

# Peacock North

## FALL, 1994



Volume III Edition 2

### 52 EMPLOYEES HONORED

by Dan Grabel

**NBC** still has a huge supply of experienced personnel on the job and that was apparent at the Nov. 14th reception marking the annual Service Awards to 43 men and women who have served for 25 years, one for 30, and 6 for 40 years.

The reception was held in the 52nd floor executive dining area with Bob Wright, Ed Scanlon, Dick Ebersol, and Mike Sherlock among the company officials on hand to congratulate the vets.

CEO Bob Wright said that one of NBC's strengths was the institutional experience possessed by this cadre of old timers and Ebersol supported that idea saying,

"There's an attitude that has pervaded this company for decades and decades — and that attitude is that when there's something new in the technology, the employees embrace it, put in the extra energy, the extra know-how, and achieve the goal." Mr. Wright took a long look at NBC's future down the road, even looking toward the day 50 years from now when another group of 25 year veterans will be at a similar Service Awards ceremony.

He said "Television has never been in a more exciting period than it is now." In fact, he is putting together presentations to GE and others to show how NBC fits into the growth of Media between now and the year 2000.

"We look very strong today, but the world is exploding before us. It's like the Oklahoma land rush. All the wagons are lined up, and

it's easy to get a wagon. Everyone wants to get involved in film, in entertainment, in sports, home video, CD-ROM, Cable, Satellite, Global delivery. Tremendous influxes of capital, and of bright people trying to be part of this business. It's a challenge to become part of this bigger world. We look forward to working with people of other lands, setting up businesses that will go on for generations, just as NBC has."

"Right now your company is doing very well, and we need that level of performance to fund these things. We hope you are all proud of your own contribution —

**"Congratulations!"**

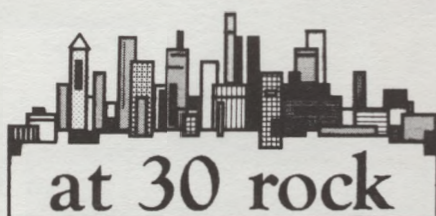
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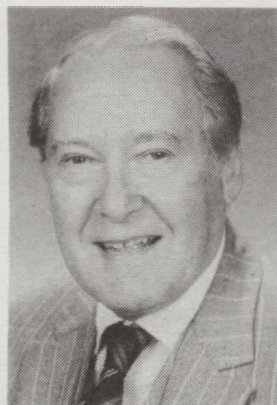
*Nancy Fields receives 40 Year Award from CEO Bob Wright*





## at 30 rock

By Dan Grabel



When you shout "Author! Author!" among a crowd of Peacock North folk you never know how

many will stand up to take a bow. For this edition of the newsletter, as far as we know, we can report on three — **Grant Tinker**, **Bud Rukeyser** and **Jay Barbree**. Tinker, who went from an entry level job as a NBC studio guide to CEO, has written "Tinker in Television" with Bud Rukeyser, once the chief of corporate communications and Grant's longtime friend, and associate in putting together the book which came out in September. I still remember Tinker's application for membership in PN. Where it asked for the name of his spouse, he filled in "Many." On a recent nationally televised commemorative show former spouse, Mary Tylor Moore, paid tribute to Tinker's inventiveness. Nuff said, so you can see he's a down-to-earth guy. The NY-Times book reviewer (Bill Carter) describes Tinker as a man with grace and charm, except when he takes off the gloves and and comments on GE's takeover of NBC.

**Jay Barbree** was NBC's radio voice at Cape Canaveral all during the exciting, early days of NASA and those space launchings that were big news again and again. Now, Jay has teamed with writer **Howard Benedict** to co-author "Moon Shot," the book by **Alan Shepard** and the late **Deke Slayton**. It was in its 9th week on the NYTimes best seller list when we wrote this. Its the story of how Americans reached the moon in July 1969. Boy! does that seem like eons ago. "One step for man, one giant step for mankind."

The rumor mill on NBC's future was a house afire one week in September. First we heard a report that GE had the **FOR SALE** sign out again and that three possible suitors were lined up to swallow up the network which CEO **Bob Wright** had said several months ago was not for sale. The bidders were said to



*Grant Tinker in 1982, shortly after he was made chief executive of NBC*

be Time-Warner, Harcourt General and Ted Turner. A few days later **Sue Simmons** read a report that NBC itself was out in the market seeking to buy Madison Square Garden, the Knicks and the Rangers.

Other companies after the Garden include Nike, Liberty Media and ITT Cablevision, and in the end Cablevision won the bidding war. How much did it go for? Well, earlier Larry Tisch of CBS had offered 500-million, but that offer was rejected. In a day when hockey players are getting 6 and 7 million, 500 million sounds like a paltry offer for the property. Obviously, it was. But the main thing is that NBC was in the bidding, so it smells like GE is planning to continue to own the net. But stay tuned.

Newsman **Jack Freeman** has been doing the six-on, six-off routine for the past few years, and in that time away from **30 Rock** he has been working for the Earth Times, a periodical given to improving man's lot. Jack probably has gone through a few passports because every time we check up, he's off to another land: Vienna, South America, Australia, and most recently at the population conference in Cairo.

**B.S. Brown** has been moaning, "my aching back." And with good reason. The Today show newsman underwent one disc operation and remains on the sick list despite the surgeon's tinkering. Watching the credits on USA cable tv's coverage of the U.S. Open tennis championships we spotted the name **Steve Palachek**. It must be Steve, Junior, as we recall another Steve doing audio on the Today show at



the RCA exhibition hall on 49th street 40 years ago. Some musical chairs being played in the Washington bureau. **Andrea Mitchell**, who has been the chief White house correspondent, has been named to the new post of chief foreign affairs correspondent. And **Brian Williams**, a former anchor of Saturday Nightly News, now replaces Andrea with the chief White House correspondent title. The NYTime's Chronicle column says that's a signal Williams is a contender for **Tom Brokaw's** chair when Tom decides to depart Nightly News because Brokaw, too, was chief White House correspondent before he moved to his present job. Of course, that's just a guess since every one-time White House chief has not moved up to become The NN anchor. Williams joined NBC in March of 1993 and has reported from the Middle East and from South Africa.

**Peg McKinley** of NBC's Human Resources Dept has kindly sent along the June issue of Take One, a 30 Rock house magazine. Hindsight has provided us with an interesting twist. The mag headlined one story — "Will Baseball Network Hit a Homer?" It reported on a new organization that was made up of Major League Baseball, NBC and ABC and the venture is called The Baseball Network. It was created as a money-saver since all the telecasts were produced by one staff, and that avoided duplication by NBC and ABC. Additionally all the marketing was under one roof. Of course, with the players' strike and the owners finally calling off the season there must be some unfortunate chaos and loss of jobs since

the staffers have nothing to produce and nothing to market. Former NBC sports Executive **VP Ken Schanzer** is the president and CEO of the new organization. WMAQ-TV, NBC's Chicago outlet, is participating in a non-tv program called "Recover the Gifted." The program recognizes the need of minority children to learn about the rewards of successful careers by having a mentor. As part of the operation member kids spent a day at Channel 5 learning about the day-to-day operations of news, sales and technical areas. Its akin to the "Take Your Daughter to Work" day.

And NBC, like many other organizations, marked Take Your Daughter etc on April 28th with adolescent girls from age 9 to 15 swarming **30 Rock** and the studios in Burbank, Chicago, Denver, Miami, Washington and CNBC. The program is designed to expose girls to a working environment, build their self-esteem and prompt them to think about their own career possibilities. The young guests participated in studio tours, engaged in panel discussions with working women and observed and assisted their employee sponsors on the job. In New York, **Jane Pauley**, **Katie Couric**, **Carol Jenkins** and **Jane Hansen** were among the hosts for the visiting girls.

At WRC the day began with a welcome from **Mac McGarry**, host of the "Its Academic" show and they received advice from anchor **Doreen Gentzler**. In Denver, the girls kicked off their day with a visit to the Governor's mansion for breakfast then went

to KCNC for demos of EJ trucks, a tour of the studio and the interesting graphics department. In Chicago they sat in on news planning and watched technical construction. Miami's WTVJ put a twist on their visit and instead of joining their parent at the office they were switched to another mentor. GM **Don Browne** hosted them at breakfast and a tour of the newsroom.

Presidential honors from Washington went to GE via the New York City chapter of an organization called the Elfyn Society. Its composed of NBC and GE employee volunteers who serve as mentors and friends of students at Harlem's Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics. The mentors sponsor career days, and have donated computer equipment and refurbished the school's greenhouse in recent years. GE (and Lenscrafters, Inc of Cincinnati) were chosen from more than 5,000 nominations. GE was cited for its College Bound program designed to double the number of college-bound students from selected poor and inner-city schools in 12 cities where GE has major facilities. WTVJ came up with a good idea how to broaden its hurricane weather reporting and its promotional efforts at the same time. The station, in conjunction with Southern Bell, activated nine live remote weather locations — the Automated Weather System — by locating reporting equipment at nine school buildings within reach of its signal. The schools will use the AWS as tools to teach students about meteorol-



ogy. Weathermen from WTVJ will hold open house for the students and teachers, will explain how to use the equipment, and will visit the schools. □

**More at 30 rock on page 20**

## Our New Members

*Robert Bartnik, Cheyenne, WY*  
*Jack Bennet, Spring Hii Heights, NJ*  
*Lawrence Byer, New York, NY*  
*Terry Doll, New York, NY*  
*Martin Hode, New York, NY*  
*Lee Jones, Savannah, GA*

*Carl Killingworth, New York, NY*  
*Ronnie Lynn, Burbank, CA*  
*Gil Muro, Tappan, NY*  
*Johnathan Oakley, Peekskill, NY*  
*Phil Parlante, Huntington, NY*  
*Gene Pellicano, Secaucus, NJ*  
*Garry Simpson, Vergennes, VT*  
*Melba Thomas, Valhalla, NY*  
*Madeline Williams, Rego Park, NY*

# Aronoff Does Time at Sing Sing

by Dan Gabel

It was not a happy scene. Morty Aronoff walking into the maximum security area of the New York State prison at Ossining.

But Morty walked out at the end of the day, unlike most men who pass through those solid doors and hear the hopeless clang of metal on metal echoing through the concrete chamber.

Morty, who along with Hank Hustis, had been the director of NABET and then NBC's program to aid alcoholics, is continuing his tireless efforts on behalf of people in need by joining the Quaker Friends Alternative to Violence Project. The Friends have been running the AVP program for 15 years around the nation and around the world at all levels if incarceration — low security, medium security and high security, although most of the effort is in the latter two categories. After being trained as a project facilitator, Aronoff has "done time" at Sing Sing and the Bedford Hills, N.Y. Women's Prison. I discovered Morty's involvement when I phoned his wife Millicent one

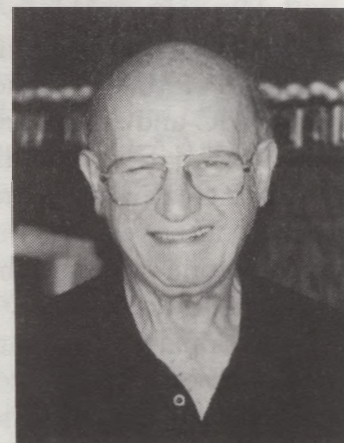
evening and she said he was away at Ossining. "Ossining," I thought and only one thing came to mind. "Hmmm." Then I dug a bit more and she told me specifically, "Sing Sing."

When Morty goes up the river its for a 3 day stretch and a 31 hour get together with inmates convicted for violent crimes. He goes into the sessions with one or two facilitators from "the street," and with 2 or 3 inmates who have also been trained in procedures to re-educate the convicts to a less violent way of life, and 10 to 20 inmates who are seeking help. And this is intensive stuff. Friday and Saturday they spend 12 hours together, Sunday its just 7 hours.

For Morty and the outside and inmate facilitators, the inmate instructors, and the inmates it is inspirational and spiritual. Part of their sessions can be likened to a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous or Gamblers Anonymous in which the inmates become introspective and most give serious thought to their behavioral outlet through violence. They sit around

in a circle and complete the statement such as, "When I get angry I....." After they've all expressed their mode of behavior they get into the helpful part of the session, completing the statement "My goal at this time is ....." This, of course is a simplistic explanation of the Alternative to Violence Project. "Light and lively" fun exercises are mixed in with the heavier ones.

Morty says the Quaker Friends are always seeking volunteers, so if you are interested in participating in the AVP program or learning more about it, you can get information at 212-477-1067. □



*Mort Aronoff lives in Brooklyn.*



## p.n. people

by Heino Ripp

Summer has come, and summer has gone.. Except for a few nice days, it seemed rainy, or hot and humid up here in N.J... Did manage to put some time in the boat on Lake Hopatcong - especially on Sunday's, anchored in a deep cove with the New York Times... Soon learned though, that the lake took on a greater serenity as sundown approached and most of the roaring Captains disappeared . That was a great time for swimming and dining without having the wine spilt all over the cockpit.

On the first night excursion, it started to sprinkle, so pulled up anchor and headed for the dock. Sprinkle turned to pouring rain. Managed to get to dock OK, but upon approaching the dock, discovered that all the boats I used as markers, weren't at the dock and the high strong lights illuminating the dock area backlit the rain, making the dock virtually invisible. After a second go around, docked OK, but for the next evening out I made a blinker, attached it to the dock, and from there on landed on instruments.

Managed to get to

Charleston, S.C for a nice visit as well as to Cape May, N.J.. If you're ever in Cape May, You must stop in at the :**"Peaches"** restaurant for dinner -I give it 8 spoons, at least.!

At home, built another section of decking, more landscaping, moved tons of top soil and boulders. Cleared loads of trees, poison ivy and brush to triple the back yard size.

Bought a Yamaha keyboard - the only one that really sounded like a piano, + 100 instruments and managed to record a short Swedish song with a variety of instruments. Lots of fun. Now I need a 16 track recorder. The Svenska flika's Travel Biz keeps me busy. Since my old computer died, a new 486 mother board was installed, plus a 340 megabyte hard drive etc **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO**

### JOE ANGOTTI ?

Well --- While at La Maganette in the Spring, I happened to be seated next to **Catherine Faulkner-** who gave me **Joe's** address. I sent him a few back issues of the Newsletter. Joe replied with a very pleasant letter -- Joe is now a professor at the University of Miami , in Coral Gables, Fla.

**Jack Bennet** spent 5 weeks in the hospital with a heart problem. Jack is doing fine and can be seen at his bait & fly shop at the Jersey Shore. Good fishing; and stay well!

**Marie Finnegan** called at the summer's end, looking for **Ira Skutch's** address which I happened to have, then talked of a meeting she attended in Maine at the **Roger Muir's** residence. The guests included **Bob Rippen**, who directed **Howdy Doody** also a fellow who many of you will remember from the 50's era **Garry Simpson**, and his **wife Kathleen**.

Garry did many directorial feats, among them "Chevrolet on Broadway", a half hour drama from 8G. Garry always did his homework, coming in well prepared, and we tried to make a movie out of each of his shows. ( P.S. **Gordon Duff and Barry Bernard** did some of the shows too). After leaving NBC, Garry wound up in Vermont, heading up a TV station there, put their children through college and is enjoying New England living. It was great to talk to Garry again - a long time since we used to go to work, I from Stamford and he



**p.n. people B**

from Greenwich, Conn. I believe he said he was 80. and sounded bright and alert as he did some 40 + years ago. I'm sure he would like to hear from anyone who used to work with him in those "Golden Years". **Bill Garden**, 1948 NBC sports Guru, also came by.

