

Peacock North

The Second Generation

SPRING, 2003



Volume 3 Edition 1



*All members, their spouses,
guests, and friends are
cordially invited to
Peacock North's
16th Annual
Spring Luncheon*

*May 18, 2003 at 12 Noon
La Maganette Ristorante
825 Third Avenue
(Northeast corner of
3rd Avenue & 50th Street)*

See RSVP Form on page 15
Please Reserve by May 5

Peacock North to Hold 16th Annual Spring Luncheon

Once again it's time for our annual get-together to meet with coworkers and renew old friendships. We'll meet at our old hang-out, La Maganette, and enjoy some good food and spirits at our regular time, 12 Noon.

We urge you to RSVP as soon as possible, using the reply form on page 15. Many of you may not want to destroy our historical magazine, so you choose to just send in your check. If you do so, please include the exact names of the attendees so that we can prepare name tags in advance.

Look forward to seeing all of you Sunday, May 18th.

Marilyn, Jim and Lenny

INSIDE PN

Spring Luncheon Invitation	1
David Rush	2
O'Gorman Visit Correction	2
Lenny Stucker.....	3
We Get Letter and Pictures.....	4,5
Obits	
George Voutsas.....	5
Tom Smiley	6
Mister Rogers	6

Dorothy Tamburri	6
Reinald Werrenrath	7
Jay Barbree.....	8
Mort Hockstein Writes.....	8,9
We Get Letters	10
Florida Lunch Bunch.....	11
Peacock West November 2002.....	12
Westwood One and NBC Radio News.....	13
Don Blair Writes	14
Luncheon Reply Form and Dues & Membership Form	15

By Russ Tornabene

Did **David Rush**, a one-time NBC newsman who patiently climbed to the top—step by step in his profession—ever dream that one day he would get a really big check by merely picking up a small piece of cardboard?

When Rush joined NBC in 1962 as a reporter and anchorman at WRC-AM in Washington, he was paid a reasonable wage. As he learned the skills of the trade, he progressed over the next years, and his pay increased. His income was of less concern to him than his desire for continual improvement, as he earned various new assignments over a 35-year career with the NBC radio and TV networks.

But Rush never imagined that it would take but a five-minute exercise of “selecting among choices” that would change the rest of his life, and greatly increase his income.

That exercise resulted from buying a winning ticket in the Florida Lottery.

“Usually I checked my numbers on Sunday afternoon,” Rush replied in an interview from his office in Marco Island, Florida, “but on this day (December 14, 2002), I had dressed for church and was waiting for my wife, so I thumbed through the Naples Daily News. It was the headline ‘Marco Ticket Among 4 Lotto Winners’ that caused me to break my habit and check my numbers, right away. I had played the Florida numbers for 14 years without any winnings.”

“I checked off row upon row. On the next to last row, the numbers fell in place. I breathed in deeply and then called to my wife Betty, ‘Hey, babe, we won!’ ‘Won what?’ ‘The Lottery!’ to which she replied, ‘You’d better hurry up and get dressed or we’ll be late for church.’ ‘Then I showed her the numbers and she became appropriately hysterical. We had won \$14,281,343.70, as one of the four winners who would split the total amount.’” (After taxes, fully paid before any celebrations, the amount was reduced to somewhat over nine million dollars, for the Rushes).

What were the first uses of the new money? Among the charities contributed to was the regional Salvation Army’s County chapter, where Rush had mailed a \$100,000 check. The result made the national newswires, when the chapter’s commander returned the check to Rush, describing it as “tainted money.”

The AP story set off a small flood of requests from around the country, people asking for shares of the good luck from Rush’s lottery ticket. The result was that

other charities benefited from what the Salvation Army unit had rejected, groups that provide help to feed, clothe, provide health care, and housing for those who need this assistance.

And a reaction from their children especially warmed the hearts of the Rushes, who had written substantial checks to their three grown children, with notes that stated “...this is your legacy, in advance....” The children all responded with letters of appreciation, including information that they each had, in turn, made charity donations of 10% of their parents’ gifts to them.

Rush’s record at NBC is impressive. A year after his start at WRC News, he was chosen to anchor a shift on Monitor’s Network News on the Hour. Over the next years, he reported Washington events for both NBC radio and television news programs, including stints at the White House in ’65 and ’66 (LBJ was President); John Kennedy’s funeral; Richard Nixon’s impeachment hearings; and Jimmy Carter’s first year in office as White House Correspondent and into Reagan’s first term. In his final three years at NBC, Rush was Chief Business Correspondent for the Radio Network and filed business reports for the daily “closed circuit” television feeds.

Now, David and Betty Rush continue living in their home after the acquisition of the small fortune, which prompts him to give this advice to young people: “Work hard, come to terms with yourself and the organization that employs you, and with the people you deal with. Hope for a good mentor, be patient, don’t let your ambitions ruin your hopes. And...buy a lottery ticket.”



