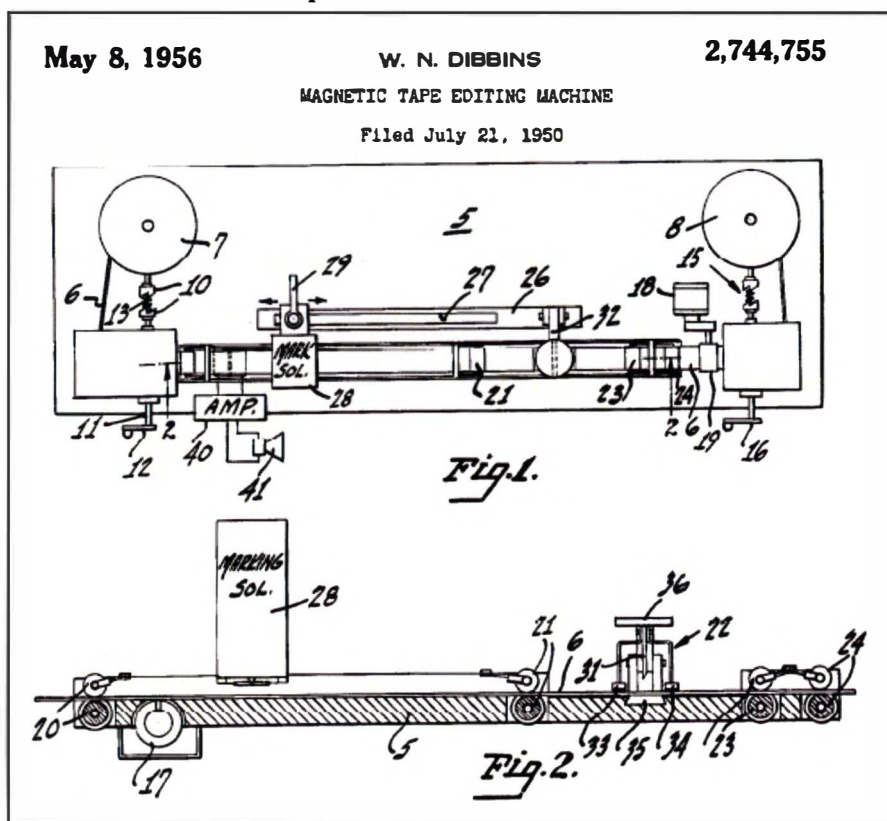
Walter's passion for imparting knowledge was surpassed only by his love of boating. He held a Coast Guard Master's license, and was a past Commander of the United States Power Squadron. He spent many years dedicated to safe boating operation and educating boaters. Over the years, he cruised the entire East Coast with his family in tow. He was an expert navigator and seaman, and was proud of his "N" designation. Walter enjoyed teaching on many levels. His last goal in life was to teach his grandson how to drive, which he accomplished.

As an alternative to flowers the family has suggested memorials be made to the American Cancer Society, 75 Davids Drive, Hauppauge, NY 11788.



—newsday.com Feb 4, 2010

Shown below is a portion of one of Walter's U. S. Patents



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January 1, 2010



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Your contacts:

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Jim Marshall

Lenny Stucker

Joel Spector

(Peacock North Editor)

E-mail: peacocknorth@yahoo.com

Mailing Address:

PO Box 112

Rowayton, CT 06853

Peggy Howard Chane worked for NBC Spot Sales in 1967.
From 1970-72 she worked for NBC Sports on the Sapporo Winter Olympics,
Dick Schaap Monday Night Baseball, and Weekend Pre-Game Baseball.

Peggy held many positions on various Game Shows from 1972-75.

She was at Paramount Pictures from 1979-84.

She then became a TV and Film Producer and Director.

Peggy resides mostly in New York City, with shuttles to Los Angeles as well.

Jim Dullaghan was at NBC Sports, then ESPN from 1962-79.

He and wife Cathy live in Holden Beach, NC.

Lauren Fishman worked at NBC Corporate Events from 1976-1992.

She now owns her own Special Events company in New York City.