In the middle of October, daughter Shirley McCauley from New Jersey, family and friends organized a surprise **80-th** Birthday party for **Don Pike** in North Carolina. Happy Birthday Don. Don is still enjoying his music, actively engaged playing his trumpet in orchestras. Among the guests was **Michi**, the costume designer for the **Perry Como's Kraft Music Hall Show**. **Walter Miller** won another Emmy Award, but wasn't there to accept it, cause he was doing the Country Western Music Awards from Nashville.. PN Publisher **Frank Vierling** left N.J. soon after the last issue of PN came out , headed for Panther Pond, Maine. Didn't return til October. While there, they attended some five shows at the State Music Theater at Bowdoin in Brunswick. As is the custom, they joined other

couples which included **Art Holub** and his wife **Dot**. (They live in Paris Hill).... Socializing and visiting two high school couples, driving up to Quebec City for a short visit, a few days in Kingfield, Maine, home of the Stanley Steamer Stanleys, as Frank put it. Cars were their hobby -BUT- they made violins ! Also they were in the photographic dry plate biz.. Enjoying Maine kept them there until the fall foliage was in full bloom. Besides other side trips, visiting more high school friends in New Hampshire, they seemed quite content to linger longer to enjoy what retirement is made for. Upon returning home, he discovered that **his** computer had died, requiring major surgery in the form of a new motherboard, and other parts and hard drive now is in the 500 megabyte area. Built in obsolescence I bet... Frank is back pounding the keyboard for this issue.

(**George Corrado** used the Vierling's Maine residence for a week in August)..

**Jack Durkin**, video man extraordinaire, suffered a stroke recently. Talked to him this evening and he sounds like he's in good spirits. His right side is a bit weak and was about to go

for a motor vehicle driver's evaluation tomorrow. They rescind the licenses under these circumstances in Pa. Lucky for Jack, his wife Beth does a lot of chauffeuring these days. As a videoman, Jack was very meticulous but easy going, can't remember him ever as a grump and his pictures always sparkled. It always was a pleasure to have him on the crew..Give him a call - 215: 377-0364. **Arnie Rand**, just did, from his motor home in Florida.

**THESE ITEMS - OVERHEARD AT THE  
OCTOBER Mini LUNCHEON AT THE  
Picco Lissimo**

This summer, **Peg and Pete Peterson** went to California for a wedding. Whilst there he rounded up some folk and had a Mini-Lunch. In attendance were - **Hal Alexander, Perry Massey, Vinnie DiPietro, Fred McKinnon, Bill Klages, Bob Hanna**. Yup, looks like Peacock North is spreading its wings.. More on this somewhere in the paper.

Our correspondent **Roy Silver**'s son Jonathan served a City Editor of the Madison, Wisconsin Capitol Times. (Like so many papas - like so many sons)..Roy's wife, **Elaine** is recovering from a broken ankle and an abscessed tooth !



## p.n.people C

In May, **Dan Grabel** did a 16 day trip to England and Portugal. In Portugal they drove North and West of Lisbon, and soon got "cathederaled out".

(Have you ever heard of visiting cathedrals in the U.S.?)

Summer called for a trip to Mt. Washington, N.H., where he got the "coal dust treatment" while riding the cog railway to the summit.

In September, he got reminded of early American life while "doing" Old Colonial Williamsburg. Came home via the ocean route and enjoyed the looooong ferry ride between Lowes, Del. and Cape May.

Not to rest for a moment, The Grabels plans for winter include Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada, where the North American Ski Journalists will hold their annual meeting. ( Big D, writes a ski column for the local paper).

### **Francesca and George**

**Peters.** Fran declared "What a wonderful, mixed up summer this has been... Went to the National Alliance for the mentally ill (NAMI) convention in San Antonio, where it was Hot, hot, hot ! The river walk was wonderful and so was the convention. -- And who do I see

when I get off the plane at Newark ???, Peg and Pete Peterson - there, waiting for their son. They were as shocked to see me as I them. (George was waiting for me in the luggage area) ! He decided to stay at home to take care of the house and the lawn. Honest"

San Antonio again found

Peacock North visitors,

### **Dorothea and Bill**

**DeLannoy--** drove there in May for a wedding. During this three week span they visited friends and relatives in Washington, D.C., Asheville, North Carolina, Atlanta and Austin, Texas, thoroughly enjoying that part of the USA. Great country, but a loooong ride! (5045 miles to be exact..). September saw these two on a 14 day tour of Israel.. Lovely country. "We were part mountain goats, hobbling up and down the rocky tourist sites"-- Impressed by the country - so beautiful and modern..

--- "Glad to be home..."

**Gary Iorio** reminisces that Life is wonderful as the years go on and the family increases. For us it's now up to sixteen grandchildren!!! The memorable moments with the children and the days on the golf course are great, but that's not all of life..

Gary confesses having gutted the bath room, and not being so fast in the work area, feels pressured to have it redone by Jan. 2, when they're to leave again for the warmth of Florida They remarked "It was nice spending a day at the recent PiccoLissimo with the gang..

Hello to all that we **didn't** see!"

### **Nancy and Jerry Cudlipp:**

Still going along enjoying retired life more than ever. "My wife Nancy is busy enjoying her retirement also. Nancy plays tennis and golf and keeps finding projects around the house for me to do."

... "Just had a visit by Diane & Bob Juncosa and finalized plans for our sailing trip in the Caribbean. There are seven of us, with Diane's brother being our Captain and skipper. We'll be on the water for ten days, picking up our sailboat in St. Thomas on Oct.22. We're all looking forward to a great time. Will report further once we return.. Best to you all."

**Frank DeRienzo:** "Am enjoying my retirement, living in Summit, N.J.. Have two grandchildren. They belong to my daughter, Ariane. Just back on my feet after my second knee replacement surgery, to correct an arthritic problem. At least



**p.n. people D**

when I get to heaven, I'll have two good knees.... Was good to see everyone at the luncheon at Picco".

**Florence and Jim Sunder:**

are taking a trip to National Parks this year. Yellow Stone, The Grand Canyon - to Las Vegas and Central Park. Still miss Paris! !

**Lee Pliskin** is thankful for a peaceful and quiet summer -- and at this time NO MORE GRANDCHILDREN in sight ..

**Bob Fraraccio** is proud of their daughters Cathy and Mary. You would be too , 'cause for their 35th anniversary, the two ladies gave the Fraraccios a cruise. They flew to Honolulu, board the S.S. Independence and sail the Hawaiian Islands. Beats the Staten Island Ferry !

**Remember Roz**

**Bigelow** ? A lighting Director, went to ABC, became famous, then retired in 1986. Divides his time between Spring Valley, N.Y. Charlestown, N.H (or was it N.C.??) and Hutchinson Island, Florida. Still finds life interesting after three grandsons and of course, enjoys being retired. Speaking of cruising Hawaii, **Dot and Buddy**

**Shadel** spent a month in Pearl Harbor, with their daughter and

son in law. It was doubly enjoyable for the Shadels 'cause while their youngest daughter was shoveling snow, they were enjoying tropical weather in the Islands. Next June they'll be transferred to Japan for a two year hitch. (He's a Captain, in command of a naval vessel). Buddy hopes to visit them in February and take a side trip to Sapporo to renew old memories of the **1972 Winter Olympics**. (Heino says, Our greatest assignment, where we all were treated like royalty, flying 1st Class and working with a great group of people. **Dick Auerbach** produced, **Ted Nathanson** directed, **Bob Galvin** was Tech Supr., **Ripp**, TD, **Neal Smith** did audio **Buddy** on Tape, **Walt Dresch** , **Murray Vecchio** and **Ernie Thiel**. In Sapporo, Buddy, Ernie and I were in the subway, seated waiting for a train, when a small group of school kids spotted us in our NBC logo'd sheepskin jackets that Dick had arranged for us. Several took out their pen and pads, and sign-languaged their request for an autograph. We were quite embarrassed, tried to indicate to them that we were "nobody". They started to disperse, when one tearful tiny Japanese girl

came over and we had to write. After a few "autographs", I looked up and couldn't believe the line of kids that had formed extending to the end of the platform. We kept signing til a real athlete came by. Ernie and Ripp enjoyed a couple of days in Tokyo afterwards, where, while at the top of the Otani Hotel, in the high revolving restaurant, Ripp got to practice his Russian, talking to and singing with some highly vodka'd Russians at the next table. From there, Ernie was summoned to go to China ..H, ) **Nick Ponella** is traveling a little and is enjoying having time now for his hobbies, like Ham Radio.

**Bob and Diane Juncosa**, who reside in Foresthill, California (near Reno Nev.) enjoying their visit Back-East , for four weeks, with former neighbors and NBC retirees - "very pleasant", he says. all this was followed by their 10 day forty nine foot sailboat Caribbean cruise with the Cudlipps. **Lucy and Carmine Rocco** have been traveling to and from North Carolina, and finally they made it to the Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Says: You should do it at least once.. Crazy t but an experience. Miss you guys !



**p.n. people E**

(H. note--we did a Perry Como show in N.O. with Dwight Hemion. On the morning we were to shoot in the French Quarter, We had made arrangements with the Police Dept to have certain spots cleared of parked cars, blocking off streets etc.

I arrived at the location at about 4 or so in the morning.. Our parking spot was bumper to bumper with cars, also several truckloads of sand was sitting where the unit was to be. We called the police. They came down, discussed the situation. The cop said, "you want it cleared now?" I said yes. Bit PO'd for we had thoroughly discussed this with the authorities at great lengths as well as a walking tour of the locations. The policeman called in on the radio for some wreckers, also several street sweepers.. Very shortly all of the above moved in , wreckers removed the locked cars and parked them "somewhere" in town , and the street sweepers swept the sand mountains , and oon we moved the gear in.).

The following are mostly from La Maganette. . Some may be old hat by now, but many of our readers weren't there, soo here goes..

**Bob Newman :** Trying to catch up with everything he put aside over the years.(Not much success yet!)Also assists his wife, Vivien, in her sole proprietorship business, with computer and record keeping support. Since it's a home-based biz, it all works out well..

**Jim Mullen:** Enjoying doing volunteer clerical work several days a week in the systems dept. at the Metropolitan Museum of Art ..

**Pat Donegan :** "Nothing to write home about - or even to write about at all. But retirement's more fun than you'd believe." ( I think she's one that has captured what being retired is all about. You want to sleep late? Sleep late !. Remember all those days when you couldn't do that ? Pat ?..)

**Joel Spector:** noted that this is his 29th year of audio at NBC. Now he'd doing The NBC "News 4" Monday thru Friday - 6B control has been totally rebuilt with all the latest equipment. (Hey Joel, It's always nice running in to you every once in a while - H.)

**Scott Schachter** says: "Glad to be retired, miss the schmoozing." ( Hey Scots - Let's tell Microsoft that schmoozing is a real word,

'cause the spell check always comes to a screeching halt here! H.) "Am working with my wonderful wife producing an 8 page newsletter. I'm the desktop publisher. Chartered a barge through the French countryside this spring with friends and family, savoring this precious thing, - **LIFE!**"

**Ginny Seipt:** Finishing up tenure as producer of "Live from the Play by Play" show for the Madison Square Network. See Chet Simmons & Bob Gutowski all the time. Will be unemployed as soon as Hockey and Basketball seasons are over! Have talked to Steve Friedman about VR work on TODAY, but no news yet.

**Barbara Stanley Cline** has been at NBC now for 27 years (October) Her first Peacock North gathering - :says she, "It's Wonderful".-- Saw Phil Falcone, who worked with her mother when she was a child star in radio! Before too long, hopes to be with **Dick** in North Carolina.

**Jean Schneider:** Happily retired in Panther Valley, Allamuchy, N.J.(How's that for a name - Alla-moo chi. Great spot tho- H.) Jean does some



## p.n.people F.

volunteer work at Waterloo Village (just North off Rte 80 West). This was Jean's first P.N. gathering also. "Really Great she exclaims" (even in writing)..PS **Doris Williams** retired in North Carolina.

**Dick Swicker** was here, beard and all (You look very distinguished, it's great) Dick continues to be active, teaching and doing wood burning. Handles reproduction burnings up to 12 feet long. He's healthy, travels with his wife - "What more is there ???" he asks.

**Frank Weill** says he has adjusted well to retirement after a year. To his surprise, he's kept very busy - time seems to fly, sez he. He's even done a bit of traveling as well.

**Denise Robinson** notes that "we're still together (again) and very happy to be. This year's La Maganette crowd was even bigger than in the past and everyone looks so great !--- Maybe we can start a new Network, huh ?"

**Maureen Potrato** echoes Denise re: What a big turnout this year, Glad to see many new faces at the luncheon. All is well with Maureen.. "We have a new mayor and maybe the beginning

of a "new" Old New York..See you next year."

**Ruth Stone** is in her lovely condo in Arizona - having a great time and sends her very best wishes to you all (Hope her air conditioner was working this summer)

**Jim Holton** (Reinholds, Penna.) just finished his fifth book in four years! (On a variety of regional history subjects)

**Joan Ehrlich White** is currently on a sabbatical from job as a public defender with the Legal Aid Society in Bronx County

**Arthur White** is "proudly still working with Bill Moyers who is responsible for worthwhile programming on Public Television." And Arthur - You looked Mah-vel-us" - H.

**Joan Gifford** is busy looking for a new job.(and also looking good)... "having lots of fun today with all my dear friends from NBC. Thank you Peg and Pete Peterson"

**Don Meaney** very happy to attend the bash and vows never to miss another since they're so nice and bigger than ever.

**Lois Marino** - At Madison Square Garden...Since it's sold, Lois says maybe she'll become a

beach bum..--- "Love these reunions ! ! ! !"

**Harry Fleetwood:** Theater and cultural reporter for WBAI, heard on Arts

**Magazine**, Spent six weeks in France in June: Paris, Riviera, by car to chateaux and B & B's

**Fred Collins:** - "takes a licking and keeps on ticking"-- still doing voice-overs, --still plays lousy golf, -- travels a bit and enjoys seeing old friends....

**Mel Brandt's** doing phone patch voice-overs from Tampa in winter and phone patches from Penna in summer. Mel never comes to New York except for Peacock North... "We have the best of it ! "

**Bill Hanrahan confesses:** My being here is part of a masquerade. I was never an announcer with NBC. I was with CBS for a year and a half - Then I met **Fred Silverman**, who got me a staff job with KGHF in Pueblo, Colorado. The rest is history !

**Vic Roby** announces :He lives from one Peacock North meeting to the next --- managing to play a little golf in between. (Vic you're hired as publicity staff for PN).

How nice it was to see **Ed Herlihy** join the group !



**p.n. people G.**

Ed Herlihy ,(Fred), used to say "This is the Blue Redwork of the Fraternal Broad (casting) Ass-ociation.

" A lovely party yoday"! !