**Correction
to Winter 2003 Issue
Jim O’Gorman visits Ireland??
Sorry Jim, we now know
that you were in Portugal.**





A Moment in Life

By Lenny Stucker

A month after I left NBC, the USA Network hired me as a director for their boxing series called USA Tuesday Night Fights. I loved it! I was treated with respect and allowed to be creative. I did not know then that this would change my life in a way that I never dreamed. After two years of directing boxing I became friends with a lot of people that were involved in pay-per-view boxing. Boxing was in big demand from the international broadcasters around the world. I had started a company called TalentWorks. HBO recommended to their international clients that TalentWorks could help them with their production needs for boxing in the USA.

TalentWorks started assisting one country after another with production in the USA. A strong bond and trust was developed between TalentWorks and the broadcasters around the world. TalentWorks was asked by these broadcasters to obtain the rights to a great variety of events including boxing, the Superbowl, Indy 500, Stanley Cup, Boston Marathon, New York Marathon, The Academy Awards, MTV Awards and so on. Soon TalentWorks was recognized in the USA as the representative to negotiate exclusive TV rights for these global broadcasters.

In 1998, TalentWorks was invited by Germany to be their program director and help Americanize European television. TalentWorks was given a budget of one hundred and fifty million-dollars to buy programming for Europe. What a learning experience that was! I educated myself on the ins and outs of programming.

Lenny Stucker worked in NBC's Television Engineering Department. He is the President/Owner of TalentWorks and is also one of the three leaders of Peacock North.

What I discovered from this experience was that there was money to be made if I could come up with original programming and sell it. TalentWorks went on to create small programming that was bought by international broadcasters. Then all of a sudden bingo, my partner and I came up with the idea of robots fighting.

TalentWorks went on to co-create a sports franchise called Battlebots. I was able to get it on pay per-view first. I thought I would make a killing. Not so, it broke even. To my surprise and delight two days after the pay-per-view aired major cable networks were calling my office to talk about airing Battlebots as a series. I ended up making a deal with Comedy Central. They put us on prime time right after South Park, their number one show, what a lead in! Comedy Central ordered thirteen half-hour shows. After our third show aired we were the number one show on their network. Soon I was getting calls from major toy companies, clothing companies, video game companies, book publishers, calendar companies and so on. It was unbelievable! In the first year just getting started Battlebots made twenty million dollars in profit. The next season Comedy Central ordered thirteen one-hour shows. So far, we have produced ninety-eight shows and Battlebots is playing in twenty countries.

So here I am in my early fifties and what an unbelievable change in my life. I thank god every day and learned it's never too late to go for it.

Answer on Jeopardy in 2002

THIS COMEDY
CENTRAL SPORT
FEATURES HAMMERS,
KILL SAWS, SPIKES,
SPINNERS &
2 FIGHTING
MACHINES

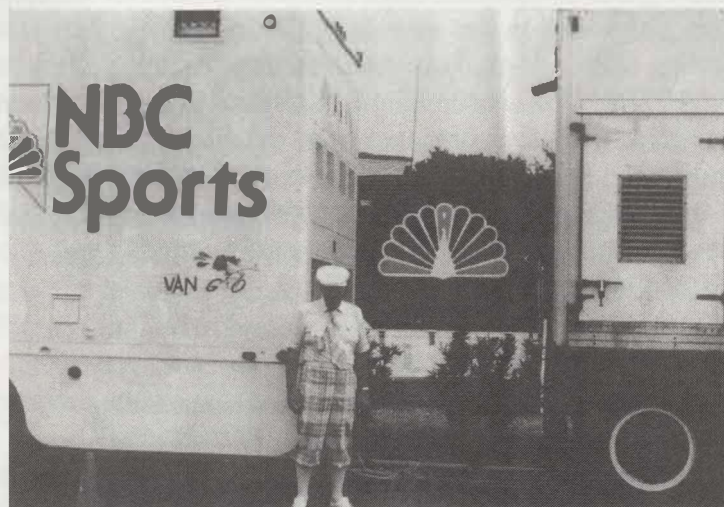
Question: What is Battlebots

We Get Letters and Pictures

From William A. (Bill) Howard

I started with NBC in the Engineering department April 15, 1946. Bill Resides and I engineered and installed the NBC TV station, WNBK, in Cleveland and I transferred to Cleveland in January of 1949 and was there for 7 years. With the trade of stations with Westinghouse in 1956, I moved to Philadelphia as Supervisor of Technical Operations of radio and television there at WRCV and WRCV-TV. In 1960, I returned to NBC Engineering in New York and retired as a Senior Staff Engineer on January 1, 1979.

The picture I am sending you was taken in the early 1980's when Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and NBC started the Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf at the Onion Creek Country Club near Austin, Texas.



In this picture, I am wearing the marshals uniform that we were required to wear including the matching necktie and knickers. I marshaled for the Legends as a member of the Senior Golf Association in Austin for 7 years. NBC made the pickup for the NBC Network with crews from New York and the West Coast. The mobile unit in the photograph was one that I did the cost estimating on before I retired. It was always exciting to see some of the fellows on the crew that I knew in New York.

Peacock North ran the article several years ago that I wrote before retiring, "NBC Engineering, a 50 Year History," that was published in the RCA Engineer. This article and 180 photographs are now in the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.



From Tony Rivera

I just read the winter issue of PN and was especially happy to see Bill Miller and the others in Florida.