**Roger Tuffe:**Noted, that **Bob Sherry** (former staff announcer) used to say immediately before giving the NBC cue "This is NBC, the National Broadcasting Castration" - then he would immediately push the announce button and say "This is NBC, the National Broadcasting Company.(Did any of these fooling around talk ever get aired ?). Rog says, "I loved my 44 years with NBC"

**Don Pardo:** Dick Dudley - upon leaving NBC announcing staff, said to me - "Don , now you are the "Doyen" ! Hooray - and am still at it !says Don!.. A quick hello from Kay, my mgr.... "Am enjoying today's turnout by my colleagues who are present... Boy ! What a staff ! ! !

**Dick Dudley:** " "I have nothing to say for publication"

**"Audrey Marshall:** tells,"Jack has done beautifully after open-heart surgery in January. While he was in the hospital, he assigned me the task of having his apartment painted! Outside of that, I am doing volunteer work for my church -

counting the daily collection - even though I can't balance my check book."

**Jack Marshall:** My new aortic valve is working and I am not. I can't help but be amazed that I played on the NBC softball team with Gary Iorio forty two years ago....

**Dorothy Brodine** doesn't know how she found time to go to work - for writing, art work, church and travel - last year to Scandinavia - keeps her busy. "It's good to see my old friends from the **good old days**..

**Scotty McCartney:**Came all the way from Palm Springs, Ca. to tell us that ---" Four days of golf, one day of tennis - and after all that work, I rest for two days....( AH , retirement !)"

**Alan Smiler** was off to Europe with 100 other vets from the 2nd Infantry Division to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of WW II, through France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany and Czechoslovakia, where he was when the war ended...P.S. the food has improved at La Mag

**Bill Ahl :** Retired 1 year, fixing house, trips to golf course, Florida and Jersey shore... Intends to look at condos in North Carolina..

**Howie Atlas:** Wife had both hips replaced in March - doing well... Second grandchild - David William Atlas Campbell . (Now a year old)

**Madalyn and Michael**

**Gilligan :** They are trying to raise a new puppy - Springer Spaniel...

**Bill Shortridge** was headed for Maine for a few weeks, then hoped to make a trip to Tunisia in October

**Norman Davidson** has been working as an artist at ABC a few days a month - just to keep from going nuts... . "It's great therapy."

This is **David Handler's** first Peacock Party. Says he's so glad to be here, and looking forward to many more.

**Ariane Mautner** wants to shout it out -RETIREMENT IS GREAT !--- (You just did)

**Carl Rohrer:**(Our theater correspondent) Just returned from a fun trip to London. Liked the revised "Sunset Blvd" so much, that he managed to see it again. "The music adds a lot to the original story. Go !"

**Rosemary Quigley**

**McPhillips :**The Golden Years are still the best !

Hi, to all the Fred Coe Philco Playhouse / Four Star Revue/ Sid Caesar "grads ...



## p.n. people H

### Catherine Faulkner:

Old friends,

Wonderful times remembered.

Such fun !

**Bill Goetz** got a call from Hal Gurnee asking if he could replace a cameraman on the Dave Letterman Show. (the regular cameraman was doing the Winter Olympics in Norway) in Feb. 1994. Bill had a great time working the show and seeing old NBC friends who went with Hal (and Dave) to CBS.

### Renee and Herb Oxman

were in Palm Springs last December, not knowing that Scotty McCartney lived there. "When I think of all the money I could have saved playing golf at his club ---cheeeez !" -- By the way, Herb is on **America on Line** with his computer. His mail address is HERBOXMAN. (spelled as you see it here; i.e.: no spaces...)

**Jerry Savitch** was the chief electrician in 6B Says: It's great reminiscing over shows and fellows I worked with for so many years. Am looking forward to other get-togethers !  
**George Moyantcheff** lives way up in Deep River, Conn., so it's no wonder this La Mag get-together is his first. Wife Vera,

cracked her left hip about two months ago.. Fortunately the bone is mending nicely. "Good to be with the gang again"..

**Irving Messing** lamented about there being no spring Golf tournament. Irv and Bobby Brown (A.D.) met and Bobby cited the difficulty in obtaining a Golf course as one of the main reasons. Irv will keep PN posted. Being November, Guess no tournament this year !.  
Irv and his MRS , Dolly, are still kept very busy volunteering to the "elderly" people in Fair Lawn. The Fair Lawn library has been and still is their primary concern in town. (A simple example of what Irv & Dolly do for people is: a lady called cause she needed to change a light bulb in the kitchen ceiling. She could hardly walk, no less climb a ladder. simple to Irv, but impossible for her, otherwise a dark kitchen. But there are leaky plumbing, electrical problems, need for transportation to the store etc. etc. Dolly and Irv are there for - whatever. [Cue the applause here for these two!]

**Fred Wagner & Bob Higgins.** from the Jersey shore, are consulting on an upcoming T.V.Documentary, to be shot - guess where? At the Jersey shore !

## Put this in your

### "Memory File"..

Many folks have problems with memory as they grow older.

Many of us now have computers. I figured out that our brain really is a computer. From childhood, we have been filling our RAM, and periodically saving the info to the "hard drive" One remembers memories from youth very well. (Dramatic events are stored in Ram and have automatic "save" cued in.) As time goes by the hard drive fills up, But - daily memories are still stored in RAM, but there is difficulty storing it to the full hard drive -so when you turn off the computer (sleep) that RAM memory is wiped out (sometimes it takes a few sleep cycles before the memories are completely gone) You've heard the astronauts referring to a data dump to NASA from the shuttle computers ? You have also heard about people that have had near death experiences and they see past events played rapidly back .??? Well the humans have been recording their life data since birth, and are doing a fast lifetime data dump to the Lord, just before they close down their human



**p.n. people I.**

computer....(Cue in the theme from **Twilight Zone** !)

**Harry Musselman**, is leading a quiet life, a little ham radio, a little computer, and handy man in between.

**Irene and Jack Keegan**

spent 2 and a half weeks in California this spring. Their daughter was married in St. Paul's in the desert in Palm Springs. Also they enjoyed visiting the Burning Desert, Joshua Tree Monument,, San Bernadino, & Lake Arrowhead. In Riverside stayed at the historical Messin Inn. Then on to San Peago, where they put in some more touring time. But Jack, would you trade our beautiful winters for all that year-round sunshine ? ? ?

**Ralph Dichter**, on the other hand, decided to pass up the playing in the snow, for now he calls Boca Raton his home away from home. Ralph read the health manual, cause he now plays tennis SEVEN days a week !He also keeps busy doing a bit of audio engineering in little theater productions both in the Nawth as well as the South

Our friend, Χηρις Σανις,

if the computer translator is wrong we'll write it as **Chris Sanis** -who writes in large letters on Pete's PN yellow pad, that he's enjoying retirement so much that he became a grand-father, a very happy one. He did his usual annual trek to Greece, which he obviously loves. Great to see old friends , sez he. (Someday **I too** will sail in Mikonos -H-)

**Gene Frisch** decided to change his lifestyle, by partaking in the Duke. Diet and Fitness Center in Durham, N.C.. He spent 4 weeks learning how to live in health through eating fat free & salt free foods plus an exercise regimen, mostly in the pool. Feeling great and searching the closets for 10 year old suits that now fit !-- Will those styles ever come back ? ?

**Mollie and Irv Sobel** still spending 6 months in Florida and six in the Catskills, playing lots of golf in both places. Now they actually believe that there is no such thing as winter...

**Marjorie Shields** just hates to stay home. In eight months, she tripped to France and Spain, next to the Far East, then a month in Australia and New Zealand. Now she has to stay home and do her laundry -- just kidding-- she actually stayed

home til November, cause of political activity. She hoped you all voted for Ron Saunders for Secretary of State..Now that elections are over, and has fresh laundry, a trip to Israel and France is in the works. Keep those planes flying Marj !

**Ted Nathanson** still keeps on working - but selectively, like Basketball in Latvia.

Hey Ted, it's been 22 years since Sapporo. Do you still have your NBC sheepskin jacket? )

(From the yellow sheet, I think Ted wrote -(handwriting's bad.

- No screamers!-

-Six grandchildren in four years-  
- Having a good time !

**Scotty Connal** started a production company (Concom Inc with sons Bruce ESPN, Allan, freelance Tech Mgr. and Linda Connal, freelance Graphics operator. Scotty's wife **Til**, was with the NBC PBX group 1945 until 1951..

Where we see Connal, hockey player **Jim Schaeffer** is sure to be around. Jim was pleased to see so many old friends at La Mag. "What a turnout!"he said - .And we were pleased to see Jim also. He still lives in Vermont, working with a neighbor doing light construction, keeping in shape.. He's looking forward to more get-togethers.



## p.n. people J.

### Peter Fatovich:

What a group

What a lunch

What a good time

(What a guy ! )

**Morty Aronoff** spent 2 weeks in Freeport, Grand Bahamas for his usual 2 week tune up for prostate cancer treatment. (It boosts the immune response zero side effects. Millicent (Mrs A), returned from a "Very Exciting" trip to Cuba ! Morty writes, "Daughter Mitzi due next week with second child - that will make FOUR !!!

(Morty Adds like the tax folk.)

**Gigi Harold** happy that we didn't take a terrible picture of her like last time. "Enjoyed seeing my friends from yesteryear - the best and most fun of all experiences." (You noticed -no pictures at all in this column., but we'll keep on trying till we get it right).

**Herb Polak** is happy to report that Mary came with him to this fantastic luncheon. "One of the best ever". It was her 2nd time and. she's having a good time

In 1992 they attended the PT Boater's Reunion in Little Rock, and saw a bit of the South. Last year, 1993, the P T Boater's Reunion was held in

Milwaukee, Wisc. Never having been to this area, the proper thing to do was to extend our trip into a 4500 mile motor tour around the Great Lakes. Since she bought a Saturn., Mary was invited to the Saturn Plant in Spring Hill, Tennessee, to attend Saturn's great "Home Comin' bash". Since it coincided with Amateur Radio's "Field Day" event, they were invited as guests of the Nashville Amateur Radio Club, where Herb will display his new call letters N2XXP.... They extend "Best regards to you all."

A small note

*My sincerest thanks to all of you who got in touch with me and offered support and prayers when they read about my setback. I'm feeling good and love you all !*

**Rita Stipo**

**The N.B.C Amateur Radio group still meets at 9:45 am EST, on 14.223 mghrtz each morning.**

I haven't been too active this summer, 'cause a lot of the Floridians are up here, and 20 meters is not a band for short hops. Did talk to Ed Wackernagle in California, who has to get up pretty early in

order to catch us, and Bob Juncosa reaches the East coast quite well. Bill Miller is heard quite often and is very big with communicating by satellite . Talked to **Roger Tuttle** today and he is quite excited about his aircraft that he's building..He's painted Peacock North on one side and the other it says Peacock South !.He has joined a group of flight enthusiasts who keep their aircraft at a Farm in Jackson, N.J., where the owner has his own airstrip. Roger had gone to Elmira a while ago for his first glider flight. He was to sit in the front seat and he was told to pull a release lever from the tow plane when cued. They were airborne at low altitude when another aircraft suddenly veered towards them. At that moment the tow line snapped. Rog was screamed at for pulling the release, of course which he **did not do**. The pilot made some fighter-plane-like maneuvers and landed the glider. Quite scary. Roger wasn't sure that he should try again. The pilot knew if they didn't go up right away, Roger would never go up. He hooked up another towline and up they went, gliding around for 45 minutes, of pure joy and exhilaration! - H.



KEN'S

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## **NILES TRAMMELL, THE THIRD PRESIDENT OF NBC**

In the 1930s I first met Mr. Trammell during my morning routine maintenance of the executive offices while working in the engineering maintenance department.

Mr. Trammell's office was located on the southeast section of the sixth floor overlooking the Prometheus Fountain. The board room was located between his office and the office of Lenox Lohr, the President of NBC, located on the northeast side of the building.

On the day Mr. Trammell became President of NBC, replacing Lenox Lohr, who was leaving NBC to become President of the Science and Industry Exhibit in Chicago, I stopped into Mr. Trammell's office on my morning routine. He was in his office and I took the liberty of congratulating him on his becoming President of NBC. He graciously accepted my congratulations and proceeded to show me an interesting "Flower arrangement" on his desk. I had never seen anything like it before or since. It consisted of a large cylindrical glass vase about six inches in diameter and eighteen inches high, filled with vegetable greens with absolutely no flowers. There was asparagus ferns, red and white radishes, carrots, white onions, red and green

peppers and many other colorful vegetables too numerous to mention. It truly was unique and beautiful and probably was made up in Trepel's Florist in Rockefeller Plaza across the street from what is now known as NBC Studio 1-A, home of the present "Today Show".

He spoke with me for quite awhile, saying the same opportunity to become President of NBC existed for all employees of NBC, as it did for him, saying his door would always be open for all the employees at all times. I came to know Mr. Trammell quite well from my many meetings during my routine visits to his office. He was a very friendly, down to earth Southern gentleman, as some of my stories will testify to.

At one of NBC Athletic Club outings at the Seawane Country Club in Long Island, he was shooting "craps" with the employees, pageboys, guides, VPs, Engineers, Announcers, Building Maintenance, etc. Unfortunately I did not "Shoot Craps" and did not know the terminology used when shooting, but I do remember he knew them all, such as "snake eyes", "Baby needs new shoes", "Fade you". At one point someone wanted to bet him three to two that he would not make his point and his response was a caustic friendly jest about that kind of bet.

As President of NBC he moved into what had been Lenox Lohr's office as was expected. On his first vacation as President, he was away for a few weeks and the VP of Building Maintenance of all Five owned and operated stations, a Mr. Vincent Gilcher, a former engineering executive under O. B. Hanson, decided to surprise Mr. Trammell by redecorating his office when he was on vacation. It consisted of new white carpet that had such high pile, it felt like one was walking on air, a new tremendous desk with what was known as "water-fall" design. The right hand of the desk curved down gracefully. It looked like something out of a Hollywood movie set.

When Mr. Trammell returned from vacation, he was more than surprised, he was upset, and made the comment, that it looked like a "Whore-house" and wanted to know where was his old desk, the desk that had been Lenox Lohr's. This was a normal size desk and covered with green leather and polished brass coins all around the edges, similar to large tacks. Believe me the desks were quickly exchanged.

During World War II, I had the good fortune to be in

More —→



Algiers working at the Psychological Warfare Radio Station, where we had three studios and three powerful transmitters broadcasting to Europe, especially Germany, to alert the world of the progress of the Allied nations in the war against the Axis. I used the expression "good fortune," meaning I was at the studios when Niles Trammell made a visit with NBC Vice President of Programs John Royal. They were being conducted on a tour of our facilities by the late Victor Tervola and late Walter R. Brown, both formerly of NBC NY. As officers in the Signal Corps, Brownie was in charge of the station and Vic formerly of Radio Recording NYC built the Master Control switching center in Algiers where I worked as Master Control operator. When Mr. Trammell met me at the Master Control Board, he was so surprised, he called out "Old John" come see who is here! He referred to John Royal as "Old John". He immediately left the tour to question me as to what I had been doing since being in the Army. He made me promise, when the war was over, I would stop in his office and visit, to which I assured him I would. When I returned to New York after leaving Algiers, I stopped in at NBC New York and went up to Mr. Trammell's office. I was still in my Army uniform. I was met by his secretary Maryann Henderson who questioned me as to why I wished to see Mr. Trammell. I explained and she buzzed him, to which he said, "Send him in." The following describes the type of man Niles Trammell was.

As I entered his office, he sprang up from his chair and walked over to me, embraced me, saying how happy he was to see me home and safe. He questioned me about the rest of the NBC men and if they were all OK. I assured him they were, when I left Algiers. He welcomed me back to NBC.

My last meeting with Niles Trammell was, I believe, in the 60s. I was working as Technical Director on an Orange Bowl football game in Miami, where a camera panning the audience had a close up of Mr. Trammell at the game. I made it my business to wait for him to exit from his section of the stadium after the game. Once again we were both happy to see each other and

he told me he was no longer connected with the Biscayne Broadcasting Company. I think it was channel 7 and that he had sold out his interest in the station. I expressed to him how much the employees had missed him, his leaving NBC many years ago.

For me, he was one of the great men I had the pleasure of working for during my forty one years with NBC.

It seems only fair that I explain the fact I had met John (Old John) Royal on other occasions before meeting him in Algiers, North Africa.

Some time before 1940, while working in Electronic Maintenance, I received an order to investigate a failure of the selector speaker, a "4194 amplifier" in the office of Mr. John Royal, Program Vice President, in room 409 in the office section of the RCA Building. The call was about five or five thirty in the afternoon, when usually all workers have left for the day, except executives. I arrived at Mr. Royal's office to find the door wide open. Mr. Royal was standing in the middle of the room, attired in a High Silk Hat, cutaway coat, shirt, shoes and socks but no pants, other than his boxer shorts, with his secretary, Margaret O'Connor, standing in front of him tying his white bow tie.

Obviously, I stopped at the door and Mr. Royal greeted me with, "Come on in, the speaker is not working." I did so and in short order located the trouble. The wall plug had fallen out of the electrical socket.

Mr. Royal was dressing to attend a social function and his secretary was assisting him. Of the three of us in the room, I must confess I was the most embarrassed. Margaret O'Connor, a beautiful young woman had just been selected as "Americas most Beautiful Mother," which in my opinion she was. I think she had a 10 year old son.

The last time I recall seeing Mr. Royal was a few years after the war, when I saw him coming into the NBC Studio lobby, escorted by a middle aged black woman holding his left arm, while he used a cane in his right hand. He obviously was very old. I'll always remember him for his executive appearance, a tall well built, well spoken gentleman. I often wondered why he never became President or Chief Executive Officer of NBC. He sure fitted the part..... □

**Ken lives in Boynton Beach, Florida**

***Join Peacock North***



## MINI LUNCH DINERS FROM NEAR & FAR

PN-ers from near and far gathered at Picco Lissimo restaurant in Fort Lee, N.J. Oct 2 for a jolly lunch meeting. Long distance honors among the 30 diners went to Bob Juncosa and wife Diane, who were in from Foresthill, California. Nearby honors probably went to Peg and Pete Peterson from Closter, N.J. We often wonder why more retirees don't drop in on these gatherings which also saw diners who arrived by public bus transport and by car from as far as Garden City, Long Island, and our own round trip

with Roy Silver covered 175 miles! You'll read about what these folks have been doing since our last paper in the H. Ripp's *PN People* column. When the Petersons made a West Coast trip last summer they invited retirees living in California to renew acquaintanceships at a lunch in Glendale. Talk about traveling to lunch — take the case of Bob Hanna who lives in Aroma, CA in the northern part of the state. He flew into L.A. airport, rented a car, and drove to the Glendale lunch. (see story pg.34)



### The Diners:

*Jerry Cudlip  
Diane & Bob Juncosa  
Buddy Fleck  
Jim Sunder  
Phil Falcone  
Frank DeRienzo  
Bill deLannoy  
Lee Pliskin  
Peg Peterson  
Dorothea deLannoy  
Roz Bigelow (in rear)  
Bud Shadel (partly hidden)  
Dorothy & Gary Iorio  
Pete Peterson  
Fred Wagner*

*Buddy Fleck  
Bud Shadel  
Nick Ponella  
Jim Sunder's back  
and  
Lee Pliskin and  
Bob Fraraccio in background*



*Delopes Parylak  
Dorothea deLannoy  
Dorothy Iorio  
Francesca Peters  
Diane Juncosa  
Peg Peterson*





# THE EAR BENDERS

by Dick Dudley



Recently, I dropped a note to **Chet Hagen**, who is about a 35 minute away neighbor of mine and asked him: "What have you been doing lately?" He writes:

September, 1994

Dear Dick,

Thanks for asking me about my latest book. The basic info:

Title: "Shouts of Joy: Legends of Gospel Music" Publisher: Avon Books/Hearst Publications, N.Y. Date of Release: January, 1995. Will be sold as a mass market paperback. Details: Includes a total biographical sketches of some of the legends of Gospel Music, including *Fanny J. Crosby*, *Ira A. Sankey*, *Homer Rodeheaver*, *Thomas A. Dorsey*, *Mahalia Jackson*, *LeFavres*, *Stamps*, *Spears*, *Blackwoods*, and from the contemporary

scene: *Bill & Gloria Gaither*, *Larnelle Harris*, *Steven Curtis Chapman*, *Twila Paris*, and lastly the "Country Connection" to gospel music.

This will be my twelfth book since 1981. Also have completed an unsold (at the moment) collection of short stories (fiction) pegged to growing up during the great depression. Am currently in the throes of beginning a Civil War book (non fiction) on the importance of horses in the war, the last major war where horses played a pivotal role. That one is two to three years away from completion.

But I also keep busy as the editor of "BOOKENDS", the 6 times a year journal of the friends of the Reading-Berks (PA) Public Libraries. And am currently preparing to shoot a video promoting the Berks public libraries, to be used as a fund raiser. (My first video in three years, and likely my last.)

Am reasonably well for a seventy two soon to be seventy three year old. With my wife Dotty, we send you best wishes.

Your obedient servant  
(the civil war influence)

*Chet*

The Epistles According To: A Postcard from **Harry Fleetwood** who was expatriating in Paris, (Paris, France, not Paris, Tennessee). My favorite city; a real preference. Not one of **Willard Scott's** hyperbole's. **Gene Hamilton** writes and says that at his NBC farewell party, Fleetwood remarked: "I didn't know Gene had so many friends. Wives, yes, but friends?!" **Bill Hanrahan** sends a doctor's prescription ordering the dosage of a double vodka cocktail which I willingly take each day. Unfortunately, the AFTRA Medical plan, won't accept the prescription. They say it's a fake — the writing is too legible. **Jack Marshall** is mending nicely after his valves were replaced, and **Audrey Marshall** keeps trying to get me into heaven (I wonder if they serve double Vodka's there?) **Vic Roby** sends thanks for the birthday card that I sent him on the wrong date, yet he slyly refrained from revealing his age. **Bill and Olga McCord** still toss the "boules" on the village lawn, **Don Pardo** thinks that  $E=MC^2$  is the formula for two emcees.

I recently went to a convention for "The friends of Old Time Radio". it's an organization made up of ardent fans of ancient programs. They meet each year for 3 days and invite old time performers to come to their convention and recreate programs of the past. I was



asked to come to their 19th annual gathering and be an honored guest. I was asked to participate in a re-creation of "ESCAPE" with **Jeanette Nolan, John Archer**, and **Arthur Anderson**, and then redo my old announcing job on "Archie Andrews", which gave me the wonderful pleasure of seeing once again **Bob Hastings, Hal Stone, Rosemary Rice, Joan Shea, Pat Hosley**, and meeting and

working with **John Rayburn**.

It was a grand three days with lots of hugs and kisses. To do a little name dropping, there in the flesh were: **Rosa Rio, Raymond Edward, Harry Fleetwood, Jackson Beck, Charlotte Manson, Arthur Tracy, Lee Erwin**, etc. I left early on Saturday and missed seeing **Ed Herlihy** and **George Anbro** who were supposed to be there.

On Friday night at the ban-

quet, I was given a trophy which read: "In recognition of your contributions during Radio's Golden Years" It's an honor more dear than the NOBEL prize, (you have to go all the way to Stockholm and they give you money). My trophy can be placed on a mantel. Mine however is on my TV set. I hope **Jay Hickerson** and the "F.O.O.T.R" will forgive me for that. □

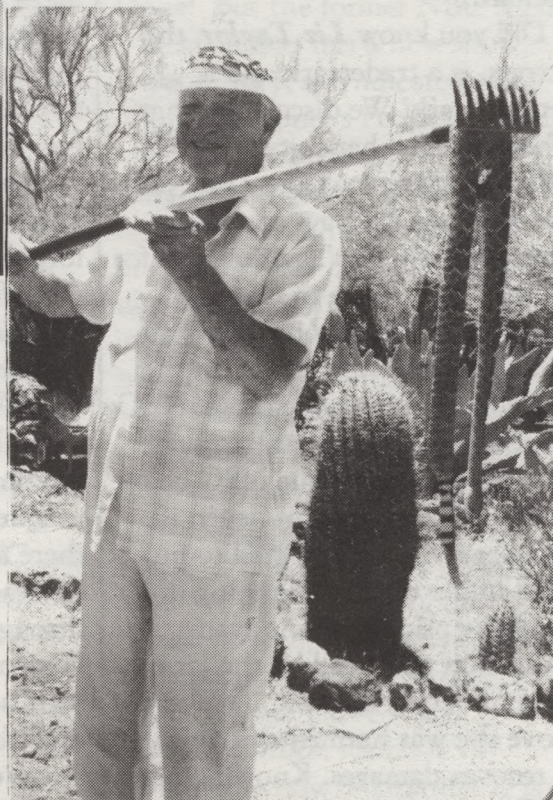


#### "ARCHIE ANDREWS CAST"

Standing: Joan Shea, Bob Hastings, Pat Hosley, Dick Dudley, Rosemary Rice, Ray Born (Former sound effects man at Mutual)  
Front: Hal Stone, John Rayburn



*Whats-His-Name and Rosa Rio who played the organ on all the soaps.*



*Gene Hamilton sends this pix from Apache Junction, AZ. "This guy (rattler on rake) barred my way to my mail-box."*

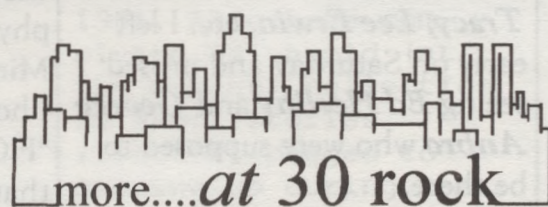


**Willard Scott** has become at "cottage industry." You see his visage popping up everywhere, such as in those brief commercials for Celebrity Cruises, where he shows up in a cameo at the groaning board as **Kathie Lee** passes by. He also appears in Slim Fast diet commercials and was briefly the host of the "New, Original Amateur Hour." Now, Willard will host a weekly "Home & Garden Almanac" for the Scripps Howard Home and Garden network. Scott will do 26 episodes visiting "America's greatest and most unusual homes and gardens." With the heavy demands of "Today," Scott will not get to all those locales, but a field producer will. In Virginia, Scott has a peach orchard.

Did you know **Liz Taylor**, the actress, is a trademark and a service mark? We discovered that when she filed her suit vs. NBC which plans to make a tv film of her life story. Liz says she's been promoting the Liz Taylor image for 50 years and is one of the most famous personalities in the world. She's seeking \$10-million. In the first round at the courtroom, NBC won. A Los Angeles judge ruled that Taylor cannot sue NBC before it runs the bio, which — even if defamatory — is permitted to be aired under the law. Banning it would be prior restraint against expression protected by the First Amendment. However, if she can prove she was harmed she can sue to recover damages. Knowing how NBC lawyers can tie up a legal action, Liz will be 100 by the time this gets to court. We, and 13

other newswriters are well aware of that since a legal action we are involved in is now in its TENTH year. That's T-E-N. Next case!

Speaking of age 100, **Barry Gray** — who must have worked at NBC sometime in his long career — and who is now 78 years



old, has just adopted a new-born child, along with his 43 year old wife, the former **Nancy Kellogg**. Gray, we think, must be the originator of the talk show. He started on WMCA radio in the 1940s and is still talking on the air — now late night on WOR. Hmm, wonder who gives the kid the 3am bottle? And is he going to teach the tot how to ride a two-wheel bike?

Here's an item of interest to people who think they were forced out of NBC or any network for that matter, because of age. **Steve Powers**, age 60, and a former reporter at Fox 5 News, WNYW, in New York, has filed a \$2-million suit charging age discrimination. That will be a toughie. Powers, who had worked there for 14 years, said his 2-year contract was terminated mid-way through the deal. He allows that Fox could terminate him, but not because of age. The net is silent, with the usual reason — "we're in litigation." The suit quotes news chief **Van Gordon Sauter** as saying the station needs to appeal to young viewers.

A lot of people and a lot of business is suffering because of the baseball strike — especially the nets. NBC and ABC were teamed in a production company called The Baseball Network. It has sold \$130-million in advertising when the players walked out. The nets

were to share 6 percent of the gross which could have been double that figure.

Anheuser-Busch, the beer people, have gotten a jump on the 1996 Atlanta summer Olympics advertising. Bud, and its sister beverages will be the only beers on

NBC coverage over 168 hours for 27 days. The TAB — that's a joke, son, will be 50-million. And a lot of suds.

**Conan O'Brien**, **David Letterman's** Late Night replacement, will be around for a while. On its first anniversary, the program averaged a 2.1 rating (94-million homes), and NBC has renewed O'Brien. When Letterman did the show it averaged 2.7. A lot of the audience is in the 18- to-24 age bracket.

So with success at after-midnight hours, NBC will try to keep an audience up to even later hours on Friday night. The next effort — to follow Conan O'Brien — will be an expanded version of "Later with Greg Kinnear." Starting at 1:35 am it had run for half an hour. Now, it will run one full hour on Friday nights. The shorter version will still run Monday through Thursday.

And "This just in." More on the possible NBC sale. From 1985 to 1990 the net led ABC and CBS, but now it is a deep third, which obviously does not sit well with



the brass. In those earlier years NBC had a 27% share of the audience, and now it is down to 18 percent with leader CBS at 23 percent. Profits in 1989 hit \$600-million. Today they are at \$250-million. One estimate we've seen puts the value of NBC properties at \$2.5-billion. Another, estimate, by Merrill Lynch puts it at \$4-billion, or higher.

Egg on the Face Dept. Earlier in the column we noted that **Bob Hope**, who was around 30 Rock before the Peacock, was not figuring in the NBC fall lineup. Then he came on the tube with "Bob Hope's Young Comedians Making America Laugh," and apparently other shows are on the drawing board. However, they had not been announced, so we'll take a hit on one cheek and not the entire punim ("face" to you).

And more on the awful shooting outside the "Today" studio. Some of the video footage of the action was shot by a young Austrian student who was visiting Rockefeller Center and pulled out his cam-corder after ducking safely behind a tree. Hmm, trees at 30 Rock are pretty slim.

Perhaps, even more dramatic were the shots from NBC street surveillance cameras which shows **Theron Montgomery**, the shooting victim, waving to police to identify the gunman, shots of the assailant standing near his car, and then shotgun in hand, charging toward Montgomery to kill him.