The stories and photos in PN bring back many good memories. A few of us retired maintenance engineers got together for lunch in Bayside, NY this last summer. Exchanging old stories and meeting with old friends always makes a good time.

Here is a photo of those of us who met.



Left to right: Gil Perez, Sen Louie, Bill Melanson, Tony Rivera, Frank Covino, Joe Morone and Jerry Ryba.

Dear PN,

Noel Engler sent this 40 year-old picture to me. He said it was taken in Cromwell's at the lunch counter and, although I am in the shot, I do not remember what the occasion was.

Jack Marshall



Left to right: Jack Marshall, DGA Director; Noel Engler, Production Manager On-Air Promotion; and Lou Bradley, Commercial Producer for TODAY.

We Get Letters and Pictures

Tributes to Silent Microphones.



Dear PN,

Danny Sutter at 90—In this picture, Danny is somewhat dazed due to the fact that he thought he was having dinner with a couple of members of his immediate family, and more than 60 family and friends burst into "Happy Birthday" when he walked into the Old Inlet Inn in Bellport on Long Island last October.

The former cohorts with Danny here are Bob Maurer, who was the producer of NBC Radio's "Monitor," when Danny was senior director of that weekend marathon for some 20 years, and Fred Collins, one of NBC's great staff announcers, who now is heard on ABC's World News Tonight. Other friends from Danny's NBC days who came to the party were Bill Mason, John Marrin, Gene Garnes and me, Beryl Pfizer.

It was a fabulous occasion, thanks to weeks of planning by Danny's wife, B.J., and their three daughters (cheered on by four young grandchildren) who gathered relatives from all around the country plus as many old NBC pals as their detective work could find. The best part of all was at the end of the party when Danny proved he's still sharp as a tack and hasn't lost his famous gift of gab. After everyone's tributes to him, Danny delivered a gracious thank-you to all...then recited the Jabberwocky verses from "Alice, Through the Looking-Glass"...concluding that although he appreciated all the nice sentiments, "as Alice said, a lot of it is Nonsense!"

Beryl Pfizer

George Voutsas, died January 2. George retired from NBC New York in 1976 and he and wife Margery, moved to Carmel, CA the following year.

In 1928, at age 17, he joined the staff of the National Broadcasting Corp. as music librarian, receiving training in program building, music research and radio. By 1933 he had been appointed general assistant to Frank Black, General Music Director of NBC, supervising his music library, copyists, and arrangers; doing research, building programs, hiring talent, and assisting producers in carrying out programs from Jack Benny to the NBC Symphony.

From 1937 until 1942, George was an NBC producer in Chicago, where he produced *The Breakfast Club*, *This Amazing America*, Chicago Civic Opera and others.

George entered the Army Air Corps in 1942, and was assigned to work with Captain Glenn Miller to create an outstanding radio unit for the Air Corps. He directed twelve programs a week which were broadcast to allied troops in the European theatre and short-waved to the Pacific by the BBC and military forces networks. Guests on these programs were the finest English stars as well as Americans Bing Crosby, Dinah Shore and Morton Downey.

From the end of 1944 until his discharge a year later, George worked from Paris, producing weekly concerts for combat troops on leave and taking shows to units all over Europe.

Upon returning to the States, George worked as a producer for NBC radio. He produced and directed music programs including RCA-Victor's *Music America Loves Best*, *Promenade*, the NBC Symphony Orchestra (Toscanini conduction), *Golden Voices*, the Boston Symphony series, the Berkshire Festival, and the Eastman Rochester Symphony Series. He also produced and directed *Words in the Night*, chosen by radio critics as the outstanding new radio program of 1952, *Faith in Action*, the *Catholic Hour*, *Biographies in Sound*, and various documentaries. Among the specials he produced was *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, the first made-for-television opera. Towards the end of his career, he served as audio director for the NBC Television Opera Company and the NBC Monitor broadcast program.

George is survived by his wife; his three children; six grandchildren; and one brother.

Tributes to Silent Microphones

Tom Smiley, Field Technical Operations from 1944 to 1985, passed away on Thanksgiving Day. He was living in Murphy, CA. Tom had recently had heart surgery—subsequent to the surgery he was involved in two serious automobile accidents, all of which contributed to his death.

By Lenny Stucker

I was very sad to hear about **Tom Smiley** passing away. When I was young and just starting out at NBC with my peers, the boss in charge of T.O.P.S. was Tom Smiley. The young group of people I came in with found it very hard to get the opportunity to advance in engineering. There was that first group of engineers that had started TV and worked together for so many years that they had developed a very strong exclusive bond. That bond made it hard for a new person to be accepted and given a chance to advance. The first person at NBC to give me a chance was Tom Smiley. He called me into his office and told me he knew I was learning the switcher on my own time. He felt that it was time for new people to come on board. He told me he would take a chance with me and he would hope that I would never let him down. He was the first to give me a chance at a time that no one else would. I have never forgotten the opportunity that he so generously gave to me. I have very fond memories of Tom and will truly miss him.

Fred McFeely Rogers, who gently invited millions of children to be his neighbor as host of the public television show "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," died February 27 at his home in Pittsburgh. Rogers was born in Latrobe, PA on March 20, 1928.