NBC is getting all the mileage it can out of the \$15-million "Today" studio. It's putting "Live at Five" in there for a five week run. Probably a test. If the rating goes up, you can bet the show will stay in the

window. **Steve Friedman** will be the shows "consultant" during that period. Now that's a job we'd all like.

Someone's yelling "foul" again at "Dateline NBC." This time its New York City's Dept. of Environmental Protection. "Dateline" correspondent **Stone Philips** described the city's drinking water as a killer and filled with a parasite named cryptosporidium. He spoke to NYC medical people who told him that diarrhea cases had doubled at one hospital without saying whether it doubled from one case to two cases or 1,000 to 2,000. Apparently the NBC defense was — "doubled, is doubled." The show also said one New York man had died in November. Of course, that guy was HIV-positive, so maybe it was Aids and not the aqua pura that did him in. The show also said that the crypto parasite had made 400,000 people sick and killed 100 others in Milwaukee last year. When NBC was asked by the Daily News if it would shut down water fountains at 30 Rock, the reply was employees use bottled water. That must be an innovation. We never saw one of those upside-down water coolers in the building. So we say, cut out the last two and you can reduce your chances by two-thirds.

But we're not all bad. NBC and the other three networks voluntarily withheld information that American planes had taken off for the invasion of Haiti until the invasion was called off at the last minute when Jimmy Carter's negotiations paid off with the high mokey-mucks at Port au Prince. The nets acted out of

concern for American troops. The nets had held a conference call with the White House 24 hours earlier and agreed to hold off on the invasion planes, but not news once ground action had begun. When there was a breakthrough in the talks in Haiti, the nets asked the Pentagon at 8:41pm Sunday if it was okay to broadcast pictures of troop planes taking off from Fort Bragg, and the answer was "yes." Haitian leaders might well have seen those pictures on CNN to convince them they had made the right decision in their talk with Carter & company.

### ***Hanging Out With The Stars***

Gosh, the names some of our talent use. Remember "**Lucky**" **Severinso**? Not so lucky. He's gone. Remember "**Star**" **Jones**? Gone! But the former NBC legal correspondent has a new show, Jones & Jury, a syndicated clone of Judge Wapner's People's Court.

**Fred De Cordova**, **Johnny Carson's** longtime producer, was hospitalized with pneumonia at press time. He's 83, and a consultant to the Jay Leno show, meaning De Cordova must have had a nice long NBC contract — Carson, or no Carson.

Wedding Bells. **Chuck Scarborough** has taken wife number three. She's **Ellen Ward**, who, they say, Chuck met on a blind date. We saw a photo of the handsome couple in the NYTimes Style page and she is verrrry attractive and curve-some.

**Mike Taibbi**, formerly of Channel 4, now of channel 2, is engaged to **Juliet Papa**, crime



reporter for WINS. Will they swap news tid-bits at the murder scene?

Boy, we caught a photo of **Geraldo Rivera** in the Daily News and we wonder if it was "doctored," or how did the photog catch Jerry in the buff? Well, not all of him in the buff. Its a head-shot and he is balder than **Willard Scott**. He has no friends in the photo library over there. The report said his 9pm show on CNBC has quintupled in audience. Fine. But can you imagine his producer, **Bob Fasbender**, claiming "high end people" watch Rivera and that's why the audience is booming. "We're taking a kind of up-market approach with this show," said Fasbender. He described the audience of Rivera's daytime show as "yellers and screamers." That would definitely be down-market. Oy, spare us.

We didn't realize it at first glance at the new **Grant Tinker** book — Tinker on Television — but the sub-title is catchier than the title. Its "From General Sarnoff to General Electric." We like Tinker's standards. When he dropped the **Howard Stern** show from NBC radio he said, "If that's the only way we can make money, we shouldn't be in the business."

### With the Correspondents

Is **Marv Albert's** head on the chopping block?. They asked that question over at Newsday when ITT-Cablevision bought Madison Square Garden. The new owners, who spent \$1,1-billion on the purchase, quickly discovered how much Marv pulls down for broadcasting the Knicks and Rangers. "Hey," they may have said, "we can do that for less."

And Pete, can we ask — why

doesn't Marv see Geraldo's hair stylist?

**John Palmer** has returned to NBC, in Washington, as a general correspondent. Four years ago he was bounced during the **Deborah Norville-for-Jane Pauley** swap and then went to work for Monitor Radio and the Monitor tv channel. John had spent 26 years at NBC, starting with local. Also returning, **Cassandra Clayton**. Others in the Capital lineup: **Brian Williams** as chief White House correspondent, **Andrea Mitchell** from the White House to chief, foreign affairs, **Gwen Ifill**, ex NYTimes, to politics, and **Bob Faw**, ex-CBS, to Nightly and America Close-up. **Jack Ford**, who had been a part-time legal correspondent, is now full time. **Tim Russert** still heads up the operation that now numbers 175 people, 16 of them as correspondents. At one time the net had 220 staffers, and then shrunk to 160.

**John Chancellor** certainly landed one of the choicest assignments of the year narrating **Ken Burns'** PBS series on Baseball. Burns, you'll recall, is the producer who put together the wonderful PBS series on the Civil War last year..... CBS correspondent **Richard Roth** has joined NBC and is based in London ..... Correspondent **Mike Boettcher** returned to Laos for a report on "Now" with **Tom Brokaw** and **Katie Couric** and his crew was the first American broadcasters allowed into Laos since the end of the Vietnam war in 1975. He was surprised how primitive Laos

remains .... Following a major curb on correspondents at ABC, NBC also has revised its guidelines on where they can speak and what, if anything, they get paid. ABC has banned speeches before trade associations and for-profit-businesses because of possible conflict of interest. Ex-NBC president **Richard Wald**, now a senior ABC vice president, created the new editorial policy. Wald said actually only one-third of the net's correspondents are on the lecture circuit. At NBC, guidelines have not been publicized. You may recall years ago — back under News prexy **Bill McAndrew** — there was an annual correspondents tour of the USA run by PR man **Milt Brown**. I think Milt's daughter still works in EJ (since she's married, not under the Brown name). But that was a promotional effort by the company. Now, one may ask, how much is a correspondent worth on the rubber chicken circuit? It is said ABC's **Sam Donaldson** pocketed \$30,000 for a talk before any insurance group, which was later covered in a story by Donaldson's "Prime Time: Live" program. Any connection? ABC wisely acted before the situation got out of hand.

I always recall that when **Wald** came to NBC from the Herald Tribune to become a vice president under **Reuven Frank**, someone — probably Frank, put an English "L" license plate over the door to Wald's office. In Britain, when you are learning how to drive a car, you must have the red and white "L" plate on the back of your car so other motorists will know you are a learner.

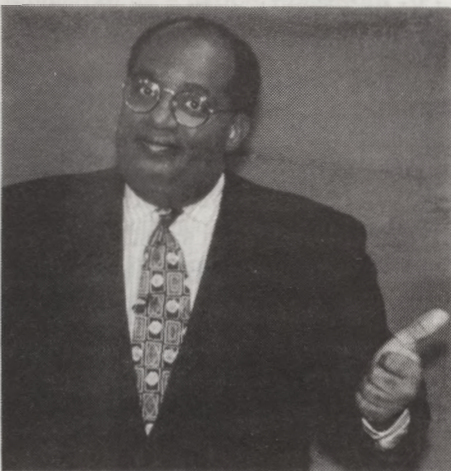


And now more about the ordinary folks (Ordinary? Well, we retirees are blase, having once in a while gone up the studio elevator with celebs).

Is **Johnny Carson** coming back on the tube? CNBC programming exec **Andy Friendly** has contacted Carson's agent suggesting Johnny host a daily evening tv call-in program.... **Jeff Zucker**, the wunderkind of a few season's ago, has been out of the trade paper headlines but now he's news again following his appointment as executive producer of "Today." Its a job he once held and was so admired by NBC execs that they simultaneously gave him the same title to run "Nightly News." Until recently he had been exec producer of "Now," but since that show has been incorporated into "Dateline," Zucker was without a job and NBC considered him too valuable to put on the street. One report had him filling out an application at ABC (well, that's poetic license, since exec producers usually "do" lunch for these purposes). Anyway, with Zucker back at "Today," what about America's most tight-lipped, most modest producer — **Steve Friedman**? Somebody's gotta go and it ain't Zucker. Steve's contract as "Today" exec producer runs until January. The local tv columnists say Steve, an old chum, of **Tom Snyder** from their NBC Los Angeles days, will join that talk show when it goes from CNBC to CBS, following David Letterman as a post midnight attraction starting in December. That's what you call taking a giant leap and landing on your feet ..... NBC has been judicious in deciding what to do with the tv movie

"Frogman," which stars **O.J. Simpson** and which was produced by a Hollywood studio for the net. "We have no plans to broadcast it at this time," comes the network decision.

### The Local Scene



**Al Roker** is single again. He and wife Alice have split and will share custody of their 7 year old daughter. Al's lawyer described the divorce as amicable and thoroughly civilized. Al, who had one talk show on CNBC, now has two. He is now doing a weekend wrap-up showing the best of bits from his call-in show and the other talk shows on CNBC. Something of a Readers' Digest approach. Hey, you can't get too much of a good thing.

**Sue Simmons** is a smart cookie, but she sort of went too far with a flip remark during an interview with actor **Tom Arnold**, who was promoting the film "True Lies." The subject got around to Arnold's divorce from **Roseanne Barr** and the actor got testy and decided to become interviewer rather than interviewee. "Oh man. Let's get into your personal life. Are you married?" "No," she replied. "Are you a lesbian?" asked Arnold. Then

with a big laugh, Sue replied, "Yes!" Arnold tried to take advantage of the flip remark. He kept on pursuing the quip — "You, a confirmed lesbian!" Sue came back with "Now that I've lied about my life, lie about yours." The media picked up the remark and that forced Sue to put out a formal denial explaining she was "kidding around." Turning serious, the charming news woman said, "Let's face it. This could be a career-ender." Well, we hope not. Her audience probably realizes she can throw in a little kidding and this time it backfired. Station manager **Bill Bolster** said "as far as we are concerned, that statement should end this conversation. Sue is an important and valued member of the NBC family."



Sue

When we read that **Tom Brokaw** and one of his daughters were out at the Cheyenne Sioux Reservation in South Dakota working with **Jimmy Carter's** Habitat for Humanity program, we thought that was very altruistic of Tom who hails from Minot, S.D. Turned out Brokaw was taping a segment for "Today."

More →



Carter, of course, was out there with hammer and nails with tv cameras turned on, or off.

Here's the kind of news we love to read: "GE Earnings up 14%" Nothing like keeping the old office in the black to assure (hopefully) all the nice insurance deals we retirees enjoy. GE is the fifth-largest industrial concern in the nation. Second quarter income totaled \$1.52 billion, or 89 cents a share versus 78 cents a share for the comparable period last year. Revenues rose 10 percent to \$16.2 billion. As Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois used to say, "A billion here and a billion there, and you're talking real money." Nice work Jack (**Jack Welch**, that is).

You'd think that the guy who leads the band on the "Tonight" show would have a pretty cushy job. High visibility, high pay, short hour. Maybe so, but **Branford Marsalis** says he doesn't know whether he'll stay with **Jay Leno** after his contract expires in 3 years. As Branford puts it, "This is a cushy, secure job and its great if you like cushy, secure jobs. But I'm used to hanging by my fingernails. I like the edge — its what makes me a creative musician." Now, there's an honest man! And bold enough to express his thoughts like he expresses the blasts on his horn. Latest giggle — **Branford's** leaving.

Here's a biggie. **Brian Ross**, who spent 20 years gumshoeing for NBC with ace investigative producer **Ira Silverman**, has walked to ABC (Silverman remains at 30 Rock) and according to one tv columnist, the walk is worth \$5-million for 5 years. C'mon, now, that's money for blonde anchor-women, or basketball stars, but a blonde guy

who just digs up juicy scoops? The story goes that Ross asked for a raise but NBC management, in effect, told him — "if you can do better elsewhere, go elsewhere." Ross did. After ABC said "welcome," NBC got into the bidding war, but Ross had made his new deal and it was too late. Two tv columnists we read described Brian as tv news' leading investigative reporter, up there with **Mike Wallace** and **Sam Donaldson**. Brian says, "I was not unhappy at NBC, but I'm ready for greater challenges." He'll do reporting for "Day One," and for "Nightline" One of Ross' big stories was an expose of singer **Wayne Newton** and his unsavory Las Vegas connections which resulted in a libel suit that awarded Newton \$23-million. The decision was later overturned.

**Greg Gumble** joined NBC this fall, switching from CBS, partly and possibly, because without NFL football, CBS didn't need him. One of his NBC chores was supposed to be studio host of the net's baseball coverage — but with the baseball season aborted, he finds himself in that empty position again. However, at 30 Rock he'll also work on NFL broadcasts, NBA basketball, and the Atlanta Olympics in 1996. NBC will get its first Grand Slam golf event with the switch of the U.S. Open from ABC to 30 Rock. The Open had been a staple in the ABC lineup for 30 years! **Bob Hope's** future with NBC is iffy — after being part of the Peacock's programming for 60 years! That goes back to the old Pepsodent radio show with sidekick **Jerry Colonna**. Hope, is

now 91 years old, had his last NBC special in May and had the lowest ratings in 12 years. Promotional announcements about the upcoming season did not mention any Bob Hope specials.

One often recalls Bob in those "On the Road to" movies. Which brings us to the National Geographic travelogues, which they no longer call travelogues. NBC will carry 5 of them each year for the next two years, taking over from PBS which usually broadcast the programs. Actually, the magazine also will still produce some programs for PBS. **Tim Russert**, on the other hand will continue to draw paychecks from both NBC and CNBC. One, of course, from Meet the Press. The other from CNBC where Tim has a Monday night call-in show. He's been renewed until July 1995, and he'll also host two 90 minute prime time specials for NBC. Quite a career change working for the **Mario Cuomo** (now former NY Governor) team, coming to NBC in a behind-the-scenes promotional capacity, and then moving in front of the camera for the big bucks.

Speaking of hot tips. There was an unfortunate one outside the "Today" show street-front studio when 29 year old **Joe Szymanski, Jr.**, a part-time lighting technician, brushed against a live transformer and suffered a serious electrical shock that required hospitalization. It is said he suffered some neurological damage. When **President Clinton** was a guest on "Today," viewers standing on the sidewalk were invited to ask questions. One lady from Park Ridge, Illinois,



asked him if he would ask his wife to host the 30th reunion of the Park Ridge high school class which **Hillary Clinton**, and the woman visitor, had both attended. Hillary later said yes they can come to the White House.

**Mary Alice Williams** is no longer on the reportorial beat, having sold her soul to the phone company as spokeswoman (have't seen her on the tv ads of late), but she has not given up as a performer. She appeared in the play "Adam and Eve Diaries" by Mark Twain during the summer at the Catskill Actors Theatre in Highland Lake, N.Y. We learned two things from that item: Mary Alice trod the stage and Mark Twain wrote a play.

There's a new name on the executive roster — **Neil S. Braun**. The former chairman of Viacom Entertainment is now president of the NBC tv network, replacing the popular **Pier Mapes**, who ended nearly 25 years service with the network announcing his early retirement at age 56. Braun had wide experience at Viacom, being involved in programming, syndication, licensing and merchandising. Sounds like a heavy hitter. There's probably much more to this tale, but we do not know it since we do not hang around the sixth floor executive dining room. Course it could be simply that aggressive GE discovered an exec with very hot credentials, and that he was available. Mapes?

### Just People

**Jerry Nachman**, a creative type who once headed the WNBC news operation, has returned to NY to head up the WCBS-tv news team. He was hired by **Bud Carey**, who

was once Nachman's boss at WNBC and is now General Manager at the CBS station. Jerry was editor of the NYPost when he quit to move on to Santa Fe to write novels, movies, etc. While Nachman was described by Newsday as a savvy newsman, it remembered he finally put out too much schlock with sweeps-period fodder like "Is God Punishing Us?" and "How to Tell if your child is Gay." **Jim Ryan**, once of NBC and now of Channel 5 put it this way — "As Disraeli once said of Gladstone, the man is inebriated by the exuberance of his own verbosity." A touch of Damon Runyon returns to NYC.

### Miscellany

GE presents its Gerald Phillippe Award each year for outstanding community service and this year 2 NBC employees were the winners of the prize — \$1,000 donations to their favorite charities. The winners were **Susan Wicher**, Burbank's assistant to the Director of Casting, and **Jeff Hark**, New York's Director of Production Operations and Scheduling. Susan has volunteered 500 hours to Habitat for Humanity, and helped the Jimmy Carter charity construct 5 homes. Jeff was recognised for devoting 25 years to Emergency Medical Care in several towns. Currently he is on the Maplewood, NJ First Aid Squad.

KUTV in Salt Lake City has been bought by the net. The station has been an affiliate since 1960.

Announcer **Guy LeBow**, who partly-owned, operated and broadcast on WNWK-fm until an ethnic group got control of the

NYC station, will be back on the air, on a Time-Warner cable tv channel. Along with various doctors, he will host a program on "alternative" medicine, the homeopathic and holistic stuff. LeBow, who worked with, the one time child movie star, when Freddie was a director at WPIX back in the 1950s, hopes he and his collaborator will finalize a Broadway musical script on Bartholomew's life by the end of 1995. I worked with both of them, having joined that operation in 1948 when WPIX went on the air. The first show was the gala opening of Idelwild Airport. Idelwild? Well, now they call it JFK.

And finally, our thanks to Roy Silver for clipping five — count 'em — five newspapers to keep us up to date on tv land. Maybe I should buy him an electric scissors for his birthday. □ (DG)

### ❖ Late Notice ❖ *Silent Microphones*

We learn with sadness that the the following EJ editors passed away in recent months.

❖ ❖ ❖

Britta Holling  
Tommy Martin  
Eliot Rauner  
Peter Ponzi  
Marvin Steinberg





**Clayton W. Ackerson**, died March 15th of this year. Clay was a graduate of an Air Force Technical School, and Capital Radio and Engineering School. He studied at New York University and State University, Farmington, NY.

Clay was employed by American Airlines in New York from 1939 to 1951 when he joined NBC as an Electronics Maintenance Engineer. He worked in all phases of TV Broadcasting. In 1966 he was appointed to the position of NBC-TV Field Operations Manager. After leaving NBC, Clay continued his contribution to the TV Broadcasting industry by joining ESPN where he worked on the construction of their facilities. Clay and his wife Lois retired to Aberdeen, North Carolina, where he enjoyed flower gardening and golf. He was most proud of his "hole-in-one" and gardening awards.

Regretfully, the Clay Ackerson notice was omitted from the Spring edition of our paper. My apologies to Lois Ackerson and Clay's many friend for this unfortunate oversight. (FV)

**Mona McCormick**, died this past July from diabetic complications in Los Angeles. Mona worked for NBC News in the fifties and early sixties. She left NBC to obtain her degree in Library Science and on completion took a job with the NEW YORK TIMES. She moved on to California where she was a research librarian at UCLA. Mona authored several books and received major awards during her career.



**John Hiram Powers**, 80, died August 17, 1994 in Hayesville, North Carolina. He was the first employee to finish 50 years of service with NBC. John started as a page in 1929 and retired in 1979. During his 50 year service he worked in casting, sound effects for radio and television, and ended his career as a broadcast engineer in network news. ◆ ◆

**Bill Merrill**, of the NBC Engineering Department, died in September. Bill lived in Bound Brook, New Jersey. He was active in Ham Radio (W2ECG), his friendly voice will be missed on the "NBC Nemo Net."



**Hal Schneider**, of Middlefield, NY died October 24. He retired in 1976 after 35 years with NBC. During WWII he worked on the development of Radar at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He joined the company after the war as a Radio Field Engineer. Hal covered numerous national and world events, including the formation of the United Nations in San Francisco, presidential elections, and the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo

space programs.



**Gayle Gary**, wife of announcer Arthur Gary died on October 26th. A memorial service was held November 2nd at St. James Church in Manhattan. It was a solemn and dignified service with readings delivered by Bill Hanrahan, Harry Fleetwood, Don Pardo, and Dick Dudley. Family and friends then gathered at the Metropolitan Club to offer condolences to Arthur and his daughter Sandra.



**Campbell Montgomery**, NBC employee died from gun shot wounds fired by an assassin on the street outside the new street level TODAY show studio.



**John Graham**, former art director and creator of the NBC Peacock, died June 12, 1994 in Upper Block Eddy, PA.



**Kenneth Keefer**, age 56, died May 23rd. Respected in the television advertising promotion community. He was with NBC through most of the '60s and '70s, then with HBO as Vice President of Advertising and Promotion until 1988.



**Tom Sabol**, age 50, NY Engineering Technical Director passed away in early summer

*We regret the loss of so many of our friends. Peacock North members extend sympathy to their families.*



## NBC exec receives 1993-94 emmy

Michael J. Sherlock, Executive VP Technology, NBC, was one of the three recipients of the National Academy of Arts and Sciences' (NATAS) 1993/4 Emmy Award for Technical Achievement and Scientific Lifetime Achievement.

The award was bestowed October 4, 1994 by John Cannon, President of NATAS, at the organization's annual Emmy Awards presentation.

"This Award is a testament to his distinguished service at NBC and in the industry". The citation reads, in part: "for life-long commitment and contributions to the development and improvement of the science and television technology."

Said Honorary PN member, Robert C. Wright, President and CEO of NBC: "We are proud to have Mike Sherlock leading NBC's developments in technology. Mike has exhibited an extraordinary ability to meet the technological challenges in a rapidly changing broadcast environment. This Emmy Award is a testament to his distinguished service at NBC and in the industry."

Sherlock a 34 year veteran of NBC has been the head of NBC's Operational and Technical Services Division since 1982. He has been responsible for NBC's Studio and broadcast operations, engineering, sourcing, real estate and administrative services. His earlier

service included Chief financial officer for NBC Sports as well as other areas of management financing.

For the past five years, Sherlock has been Chairman of the Broadcasters Caucus. He is a member of



*Stipo, Sherlock, and EMMY*

numerous professional organizations. On a personal note Mike serves on the Archbishop's Commission of the Laity in the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. Sherlock (a Peacock North member), and his wife the former Anna De Carlo, reside in Hasbrouck Heights N.J. They have four children. □

*Rita Stipo, our NBC  
NY correspondent  
lives in Brooklyn, NY.*

## LAUER IS HOT & DAILY AGENDA PROVES IT

Matt Lauer, the 36 year old newscaster on "Today," has been getting a lot of coverage in the tv columns and one reason is the variety of his activities for NBC News. One NYTimes story which described him as not terribly qualified as a newsman because 12 of his 14 years in television were spent hosting insignificant morning talk and entertainment shows, (then Steve Friedman "discovered" him), did a run-down of his typical day last summer. 4:15am wakes up 5am.....arrives at NBC 6:55.....arrives at "Today" set (we'd guess that is too tight, but that's what the Times printed) 9am to 11am at this desk 11am to 2:30 PM at his Manhattan apartment for a nap and change of clothes 2:30pm back at office, checks the wires 3:30pm does promo for evening show 4 to 4:45 checks wires and his script for "Live at Five." 4:50 Makeup 5pm to 6pm On the air. Until early September, Lauer also did the local "Today in New York" from 6 to 7 am. Seems he doesn't get any lunch or dinner, but he certainly gets plenty of practice reading the wires and scripts. And while Lauer doesn't get much chance to do reporting, neither do many other anchors on news shows so maybe the Times' dig was a bit harsh. Go argue with success! And that is why, in Britain, they call news anchor people "presenters." (DG)

**Have You Noticed  
We're Pushing  
Dues?**

**\$20 is due Jan 1**

*Without Your  
support there will be  
no*

**PEACOCK NORTH**



# Peacock Far North

Over 188 NBC years were represented by the group that gathered for the Fifth Annual Reunion of "Peacock FAR NORTH" in mid-September. Roger and Bobby (Horn) Muir hosted a weekend get-together at their home on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. In addition to 'regulars' Fran DeGennaro, Marie Finnegan, Mary McCarthy, Helen (Rachel) Nicole and Bob (Rip) and Ruth Rippen, the gathering was enlivened by the attendance of Bill and Terry (Gerbach) Garden from Venice, Florida and Gary and Kathleen Simpson who came from western Vermont.

With four directors/producers on the scene, picture-taking sessions were interesting. Our shared memories were marvelous — our shared singing was something else again.

For more information on "Peacock FAR NORTH", write to: P.O. Box 751, Wolfeboro, NH 03894. □



"Say Cheese!" Four former Producer/Directors in front of the camera: Bob Rippen, Gary Simpson, Bill Garden, and Roger Muir.



All Smiles, Helen (Rachel) Nicole, Mary McCarthy, Fran DeGennaro, and Marie Finnegan



Bobby and Roger (Howdy Doody) Muir



Terry and Bill (Sports) Garden - up from Florida



# *The gangs all here!*

Back Row: Mary E. McCarthy, Gary Simpson, Bob (Rip) Rippen, Bill Garden, Roger Muir  
Front Row: Fran DeGennaro, Kathleen Simpson, Marie Finnegan, Ruth Rippen, Terry (Gerbach) Garden, Helen Nicole, Bobby Muir



*Ruth Rippen being entertained by Fran DeGennaro*



*Helen Nicole and Gary Simpson,  
Jist a porch sittin.*



*Listening to the tales of the "old days,"  
Bob Rippen and Kathleen Simpson.*

## *Nostalgia on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee*





by  
Hal Alexander

# THE MACY THANKSGIVING PARADE

Parades like all Sporting Events are always broadcast live. I can think of nothing more boring than watching a basketball game after it's been played or a parade, for that matter, after it's been marched.

The annual Macy Thanksgiving Day Parade was no exception. Broadcast live each year on the holiday morning, it has by now become an American tradition. Other parades are telecast on Thanksgiving but none can compare with the Macy Parade.

This giant spectacle takes place each year along lower Broadway in mid-town Manhattan, with the reviewing stand located directly in front of the main entrance to Macy's huge department store at 34th Street.

A great deal of preparation and planning goes into this yearly event. Yet sometimes in spite of all the precautions taken, things have been known to go slightly awry. Or in some cases, develop into complete and utter chaos.

Rehearsals for this live two-hour program normally begin at about 1:00 AM Thanksgiving morning and continue right up to the 10:00 AM air-time.

The bands, drill-teams, floats-marchers, and balloons are all strategically placed along the parade route, so that the many cameras can pick them up quickly

and easily.

The written copy read by the host and hostess at the reviewing stand is carefully arranged to follow the parade run-down. This makes it absolutely essential that all of the parade elements remain in the precise position assigned to them.

A slip-up of any kind could easily result in a major disaster at the reviewing stand.

I for one was always pleased when I was assigned to this minor "miracle on 34th Street" because since the parade went off the air at precisely 12 Noon, I was happily assured of having Thanksgiving Dinner at home with my family.

Getting the parade off the air was no problem. The trick it seemed was getting it on in the first place.

One year, it darn near didn't make it.

It was a cold blustery Thanksgiving morning in New York City sometime in the mid 1960s. The rehearsal was completed by approximately 9:30 AM and most of the NBC crew gathered inside the giant Mobile Unit to keep warm while they waited to go on the air.

The director, new to parade remotes, sat in the corner of the huge van and looked nervously about.

"You know what we don't have?" he said to no one in particular.

"What's that?" someone asked.

"We're missing an on-the-air monitor."

"What do you mean?" asked one

of the crew.

"Here we are," began the director, "surrounded by well over a million dollars worth of electronic equipment, with absolutely no sure way of monitoring what we're putting out on the air."

"You're right," said the technical director, "but every monitor we have is being used. I don't have any spares. If you had mentioned it to me earlier, I could have gotten an extra one, but I'm afraid it's too late now to do anything about it."

The director was understandably upset. He enjoyed doing the parade. He wanted to view it along with the people at home, commercials and all.

It was the stage manager, Hugh McDermott, who came up with what seemed to be the perfect solution.

At precisely 8:48 AM on Thanksgiving morning, a uniformed security guard was quickly dispatched to unlock a side door of R. H. Macy & Company, with instructions to proceed without delay to the television department and return with a TV set.

It was now exactly 9:56 AM when the guard returned to the Mobile Unit with a small 19" black and white "portable" which was quickly plugged into the truck.

All was now in readiness as the parade was due to begin in less than four minutes.

The opening shot was to be a close-up of the ball on the end of the Drum Major's baton as he held it high in the air. Then on a cue from the director, the arm would



come down, the music would start, the band would move, and the giant procession would be underway.

That was the simple plan. However it was not destined to be that way. With less than one minute to go, the video engineer quite innocently switched the new TV set to CBS. They too were broadcasting a parade that morning. Theirs, originating live from Philadelphia was also scheduled to commence at 10:00: AM.

At exactly fifteen seconds to air, the Drum Major, on instructions from Hughie, raised his baton high above his head and waited.

"Remember everyone", cautioned the director, "be sure to wait for my cue."

The opening would have gone perfectly had it not been for the NBC Peacock.

As everyone knows, in the 1960s, all NBC programs began with a short animated film-clip of a peacock spreading it's wings while a voice announced that "The following program is brought to you in living color on NBC."

This brief film ran exactly eight seconds, which meant that CBS, not committed to any such logo, was on the air that Thanksgiving morning with their parade exactly eight seconds before NBC.

As luck would have it, the CBS parade was also to begin with, (what else) a marching band.

At exactly 10:00: AM the director glanced up at the portable TV set. Instantly the color drained from his face. He stared blankly at the small screen, unable to believe his eyes. A band was marching smartly down the street, horns blaring and colors flying.

"No, no, no," he screamed into his mouth-piece, "get that damn band back and wait for my cue."

Hughie, the stage manager, positioned at the corner of 36th Street & Broadway, a scant few yards from the Drum Major, (his arm still raised high in the air) looked uncertainly about.

"Get that god-damn band back," bellowed the director again. I'm not going to fade-up the picture till that band is back on it's mark."

"What the hell are you talking about?" shouted the harried stage manager. "This band hasn't moved a goddamn inch all morning."

"Don't tell me it hasn't moved" hollered the director, "I can see it half way down the street. I'm not going to do a damn thing until you get that band back."

It was now forty-seconds past 10:00: AM and still no picture from the NBC Mobile Unit.