He studied music composition at college and worked for NBC in New York as floor manager for "Your Hit Parade" and "The Kate Smith Show" before moving to Pittsburgh to be an off-camera puppeteer on a local children's show.

He developed a solo show, "Misterogers," for Canadian television in 1963. It moved to the US in 1968 and



went on to win four Emmy Awards, a Lifetime Achievement Award and a Peabody Award, among others.

Rogers' gentle manner was the butt of some comedians' jokes. Eddie Murphy parodied him on "Saturday Night Live (news—Y! TV)" in the 1980's with his "Mister Robinson's Neighborhood," a routine Rogers found funny and affectionate.

Rogers is survived by his wife, Joanne, a concert pianist; two sons; and two grandsons.

Orland Tamburri lost his wife of many years, **Dorothy**, on December 19. Orland resides in Vista, CA.

PEACOCKNORTH@YAHOO.COM

The email set up for Peacock North is a free service from Yahoo with a limited amount of space. The intent of this email is for our membership to use it to communicate stories and send photographs to the editors.

We, therefore, kindly request that everyone refrains from sending jokes, political messages, etc. to this address. We want to keep the space open for those very important messages concerning our membership and those wonderful stories that you continue to submit.

Thank you,
Your PN Leaders

By Russ Tornabene

Note: I showed my "Happy Holidays" edition of PN to a friend of mine, whom I wrote about for PN about two years or more ago. He is **Reinald Werrenrath**, who was a lighting director at the NBC station in NYC before WWII, and then worked out of Chicago after WWII. He was spurred to write a return note after reading that short piece on p. 4 "COLOR TV" which reminded him of his early experience in Chicago, when he helped create Ding Dong School with "Miss Frances," who was Frances Horwitz, PhD, in early 1953. My interview with him follows.

"Ding Dong School" with Miss Frances

OK, class. Today's question about Old Tyme Television is "What was Ding Dong School?"

Time's up. Ding Dong School was a Monday through Friday, 9 AM ground-breaking local TV program, with an education-specialist host who entranced nursery school age children and their parents at home.

One of the developers of this program was **Reinald Werrenrath**, who had begun his television career in 1938 at the NBC TV experimental studio in New York City. After WWII service as a US Naval officer in the Pacific, he resumed work in the new medium of television, in Chicago.

Werrenrath's skills in TV studio operations and directing had developed, and he was assigned the task of creating a program for pre-school children. He teamed up with Judith Waller, director of Public Service Programming in Chicago, and together they found Dr. Frances Horwich, a college teacher who specialized in Nursery School education. He said, "Dr. Horwich had an incredible understanding of very young children, and how to talk with them. In spite of her lack of experience in the medium, we decided to take a chance."

When Dr. Horwich agreed to try it, Werrenrath's



Taken in the NBC Experimental Studio in NYC, 1938

production was launched. The title was "Ding Dong School" with Miss Frances, reflecting the days when a large, hand-rung bell was used by teachers to summon children to their classes.

The program was first broadcast locally on NBC's station WNBQ (now WMAQ-TV) in Chicago but within a few months, in 1953, it was put on the Network. Color was coming along rapidly and the decision was made to test the show in color, in the new color studio in New York.

Werrenrath picks up the story at this point, "Our studio set was not complicated. We had asked for a couple of display shelves and a footstool and when we arrived in New York for rehearsal, the set was almost ready for us."

He compliments the scene designer as a mastermind, with a crew of workers with paint brushes who followed him around and changed whatever he felt needed improving for the color cameras.

"When he didn't like one of the shadows cast by the display shelves, they painted it. Yes, the shadow. They painted the shadow a different shade," he said. "Of course, when we were about to go on the air, and I wanted to move the shelves a few inches to get a better angle for the camera, we were stuck. Other than this, we got through that first day, with a minimum of problems." In those days, of course, all the shows were live.

"However, Miss Frances, who was a very determined person, had been unhappy with the way the painters treated her set," he noted, "they found out just how unhappy when they tried to change the color of a real strawberry with their paint brushes. When Frances saw this, she bridled her 'no!' that was loud and clear. There was never a question of what she meant."

"Color TV grew very fast, when everyone, including CBS, got aboard the same train and when people stopped trying to improve on reality and accepted the color of the world as it was," Werrenrath observed.

The show was a triumph for NBC, with high ratings in those early days of developing programs for specialized audiences.

Werrenrath compliments the article about early use of color in television broadcasts, as written in the previous edition of PN by Frank Vierling, who retired from NBC in 1983 after 34 years with the network.

Werrenrath, 87, lives in Evanston, Illinois, "...in semi-retirement; it's only 'semi' because I still use my camera and edit mini-documentaries—old habits die hard."

Experience pays off for NBC space veteran

Like the previous 143 U.S. space missions, NBC News correspondent **Jay Barbree** was on hand for the Jan. 16 launch of the space shuttle Columbia.

Viewers didn't see him again until the flight's tragic end on March 1. With everything going on with Iraq, he didn't get on the whole 16 days.

That's been the drill for Barbree in recent years. He knows that tragedy is a bigger story than the space program's triumphs.