Les Diamond, the broadcast control supervisor on duty at the RCA Building that morning had no alternative. He quickly ordered a "PLEASE STAND BY" slide to be put aired while he frantically dialed through to the Mobile Unit.

At this precise moment, the director, now realizing he was watching the wrong program, switched the portable TV set to

NBC just as the stand by slide came on.

"We're in luck" he shouted jumping up and down. "It's a good thing we didn't fade-up the picture. The network is in trouble."

It was exactly one minute and five seconds past

10:00 AM when the broadcast supervisor finally got through.

"What the hell are you guys doing down there?" he screamed, "start the damn parade."

"Not until you clear up the trouble on the network," said the director firmly.

"You're the god-damn trouble," exploded the supervisor.

"What about the STAND BY slide?"

"Get the parade moving and I'll drop it." It was exactly 10:02 AM that

Thanksgiving morning before the Drum Major finally gave the opening down-beat.

Right at this point, I would like to say that after that stormy opening, the parade proceeded smoothly without incident for the next two hours.

That's what I would like to say, but I'd be lying.

I believe it's "Murphy's Law" that states, "anything that can go wrong, will go wrong." And Murphy was certainly out in force that Thanksgiving morning.

Everything progressed nicely until the show hit the first commercial.



*D. Duck on Parade*



The plan was to come out of the commercial on a column of 40 of New York's finest Mounted Policemen as the horses high-stepped down the street.

Mid-way through the commercial, the director gave the signal to start the horses. It was quite an impressive sight as the long column of riders advanced slowly down Broadway.

Now, realizing he had cued the horses much too early, the director quickly ordered them back.

"Turn them around," he shouted, "we're still in the stupid commercial."

Waving his arms frantically above his head, the hapless stage manager (in an above and beyond the call of duty gesture) ran out in front of the "advancing army."

Narrowly missing being trampled to death, he somehow managed to stop the horses.

However, with less than twenty seconds remaining in the commercial, it was virtually impossible to turn them completely around.

As the program faded back up that Thanksgiving morning, some thirty million viewers were treated to a beautifully framed shot of 40 horses asses. (41 if you count the director.)

The next major crisis (there were no minor ones that morning) occurred approximately twenty minutes into the parade. It started with a simple five word statement from Hughie, the stage manager.

"Bullwinkle is out of place" he said matter-of-factly.

"What was that?" asked the director.

"I said Bullwinkle is out of place. I don't know how it happened, but he's not where he should be."

"Are you sure?"

"Of course I'm sure." He should be in front of the New Jersey Marching Band, not behind it."

"Then what are you waiting for? Get him back in place" shouted the director.

"Fine," snapped Hughie. "Just how do you propose I do that?"

I believe at this point, a brief explanation might be in order. For the uninitiated — Bullwinkle is a huge inflatable balloon standing several stories high. Filled with helium, it floats high above the city streets. On a windy day, it could take as many as a dozen or more strong men just to hold it down. Maneuvering one of these giant air bags in and around the hundreds of thousands of spectators that line the New York City streets is indeed a monumental undertaking.

It was now the producer's turn to get into the act. Grabbing the head-phone from the director, he shouted into it. "Now listen up. This is your producer speaking. What's all this crap about Bullwinkle being out of place?"

I'm sorry. I have absolutely no idea how it happened."

"We can't have that," continued the producer, "they'll read the wrong damn copy at the reviewing stand and screw up the whole parade. You've got to get Bullwinkle back in place."

"I agree with you," said Hughie, "but how the hell am I going to do that?"

"Where are you now?" asked the producer.

"Corner of 36th Street & Broadway," came the swift reply.

"All right listen to me," began the producer, "I only have time to

say this once. I want you to take Bullwinkle and run him down to Eighth Avenue — make a left on 8th and go down to 35th Street — then make another left and head East. Once you get back to Broadway, you shouldn't have too much trouble getting him back in place."

The head-set went silent for a moment.

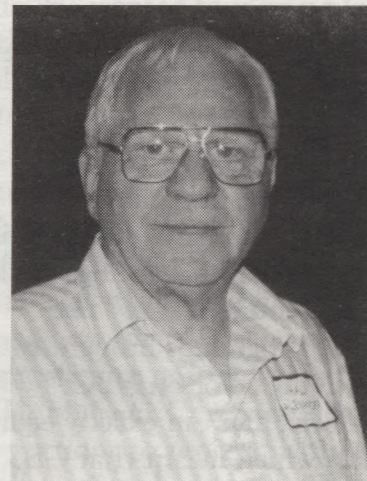
"Hello, Hughie, are you still there?" asked the producer.

"I'm still here."

"Well did you hear what I just said?"

"I heard," said the stage manager slowly, "and just like you, I only have time to say this once —

"GO \*\*\*\* YOURSELF." □



Hal Alexander and his wife, Pat live in Woodland Hills, California. Hal worked on many of the really, really big shows as a stage manager.

Have a Friend Join  
**PEACOCK NORTH**  
\$20 Dues are due  
January 1, 1995



**Some of the 1963 (?) Staff**  
**Were you there?**  
**How many friends and coworkers**  
**can you identify?**





# DISPLACED NEW YORKERS HOLD LUNCHEON IN CALIFORNIA.....

It all began with a phone call from **Pete Peterson** telling me that he and his wife **Peg** were coming out to California to attend a family wedding.

It was nice talking with Pete as I hadn't seen or spoken to him in almost twenty five years. Pete mentioned that he would like to set up a luncheon with some of the ex-NBC New Yorkers now living and working on the West Coast. I told him if it could be arranged, I would love to be a part of it.

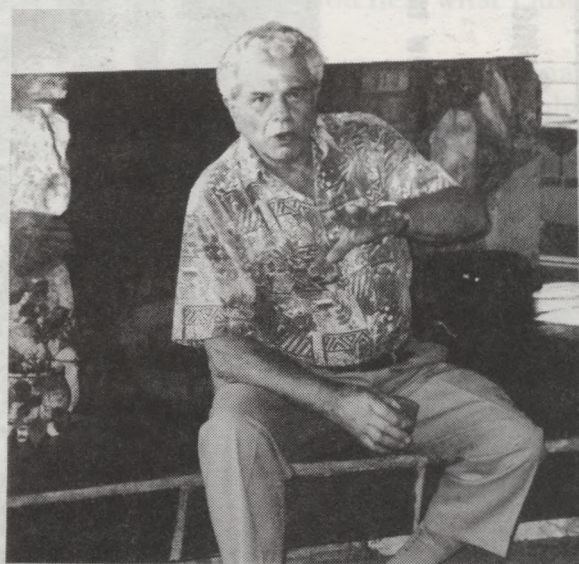
I next received a call from **Vinnie DiPietro** (another old friend from the past) informing me that he was helping Pete set up a luncheon. The affair was set up for Monday, August 1 at 12 Noon at the Red Lion Inn in Glendale, Ca.

My wife **Pat** and I arrived at the hotel and were met by Pete and his lovely wife, Peg. There was **Perry Massey** and his wife, **Pam**. **Fred McKinnon** and his wife, **Marie**. Plus **Bill Klages** and **Bob Hanna**. (Bob an attorney, reshuffled a court appearance for a client that day, flew in to the nearby Burbank airport from northern California.). He looked forward to spending the day with his old friends, and flew back later that day.

We had an absolutely marvelous lunch and much

fun reminiscing with stories of the past. Later the group drove to Vinnie and Marie's house (also in Glendale) for some more delightful conversation before calling it a day.

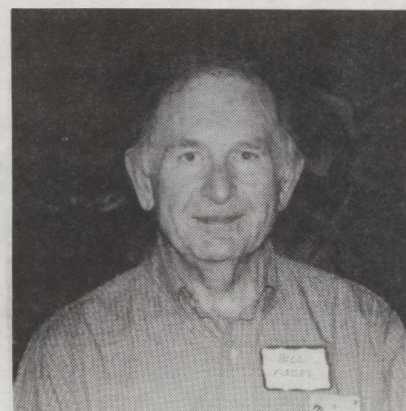
I can't speak for anyone else, but I had a magnificent time. (But I'm sure we all did.) I can only hope that Pete comes from a large family as I can't wait for the next wedding trip. □ (Hal Alexander)



*Vinnie D - holds sway*



*Hal and Pat Alexander, Bill Klages behind Peg Peterson, then Pete and Perry Massey, Fred McKinnon behind Pam Massey, Kathleen McKinnon next to Marie DiPietro, Vinnie, and Bob Hanna.*



*Bill Klages*





*East Meets West at the Red Lion Inn, Glendale, California.  
Is that Peg Peterson behind the camera?*



*Hanna misses a day in court, Marie relaxes.*



*Kathleen and Fred McKinnon, Hal Alexander*

## The Peterson's Go to California

It's been an interesting 5 months since our May PN luncheon in NY. We had the pleasure of seeing some of our PN members in different parts of the country on personal visits during the summer. Our get together in Los Angeles reported by Hal Alexander (previous page) understates how great a pleasure it was to see those good faces of retired NY NBC'ers now living in California. It was as exhilarating for me as anyone there. The lunch at the hotel was a huge success. Vinnie Di Pietro and Marie graciously invited the group to their nearby home afterward.

Thanks to Ed Scanlon and sec'y Aida, coordinating things from New York, we took the guided tour of the Burbank studios, and saw Jay Leno's Tonite Show. (I couldn't help thinking back to my days on the original Broadway Open House shows, followed by The Steve Allen Tonite Show and then Jack Paar's Tonite show which I did, every night, for the five or more years it originated from the Hudson theater. I then followed up on Johnny Carson's shows in 6B, I guess I've done more Tonite shows than anyone would want to think about).

A visit to San Diego was next to "see all the monkeys in the zoo, cause everyday we meet quite a few."

Next we had a delightful time in Las Vegas. We had to make our contribution to their upkeep, but we did enjoy all the shows we saw. (Seigfried & Roy, Jubilee, etc...). It seems the best shows to be seen today are in LV. The sets, costumes, lighting, audio, music and performances are the highest quality exhibitions anywhere. We just don't have that level of excellence on TV productions today like we did years ago. (With the exception of some of the extravaganza AWARD shows.. note... WALT MILLER).

Glad we went, glad to be home,  
in Closter, NJ. (PP) □



## Other Thanksgivings Remembered

by Frank Vierling

I liked doing the Macy Parade, like Hal Alexander (see pg. 20), because you could have dinner at home with family and relatives.

Several of these shows (and side events) stick clearly in my memory, including the one Hal relates.

I was in the TV-Field Group for 18 plus years and probably was involved with the parade each year.

My first was in 1949. NBC was only a bystander. We televised just what happened. We had no part in the parade production. Macy's said Santa would arrive at the store's 34th street entrance by noon.

We used two cameras; one on the street and the other on the Mobile Unit roof. I did the street camera — pushing back and forth, from gutter to center-street for head-on shots of bands and balloons as they rounded the corner at Broadway. This was a very simple hour show with the hope that Santa would appear before we went off the air. For many years Santa seldom got to 34th Street before the show ended.

This, of course, led to NBC's extensive involvement in the parade production so the home viewer could see St. Nick. Even with all NBC's involvement, there were many shows with fleeting glimpses of Santa.

One memorable year, Les Whitehead and I were assigned to the microwave receivers on the RCA roof. Les had a dinner date in the city following the parade so we didn't car pool as usual.

I arrived first at the RCA building observation deck doors. I dis-

covered I didn't have my "special field keys" to get onto the roof, or get into our microwave room which was accessed down the "fire stairs" to the floor above the Rainbow Room.

A worker was outside swabbing the tile deck. He wouldn't open the door. "How do I know you don't want to jump," he shouted through the doors. I waited.

All went well with the parade. It was so nice to just watch and not be out in the cold working at 34th Street.

After the parade, one of us had to stay to man the "Washington to New York" microwave link. It would bring in the Penn-Cornell football game from Philadelphia for the entire network.

At the point of "no return" in the parade coverage, that is, too late to switch equipment in case of a failure, I suggested that Les leave for his dinner. I would remain to cover the football game.

After the parade was off the air, I buttoned up the gear, switched off the lights and let the door lock behind me. I was now eligible for the "Grand DS" award of the year. *I STILL HAD NO KEYS!* The only sure way "out" was down the fire stairs. Up led to a locked door at the observation deck. *Panic time!* I only had 10 minutes to game time!

Up I went. By this time the observation deck was crowded with people. Frantic motions to get someone to open the door were ignored. *Supper panic time!* Finally a passing guard recognized me and let me out. I needed a phone.

Someone had to bring me a key. Time was ticking away.

There was usually a staff photographer around to take your picture with the city as a background — his room was opposite the one I needed to get into. He'd have a phone. But nobody could get up here on time. Maybe I *should* jump!

The photographer not only had a phone — he had a *KEY!*

As I opened the door the phones and PL were ringing off the wall. I ignored them. I fired the gear, skipped the set up procedures, and set the controls to where I thought they should be. Seconds to air time, agonizingly slow, Philadelphia's picture warmed into view, then it faded to "black" and then they switched to the game. We were on the air! Phewwww!

I picked up the still ringing engineering TOE phone. "Thanks for the picture. Where ya been?" drawled Dusty Rhodes from TV Master Control.

I don't remember how I explained it all, but I got through the day and had a great dinner with the family. I never left home without my work keys for the next 30 plus years.

Another year we used the "Creepy Peepie" for the parade. It needed a special, "one-of-a-kind," "hand-made" piece of gear to integrate it into the mobile unit system. All went well with the show. The chain of events that followed are still fresh in my mind.

I was to drive the company station wagon home and take the "special" equipment (small in size) with me. Friday morning I would pick up Al McClellan (Electronic Maintenance) (he lived near me in northern New Jersey) and we



would drive to Philadelphia for Saturday's Army-Navy game. The Philly outlet borrowed a Creepie and Al and me for the day.

Tooling along the West Side Highway, thinking of the awaiting dinner, I had a flat on the elevated two lane stretch near 125th Street!

Cars soon built up behind me and as I created a giant jam. Not to worry. Change the tire. Can you believe it? — a spare but no jack!

I called for help at an emergency phone. Back in the wagon I suffered the "slings and arrows" of the irate drivers and nose thumbing kids in passing cars. 10, 15, 20 minutes no help arrived. Looking back, I noticed there were no more cars coming, then to the front they were slowly passing around a bend-out of sight. A police car passed and disappeared. "The bums," I thought. What is happening?

Alone — not a car in sight, fore or aft. Atom bomb? (This was back in those scary years.)

Ahead, the police car rounded the bend in reverse. "What's your problem?" one of the two officers queried.

I explained my situation. Then

they explained "the" situation. There was a multiple car accident near the George Washington bridge and all entrances to the highway were closed. No tow truck would be coming.

"Do you have a jack?" I asked. They did. Their car was a small austerity version of a police car. With difficulty, their tiny jack got the big wagon off the ground. They did all the work! Gratefully I offered them money for Thanksgiving dinner. They refused! — until I convinced them I could get the money back from NBC.

The jam ahead had cleared and I zipped home to a late dinner.

5am next morning was a real shocker. I couldn't find that "special gear." Did I take it out of the wagon while I hunted for the jack? Did I leave it on the side of the highway?