But Barbree's 45 years of experience covering the space program paid off February 24 when he broke the story of a NASA memo that said tile damage during Columbia's takeoff was worse than first believed.

Barbree, 69, is the last of the TV journalists who brought the space program into homes during its go-go years in the 1960s.

The Georgia native started covering rocket launches for NBC in 1958 and has been based at the Kennedy Space Center for the network ever since.

And while he hasn't been seen much lately on NBC - which has taken to covering shuttle launches on cable network MSNBC - Barbree's contacts and knowledge about NASA paid off in a time of crisis.

"There is something to having somebody there who knows the NASA community because it's a closed community," said NBC News president Neal Shapiro. "But he's not an apologist for NASA. He's passionate about the program, but he sees his job as a critic, not a cheerleader."

Barbree was also first to report on the cause of the Challenger's disaster in 1986. But after the shuttle program got back on track in the late 1980s, public interest in the space program waned, as did Barbree's time on the air.

Barbree was ready to retire four years ago, but NBC News brass talked him out of it. They wanted him to be there for protection.

A former Air Force pilot, he has written five books on the space program—he was coauthor of the No. 1 best seller "Moon Shot." He was also a finalist in the journalist-in-space program.

He wants to work for NBC until 2008, which would give him 50 years at the network. Since he bench-pressed 200 pounds on his 69th birthday, he's certainly in shape for the challenge. And in the aftermath of the Columbia disaster, NBC viewers will probably be seeing him more in the months to come.

"I'll be needed here to watch and keep progressing the story," he said. "When we return to flight, that will be a big deal. The first few flights will be like the ones after Challenger. Every time they go up, everybody will be holding their breath to see if it's okay."



Mort Hockstein Writes

In one issue of Peacock North, Tony Block referred to "a hole-in-the-wall sandwich operation next to 8H." Tony, it may have been a hole-in-the-wall, but the two fellows who ran that shop made good sandwiches, not great, but certainly preferable to the cafeteria. Does anybody remember their names? They should have been given a medal. I always believed in that old saw that "an army travels on its stomach." And all of us in the NBC army, none more so than I, considered lunchtime a vital part of the day. But then, I've always been what my mother called a "fresser." If you need a translation, that is Yiddish for "an eater." Bloch's mention of that informal sandwich shop cued up a lot of memories of times at NBC and even of times before NBC.

When I was a young sportswriter, I lived for Wednesday nights, the boxing matches and my late night hamburger and fries... While still in high school, I had built myself into a one-man news bureau and Wednesday found me at my busiest, covering the weekly fights in our small town of Somerville, NJ for most of Central New Jersey's daily papers and a couple of wire services.

When the fights were over, I would rush to the offices of the Somerset Messenger-Gazette, which were just a block away from the armory where the bouts took place. I would write a story for the weekly paper, then call in the results to the



Mort Hockstein Writes Continued

Associated Press, United Press, New Brunswick Daily Home News, Plainfield Courier News, and the two Newark papers of that era, the Star Ledger and the Evening News.

And then came the best part of the night. By then it would be around 1:30 a.m., I would walk another block to the Somerville Diner to enjoy a hamburger and coffee, like all good newspapermen.

At the most recent Peacock North gathering, I was reminded of another high point of my gustatory past. Ed Bowers came to me with an anecdote gustatory that I had totally forgotten. "I have one great memory of you, Mort," he said. "You were sitting on the news desk one weekend afternoon and you put in a food order for the group. After a long wait, it arrived and the hamburgers were cold. You called the restaurant to complain and you must have made a very strong impression. Every Saturday afternoon for the next two months, the news desk was buried in free hamburgers. It didn't stop, Ed recalled, until one of the suits came by and ordered you to clear up the mess on the desk. "I had totally forgotten the episode, but it reminded me of dim sum Sundays. I was working the network radio desk and Bob Teague was doing local newscasts, which originated from our studio in Radio Central or whatever it was called in those days. Teague's early morning trick ended at 11:30 A.M. and I'd hitch a ride downtown with him to his apartment in Chinatown. At Bobo's--I think it was Bobo's--I'd load up about four boxes of dim sum and cab home for Chinese breakfast with my hungry crew."

The greatest fressers at NBC to my knowledge were Sid Caesar's writers, people like the two Mels, Tolkin and Brooks, Selma Diamond, Doc Simon and Mike Stewart. They'd pull in around 11 each morning, seemingly fresh from a shrink's couch, and dig into bagels and cream cheese. Hardly before they'd finished that appetizer, in came more reinforcement, corned beef, pastrami and tongue sandwiches and pickles and slaw. Maybe it was all that good deli that fueled the greatness of Caesar's Hour.

I never cared much for the cafeteria at NBC, but oddly it wasn't until I had been at NBC about eight years that I discovered that hidden sandwich shop in an unused studio kitchen where a couple of stage hands, maybe engineers, were serving several hundred people every lunch hour. I don't know why their food should have been any better than the cafeteria, but it was my choice for desk-top dining whenever I didn't go out to eat. By then I was a writer on TODAY, and those early morning shifts about once every eight days, were destructive to my waistline. Major, I think his last name was Robinson, set a table of doughnuts and Danish, bagels and coffee that never ended. Those pastries were the beginning of the end of my days as a thin, hungry writer.

On the TODAY show, my propensity toward food must have been too obvious and, with no competition, I became the food maven. I did all the food spots and worked with people like Craig Claiborne, the great food editor of the New York Times and foodies such as Julia Child and Jacques Pepin. Bernie Florman, the greatest of all prop men, was Mr. Everything on the TODAY Show. On the road, he also became catering manager. Just once, and never again, I made the mistake of helping out on that sensitive job. In Berlin, the publisher whose offices we were using for our remote asked me which members of our group should join him for lunch in his executive dining room. I think he put a limit on the group and that was when I should have referred the decision to Bernie. But, instead, I suggested he invite the talent—Barbara Walters, Hugh Downs, our producer Stuart Schulberg, our associate producer and me. Halfway through our appetizer course, several crew members, led by floor manager Jimmy Straka, stormed into that dining room to protest the discrimination and said they weren't going to sit in a cafeteria and have a lunch of potato soup while others were dining much more regally. They were right. Schulberg interceded to straighten out the problem. And I decided at that point to leave the catering to others and stick to writing, and eating well, of course!



We Get Letters

Hi PN,

I am recuperating from my second total hip replacement and am doing very well and starting to play golf again. I guess you can call me a Bionic Woman. Keep up the good work. I enjoy each edition.

Mildred Kalbac Bracco
Punta Gorda, FL



Dear PN,

Thank you for a great Winter 2002 edition and the articles by Frank Vierling (my favorite "NBC" historian) and O.B. Hanson. I remember O.B. very vividly—he was my "big boss" when I was hired in 1948—A true visionary as the article proves. I have "all" my PN magazines because it is OUR history and written by OUR people. Just hang in there—you make my day!"

Herb Greeley
Melbourne, FL



Dear PN,

I was so used to communicating with Pete Peterson and can't believe he "retired." He did a marvelous job all the years. He was living near us in Closter, NJ, is he still there? I worked with him when I was at NBC in 1951. Also with Frank DeRienzo, Frank Weill, TD Bob (the Moose) Daniels, Marcel Theinpont (audio), Bob Davis (lighting), etc., etc. What triggered all this was seeing Frank DeRienzo's mention of his then 9-year old grandson in an earlier PN magazine. (I have 6 grandchildren by 2 sons).

Most of the people I have mentioned worked on the Lucky Strike Hit Parade and the Arlene Francis/Hugh Downs HOME show which aired daily 11am-12noon. I won't bore you with more!

Unfortunately, the May 18th bash is the simultaneous birthday of my younger son, Brian, and his wife Rosy. If for some reason they don't celebrate that day, I would love to be with you all.

I work at CBS now (have for many years, in News) but I have great memories of NBC. Particularly of Mort Eaton who invited me, along with some other friends, to a trip where I met my dear wife.

Bernard Jacobs
Tappan, NY



Dear all,

Amy and I spent Christmas in Anchorage Alaska—wonderful, but it doesn't get sunlight 'til 10:30 A.M.

We love getting our PN magazine and reading about the early and mid years of TV.

Up here on the Cape, we had a Marconi 100 year celebration attended by hundreds of ham operators. Cape Cod is a wonderful place to retire, with good weather, great clams, and water all around. Golf too!

A BIG HELLO to all my friends from NBC.

John Trautwein
E. Orleans, MA



Hi all,

Your Winter 2002 magazine was a great edition for holiday reading. I'll especially be a hero to a friend of mine here, who worked at NBC, New York, in the late '30's. He will love the terrific piece by Frank Vierling.

I noticed something, for the first time, in that photo of Art with then President Reagan. Why, it looks as if Art were as tall as Ronnie. Actually, we came to learn that Art was a lot taller, in many ways. He had a clear focus on the ethical, and though it cost him some time and energy to make clear that it was his mandate, he followed that light to the end.

Keep the torch lit!

Russ Tornabene
Evanston, IL



By Don Blair

The **FLORIDA BUNCH** gathered for lunch and nostalgia at the Olde World Restaurant alongside US 41 in Northport, Florida back on Friday, February 28th and there were 15 of us. It was the inspiration of Jim and Mary Marshall among others but it was Jim to whom I quickly sent a check when I saw his appeal to retired NBC-ers in an edition of Peacock North late last year.

Fifteen may not seem like a big deal, but it was. It was a warm and friendly get together and....most importantly...a very good start. Nearly ten years ago, a Florida couple who had gone to the same high school I went to in New Jersey (Flemington) began the same process with a few modest newspaper notices...here and up in New Jersey. Our first year in Punta Gorda we had around 30 show up. We soon had to adjourn to Orlando and now regularly see close to 300 at our annual all-years school reunions. It can happen here.

We can't know how many of our former co-workers are kicking back and soaking up the sun just as we do. But anyone reading this article can help...and



spread the word. This recent gathering was a treasure of nostalgia and good-natured story-telling and it was often led by my old friend from Gemini splashdown days, Pete Fatovich and his fellow NBC'er, Aavo Koiv who drove over from the east coast!!! They invested a lot of hours to join us. Others could and will...once they know what we're up to over here.