I called Al McClellan. Not to worry, he assured me, we could stop at Radio City, after 9AM, (we were due in Philly at that time) and pick up the parts to make the equipment needed.

To shorten this up — we got the parts, then to Hertz (the

wagon was leased), got a jack and tire, retraced the ride to the GW Bridge to scan the highway for the lost equipment (not there), got into a horrendous construction traffic jam on the NJ Turnpike, go off, got lost, passed our stadium destination — so we could check into our hotel and have dinner (we hadn't eaten all day). Meanwhile NJ and PA State Police had been alerted to find us. By 9pm we arrived at the stadium to hook the Creepie up to Philadelphia's mobile unit — only 12 hours late.

Saturday the game went well.

Then followed embarrassment beyond belief in explaining over, and over again, to everyone, how I lost this *valuable* equipment.

Epilog — About two years later, Wally Serfin (field engr.) brought me a piece of electronic gear. "Is this what you lost a few years back?" he asked. While cleaning the wagon to return it to Hertz, he had found "*it*" (where the third seat goes) in a narrow space under the floor. It had slid forward, completely out of sight.

By this time *nobody cared*. □

## THERE IS LIFE AFTER NBC

by Phil. Parlante, Former NBC Tech. Mgr.

Elec. Maint. people make terrible video engrs. I was in the freelance world until Oct. '92. My hat is off to everyone out there that does freelancing for a living. It's not easy, and it always seems that when the bills come in, the work doesn't, and vice versa.

After doing a number of really interesting jobs like the "GULF WAR" for NBC, and several spring football games in London with former NBC Sports Director, Ted Nathanson. I kept my ear to the ground and looked for a full time job. As all you PN retirees know 401K and retirement plans are real important. That's when the NBA (Nat. Basket-

After leaving NBC in 1990 I free-lanced as a Tech. Mgr., Electronic Main. and of all things a Video Engr. To all of you ex-video types, I'm here to say that

ball Assn.) came into my life. I got a call from Steve Helmuth who left his producer Mgr job with NBC Sports, for a job in Wash. DC. several years before, but was now a NBA Entertainment VP of Operations. He was looking for a Dir. of Engineering. It was perfect for me. Now I am Director of Engineering for NBA Entertainment, located in Secaucus N.J. in the "Hartz Mountain" area. Our studio is a 75' square with a 35' ceiling equipped with three cameras, Sony audio console and a Grass Valley 300 switcher and 2 channels of DVE. All FOR RENT TO OUTSIDE CLIENTS!

The hardest part in leaving NBC was leaving the people. Of course, most are retired, but I still keep in touch with many that haven't. Occasionally I see some old NBC'ers at Sports/NAB events.

Stay healthy and lets keep in touch through *Peacock North*. □



# STRIKE UP THE BAND — LET'S DANCE



## The BIG BAND DANCE SOCIETY OF New Jersey

*Invites you to dance to  
the Big Band Sounds of  
the George Newell  
Orchestra with Jazz  
Vocalist*

Kathy Levin.

Sunday Afternoons, 1:30 to  
5:00 The Skylands, Route  
10 Randolph, NJ.

Nov. 13 - Dec. 4 - Jan. 15

Feb. 12 - Mar 12 - Apr.

George writes:..... I have now been out of 30 Rock for 13.33 years, and, except for a fortunate tour as a founding station manager of a UHF station in Tampa, have ever since been plying (what's left of) the free-lance trade in North NJ as a Director-writer-producer (and sometimes edit at home).

Without music, life would have been very dull up til now - - - (scholarships and gigs had paid for half of my college days); I can recall one year (of '61, knowing no one in NY) in which there was no chance to play. Nowadays I am prayerfully grateful that I am able to play *somewhere* at least once a week (drums, percussion, keyboard) paid or gratis, or at least help out as a choir singer (or replacement organist).

We presently have a jass/swing dance orchestra of 13 top guys plus a gal singer (who, like most of the guys, has a name band pedigree).

In this artistic and economic climate our goal can only be to work monthly (and most big bands are not even doing that well). This year our '94 World Tour was Nutley — Morristown — Ridgefield Park — Brooklyn — Netcong, with the souvenirs ACR yet to be released. Our sound is much like Woody Herman, Stan Kenton (my icons), Sammy Nestico (Basie), plus some charts that I have written over the years. So far as I know, we are the only working orchestra with *two* airline captains in our ranks (trumpet, tenor sax), and the only roadie/crew chief/sound -mixer Paramedic (my son Scott, who will be remembered as an early 5H cartoon-watcher).

It's been a while since those instant gigs at conventions (with Don Pike — trumpet, Jack Weir — drums, Dave Wilson (SNL) or myself on piano and/or organ (we even had a dance one night in

the 6B prop-room) ... but I'll never forget any of these folks, and still hope to see some of you PN'ers at our dance series this winter!!

All the best,

*George (W2FTP) Newell*



*George lives in Morris Plains, NJ*

**SPECIAL THANKS  
TO PN MEMBER  
DON GOGARTY  
FOR OUR COLOR COVER**



In 1971 the TODAY program went to Romania to telecast for five days and here is **ROMANIA AFTER DARK**.

Nothing. That's what there was to do — nothing. A television crew does not live by work alone and we were anxious for some form of entertainment to while away the evenings. Then came the word — our director Marvin Einhorn and his wife, Annie (both love the theater) learned that there was to be a performance of LA CUCARACHA at the Community Center. Sounded like a Latin production translated into Romanian but what did we care — we could tap our toes in time to the music. Our congenial group gathered with tickets in hand and took off for the Center — why we might even spot some talent for TODAY this evening.

Wait, what is going on here. This appears to be amateur night for the local comrades. We are spotted right away and told to be quiet. We are quiet. We plaster smiles on our faces to look pleasant but it's hard — you see, each performer gets to do four numbers (if at first you don't succeed) and from the program's lineup, we won't get out of here until dawn. Escape is impossible for the doors are locked once the entertainment began — this might be a safeguard or it is truly what we call a "captive audience."

A note is passed to me from Annie "why don't you feign an appendectomy attack and I'll get help" — my only laugh of the evening. Unfortunately, it came at the wrong time and one of the jugglers dropped his balls. Again, we are told to be quiet. I think they

## Yesterdays TODAY

Marian Eiskamp

knew we weren't from the neighborhood.

Tension starts to mount when the comedians come on and we do not laugh in the right places — okay, so who knows Romanian? What's to laugh? Finally, some action in the rear of the auditorium takes the onus from us. The performances are finished — votes counted — and someone was demanding a recount! Woe to her. Must've been an irate Mother to take such a risk. It could mean two weeks in Polesti looking at oil wells.

An argument begins and a recess called to regroup. What a mistake they open the doors and we make a hasty exit amidst boo's. Possibly we were tagged "ugly Americans" but your country can ask just so much of you and it does not include a dusk-to-dawn amateur contest in Bucharest. Does it?

We may be finished for this evening. They won, but word is out that the circus is in town. Do we dare? Oh, it's just a road company of the Moscow Circus but I hear the bears are quite good. We buy tickets.

We regret it — the bears were very old. However, tomorrow is May Day and we have plans.

Today is the Parade. We are all excited about it which shows how daft we are getting. May Day Parade is a big event in Bucharest. What we didn't know was that you do not watch the Parade — you are the Parade. We made a bad mistake by stepping

off the curb and the marshalls would not let us back on the sidewalk. They stood arm to arm and none looked friendly. So I marched with the Bakers Guild; they seemed glad to have me. My friends were with other groups and now I was wondering if maybe we had been in Romania too long — we fitted in. I got tired after awhile and had the unpleasant feeling that this was an all day affair and I wanted out — like now. Every time I reversed my walk a marshall set me in the right direction again. How to get out of here — I had my passport with me and gave it a try. I waved it at the marshall and made motions like a plane — hoping he would think I had to catch a plane back to the USA — although why anyone would give up this parade experience is a moot point. But it worked and I ran back to the Hotel. My cronies were still marching when last seen. One year later I read in the paper they had discontinued the May Day Parade in Bucharest. I wonder why — maybe too many foreigners? □

Marian lives in Greenville, TN

## A REMINDER

Please Send in Your

Dues by January 1

Without your continued

support there can be no

**PEACOCK NORTH**



# "TODAY" Show Move Includes Many Innovations



100 feet east of the old Garroway studio at the RCA Exhibition Hall circa 1952, stands the new 15-million dollar complex to today's "TODAY." Offices are above the studio. Remote cameras on the second floor can view the skating rink and the Rock Plaza area.



Kate Curic and Bryan Gumble at the simple round desk of home base with street audience looking through the bullet-proof glass.

It took 42 years, but the "TODAY" show returned to its roots on the first day of summer, June 21st. Long gone were Garroway, Lescoulie, Flemming, and J. Fred Muggs, and instead we have Gumble and Couric. Bill Cosby showed up outside the window selling flowers (Hokey?), former mayor Ed Koch showed up with bagels for the staff, and a blimp got the overhead shot of 49th street and the crowds. One change is that the studio sound will be piped to the sidewalk viewers — that should help because in the old days they could only wonder what was going on inside.

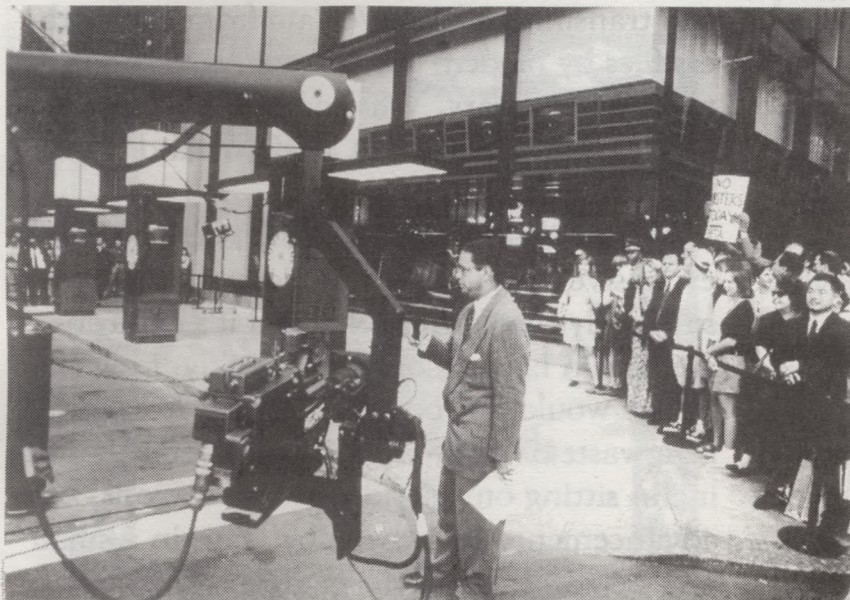


This should make them more a part of the show, and possibly more responsive. Steve Friend was strongly against a suggestion that sounds from the control room also be piped out there. The 15-million dollar studio includes windows of bullet proof glass. An idea probably never considered back in 1952, but sound today. There are no street entrances to the studio.

There will be an amazing number of cameras to shoot "TODAY" inside and out. Five cameras will cover the action inside the studio, two more will be in elevated positions to get high shots, eight cameras will be set up on surrounding buildings, and also three outside cameras atop kiosks to pick up pictures and comments by the crowd. A lot of these cameras, of course, will be remote operated so there is not going to be dozens of NABET camera jobs for this one. □



One of the innovations is the three pylons outside the studio which have monitors broadcasting the show. In the old days the street viewers could not hear the show's audio. Protective overhead shutters drop down after the program ends.



Robot camera takes orders, and get no O.T., as Gumble awaits a cue. One of the viewers that day held up a prominent and cryptic sign reading "No lobsters today, Peta."



## A MESSAGE FROM PETE PETERSON . . . . .



We hope that everyone had a good year in 1994. With the holidays upon us, right from the start, we're wishing everyone :

*MERRY CHRISTMAS  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS &  
HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

### *Let's hope for an even better 1995.*

Yes, changes are happening for many of our members, and some are difficult situations. We receive calls and mail about the complexities of surviving problems relating to health, spouses, family, children, financial difficulties and other conditions as well. There are no easy solutions we know of, and of course we are not strangers ourselves to those types of complications. The motto here is still, "KEEP GOING."

Once again our publishing team has championed the technology at their disposal. Frank and Rippy, both encountered compounded difficulties in using new and modified programs and technologies in putting together this outstanding edition of the PN newsletter. And our thanks to Dan Grabel for his information packed *at 30 rock* column. We are indebted to their generous volunteerism. (You can send in a comment to them along with your 1995 dues, if you care to!)

Technology continues to a leap ahead. It's affects are widespread. We here at the PN group are trying to keep abreast of the progress in computer advancements as much as is practicable. This past summer, all three of us (Rippy, Frank, and I), those who work

on the PN newsletter have upgraded our respective computer systems to take advantage of the new larger 500+ megabyte hard disks. We're using new software systems and programs that are coming on line. We have all upgraded to 486 chips, with new higher clock speeds, and in my system I have installed a CD-ROM unit. I've also joined up with AOL and INTERNET so that I can communicate by E mail (Anyone who wishes to use the system with me can contact me for my E mail address.) All three of us now have some kind of FAX capabilities, either by FAX Modem or stand alone fax/phone systems. We can now zip data and material for review to each other. The programs available to us are mind boggling. Our new and complex newsletter publishing programs are challenging. My two CD-ROM encyclopedia programs have so much information in them that it would literally take a lifetime either to see, read or hear all that is available. In the background the system can simultaneously provide computerized MIDI software music playing your choices of Glenn Miller or whomever as you work away at your processor programs. We can transmit and receive data from each others files by modem ties and augment the material as necessary. What does all this mean. We're partly into TOMORROW land TODAY!

All this and more is available, but, it's at an expensive price. The technology is advancing so rapidly that the systems and it's environments can become obsolete quickly. Low efficiency would not be cost effective. It would be a waste of time, money, and energy, resulting in sitting on the sidelines as "wagons" of advancements passed you by. This in a small way depicts some of the complexities of running an organization or a business. There are



so many possibilities that it becomes difficult to choose the right direction.

At the Twenty Five year Awards ceremony, Bob Wright told the group about the media's outlook and its possibilities. His analogy to the "start up" as positions of wagons in an "Oklahoma" land grab, well depicted the situation. The competition is fierce. His current management is attempting to evaluate and incorporate a long range plan. The strategy would be to set in motion a productive successful course for the future. NBC faces the technological competition of TOMORROW. Whether its leadership can find its way through the morass of the technical/financial explosion while racing down the interactive information / entertainment highway and remain a viable entity will be an interesting saga to watch. Deep pockets are necessary to make all of this continue successfully. As the former cadre of those who did the last fifty years, we wish NBC every success. Our PN retirees group will watch with interest as long as we're around to see the daylights of TOMORROW.

*Regards, Pete Peterson*



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And a special thank you to  
Peg Peterson and Lois Vierling

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*Ed  
Gebhart*

*Jerry  
McGee*

*Gene  
Martin*

*Chuck  
Schneider*

*Wilford  
Howard*

*Irv  
Ehrlich*

*Charles  
Tesser*

Front Row:

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Russo*

*Jerry  
Caruso*

*Sam  
Kirshmann*

*Hal  
Alexander*

*Al  
Camoin*

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