For the record, this years attendees were Bobo and Dorothy Bartnik, yours truly Don Blair (a radio network brat), Jim and Mary Blaney, Jim Blaney Jr., Pete Fatovich, Aavo Koiv, the Marshalls - Jim and Mary, Bill Miller and Ginny Ireland, Arnie and Barbara Rand and Bob Rudick. Only a few of these fine folks were familiar to me when I walked in but they were new friends by the time I left. There's something about an NBC crowd that is worth your time and travel.

Let us know who you are and where you are and please get in touch with Jim Marshall at 3737 El Jobean Road, D-5 in Port Charlotte, Florida 33953. You'll be glad you did....and so will we.



PEACOCK WEST NOVEMBER.....2002

Saturday evening, September 28th, marked the 7th Annual Reunion of NBC Retirees and friends. Our resident photographer Gary Null and wife Diane were taking a well-deserved vacation...hence no group picture as the home-type cameras were just not up to the job at hand. However, here is a collage of some of the attendees.

The politely boisterous crowd consisted of: Carolyn Arnold, Steve & Jo Andreae, Dave Bell, Lou Benvenuto & Barbara Holoter, Leona & Carmen Blair, Jeanne & Lucky Brown, Phil Brown & Polita Barnes, Victor Cabrera, Bill & Bobbie Celello, Judy Chapman, Teri Collum, Geno & Pat Conte, Cy Corbett, Ed Croft, Ernie & Ramona Dellutri, Tom & Marie Elliott, Ken &

Bobbye Erhardt, Ron Estes, Sandy & Frank Flemming, Jim & Hallie Foy, Ralph & Sylvia Frost, Gerri Gillette, John Riffin & Chris Sedwick, Peter Groom, George Habib, Kit Haralson, Bob & Annette Henry, Reed & Joan Howard. Also James Ickes, Kathleen Ireland, Jim Kantrowe, Alan Kaul, Helen Keyes, Eddy King, Ed & Barbara Kranyak, Rick & Bonnie Lombardo, Jerry & Pat Madden, Byron McFarland, Betsy McGowen, Karl & Lois Messerschmidt, Dave & Carol Morgan, Ron Olney, John Olson, Bill Orenstein, Frank & Thelma Ozburn, Bill & Joan Palmerston, George Pitts, Millie Ries & Roy Wiegand, Bob Rink, Phil Ryder, Frank & Millie Scuito, Bob & Olivette Shannon, Willis & Elizabeth Sherman, Eric Sjolander & Janet Miller, Bob & Joyce Smith, Dossie Smith, Jerry & Doris Smith, Vicky Smith, Sherry & John Spence, Helen & Joe Strauss, Norm Tapper, Vern Thompson, Rosemary Trosper, Don Van Atta, Bob & Debbie Vinson, Jack Watson and Leila Wendleken.



WESTWOOD ONE AND NBC NEWS ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF NBC NEWS RADIO

Westwood One (NYSE: WON) and NBC News recently announced the debut of NBC News Radio featuring content, programming and leading journalists from the top rated television news network, beginning on March 31, 2003. For the first time in the history of network radio news, newscasts will be fully anchored by top television news talent. NBC News Radio newscasts will be anchored by, among others at NBC and MSNBC, Tom Brokaw, Brian Williams and John Seigenthaler.

Westwood One's NBC News Radio will be comprised of one-minute reports fed hourly each weekday from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET. NBC News Radio will also provide one-minute special reports during breaking news events and affiliates will have the opportunity to simulcast breaking news from NBC and MSNBC. NBC News Radio correspondents will also provide custom reports for major market radio stations. In addition to the news updates, NBC News Radio will include sportscasts, features and entertainment feeds.

As the need for world and national news increases, the demand for comprehensive, top quality news content for radio continues to expand," said Joel Hollander, President and CEO of Westwood One. "We are proud to offer to radio stations the unprecedented opportunity to hear NBC newscasts that are fully anchored by NBC and MSNBC's world class news personalities."

"This partnership makes great sense for us, said Neal Shapiro, President of NBC News. "The power of NBC News already extended across the broadcast network, our cable channels and the Internet and now we can add radio to the list. NBC has a storied history in radio. NBC News Radio gives us the opportunity to write some new chapters."

For more than 70 years, NBC News has been the primary source of global news and information for generations of radio listeners, television viewers and Internet users, providing immediate coverage and in-depth reporting of major events. Operating around the clock, NBC News has bureaus in key cities in the United States and overseas. NBC News provides more than 25 hours of weekly programming in the United States, including the No. 1-rated broadcasts "Nightly News with Tom Brokaw," "Today," and "Meet the Press." The network also produces weekend editions of "Nightly News" and "Today." "Dateline NBC" is the signature broadcast for NBC News in primetime three nights a week. Also under the NBC News umbrella is MSNBC, the 24-hour cable news channel and Internet service launched in 1996, and primetime programs seen on CNBC, the nation's number one financial news and information cable network.

Westwood One (NYSE: WON) provides over 150 news, sports, music, talk, entertainment programs, features, live events and 24/7 Formats. Through its subsidiaries, Metro Networks/Shadow Broadcast Services, Westwood One provides local content to the radio and TV industries including news, sports, weather, traffic, video news services and other information. SmartRoute Systems manages traffic information centers for state and local departments of transportation, and markets traffic and travel content to wireless, Internet, in-vehicle navigation systems and voice portal customers. Westwood One serves more than 7,700 radio stations. Westwood One is managed by Infinity Broadcasting Corporation.

Submitted by Bob Kimmel, one of the senior producers at NBC Radio in the "old days."



DON BLAIR

Spokesman....Narrator...
Voice-over...On Camera
Lecturer

Dear Keepers of the Flame,

Peacock North appears to be in continuing good health. Keep up the good work. I was just going to make this a brief note accompanying my renewal check until I realized that we're making a bit of news down here in "God's Waiting Room" ourselves.

Our Broadcast Pioneers Chapter (Sarasota) began turning out video biographies of some of our esteemed members last year. I host and co-produce and we tape at a county TV facility in Bradenton. Our first effort was Rosa Rio, the petite little dynamo who provided the organ music backgrounds for dozens of radio soaps and dramas, mostly out of 30 Rock. She lives in Sun City Center north of here and we taped at her home. I sat alongside her while she re-created some of the grand old themes and musical punctuations used to convey fear, fun and high anxiety. She still teaches and still tours. Has wowed them at Disney World within the past couple of years. Must be near 90 but you would never know it. Anyway, after a nice month-long run in Manatee County back in June, 2002, I have placed it with our school channel down here (Channel 20, Sarasota) and they ran it five times a day during the month of December. Everyone I bump into has seen it and a few are getting tired of it. Can't imagine why.

In January 2003, they did the same with our bio of John Gambling...the middleman in that incredible 75-year run of *Rambling With Gambling* on WOR. He lives in luxury down in Sanibel not far from where the Bush clan gathers. That show also turned out nicely and we hope it will be as well received as Rosa Rio has been. After that, comes my biography with a lot of my work in the space program (carrier splashdowns). Down the road we

will be doing biographies with William "Bill" Corrigan, former NBC-TV News executive and, hopefully, Paul Duke, formerly host of *Washington Week in Review* on PBS and, prior to that, many fine years with NBC. Just partied with him recently in Sarasota and if we catch him before he heads back up north, we'll put him on tape—probably in the same hour with Corrigan who is a full-time Venetian like us.

Also at that party, the elegant Russ Ward, longtime Capitol Hill correspondent for our dear, departed NBC Radio Network. Probably 80'ish... Russ remains an avid and excellent sailor (out of the Annapolis area) and a terrific skier with a major ski trip on the books within the near future.

I expect to be writing regularly (monthly or so) for the Sarasota Herald-Tribune this year on subjects of my choice and their approval...and getting paid!

Meanwhile, look us up on your computer at MadyRadio.com and have some fun listening to my "kick-ass" commentaries and he-she talk with Ann Corcorane very week. Heard worldwide, of course, and said to be getting as many as 150,000 hits monthly.

Retirement? What does that word mean anyway? Seems to me that most of us have something in our blood that was very, very good and rewarding and they may have to pry a microphone out of my hand when our time here is up.

Taking notice of a few retirees from years and/or divisions I did not work in but living nearby down here, I may phone a few and see if I can entice them to join us for our four-times a season Broadcast Pioneers luncheons in Sarasota.

The retrospective on NBC Radio was wonderful and I will be accessing that website on Charles Livingston Bull soon, but I have both a book and a play in progress so those will come first.

All the best from Florida.

Don Blair now resides in Venice, Florida. He can be reached by his email—donwblair@comcast.net.

Peacock North 2003 Spring Luncheon
REPLY FORM Due by May 5th

I/we will attend La Maganette luncheon on May 18th, 2003.

Name _____

Spouse/Guest Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cost per person: \$25.00

Make checks payable to: **PEACOCK NORTH**

Mail to: PO Box 16755

Stamford, CT 06905

Peacock North

Dues and Membership

Name _____ Spouse Name _____

Renewal—No changes to information previously sent. ☐

Changes only ☐

OR

New Membership ☐

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

At NBC from _____ 'til _____ Dept. _____

New Membership ☐

Dues: \$20 Per Year

Year 2003 WAS DUE IN JANUARY

Additional \$10 donations (if able) appreciated this year to cover new operating expenses.

Make check payable to Peacock North.

Mailing Address:

PO Box 16755

Stamford, CT 06905

Open to NBC Employees with 15 Years or more service.

**Your contacts:**

Marilyn Altman

Jim Marshall

Lenny Stucker

E-mail:

peacocknorth@yahoo.com

Mailing Address:PO Box 16755
Stamford, CT 06905**New Peacock North Member****Jack Katz**, Film and video tape for 34 years. He and his wife live in Wantagh, NY. They plan to attend the Spring Luncheon in May.Peacock North
P.O. Box 16755
Stamford, CT 06905Presorted
First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 103
Marietta, OH**First Class Mail**Dues were due—
January 1, 2003