

AIR CHECK

NEWSLETTER OF THE RADIO ENTHUSIASTS OF PUGET SOUND (REPS)

Frequencies-a Loving Critique of OTR

Where are the Feuds of Yesteryear?

I've been thinking about feuds and how I miss them.

W.C. Fields versus Charlie McCarthy.

Jack Benny versus Fred Allen.

Groucho versus Everybody.



Margaret Dumont and antagonist Groucho Marx

Feuds are fun. Contemporary celebrities either have no feuds or have boring feuds. I really don't care who stole Jessica's phone and what Ashley's dog did in Leonardo's house. I want feuds with punch, with power, with insults.

The great radio feuds are part of the grand American tradition of invective. Americans love throwing insults at each other, and have a deep appreciation for someone with a talent for it. American humor, from Mark Twain to Lenny Bruce, from South Park to David Chappelle, is filled with profane and poetic ways of telling someone you don't like them very much.

The golden era of American insult was the first couple decades of the last century, when a whole big mish-mash of cultural forces, including the Jewish theatre, successive waves of American immigrants, and the anything-goes world of Vaudeville ran pell-mell into each other. The resulting collision created American popular culture, as well as re-inventing that comic staple, the double-act.

Oh sure, there had been double-acts as far back as the servants of Shakespeare or even Aristophanes, but our native American soil did something to the two-man comic team: it democratized the concept. The classic Vaudeville double-act isn't a master/servant, it's two evenly-matched opponents, verbally sparring. Free speech and no clear social boundaries meant that two guys standing on a stage could fling insults back and forth at each other at will. What freedom! Try telling a Kaiser or a Czar that he's a knucklehead, and see what happened to you. But in America, anybody can say "nertz!" to anybody else, including the President, and get away with it. (And to those who believe that the office of the President should be above reproach, I say "nertz!")

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Radio comedy was of course the comedy of Vaudeville. When you hear W.C. Fields roar that he's going to turn Charlie into firewood, and McCarthy fires back that he'll put a wick in his mouth and use him as an oil lamp, those jokes were written for a Vaudeville stage.



Fields had a nasty temper and may have truly hated that block of wood, but Benny and Allen were in reality good friends, only scripted rivals. Though their scripted feud did once at least burst out into something more spontaneous. After Allen, a notoriously quick wit, shot out an impromptu zinger at Benny during one on-air showdown, Benny, who never improvised if he could help it, shot back, "you'd never DARE say that if my scriptwriters were here!"

by John Longenbaugh

SHOWCASE MINGLING ROOM:

Throughout the "Kids Again!" Showcase, June 23-24 at the Seattle Center, attendees will want to drop in again and again at the Mingling Room. The Mingling Room ("Mingling" means "Fidalgo" in Freedonian) is Showcase's hub for gathering and commerce — a place to browse, bid, talk, buy and enjoy.

Two features — the Silent Auction and raffle — are described in an accompanying article.

Attendees will also find treasures, memorabilia and people to meet.

Among the offerings:

- Registration — your first stop at Showcase to pick up your registration packet. Staff at the Registration table also handle consignment and REPS Outlet purchases and sell raffle tickets.
- Jim French Productions with recordings of his top-notch, nationally syndicated radio dramas, including "The Adventures of Harry Nile" and "The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" as well as other "new" radio shows and material on old-time radio shows and topics.
- Consignment goods from REPS members, who have been invited to brave their hall closets and pore through their collections to sell some of their gems, with 30 percent of the proceeds to help defray Showcase costs.
- A discovery table with material on other nostalgia organizations and a chance to meet their representatives, such as Sharon Richards of the Tex Ritter fan club.
- The REPS Outlet, offering hundreds of hours of shows on CDs, cassettes, in cassette packages and on vinyl that were donated to REPS.

The Outlet will also be stocked with CDs of uncirculated material from ET discs featuring the likes of Bob Hope, Jack Benny, Phil Harris and Alice Faye, Jimmy Durante, Red Skelton, Eve Arden and Blackstone. Attendees may also buy DVDs of "I Remember Mama" episodes and recreations from the 2005 Showcase.



STRAIGHT ARROW LEADS THE COMANCHES TO VICTORY

And — this just in — a hundred copies of Movie Mirror and Photoplay magazines from radio and Hollywood's golden age will be priced to sell.

- Vinyl expert Doug O'Leary is perusing his warehouse of holdings to select recordings of old time radio and music by the era's artists.

- Laura Leff, president of the International Jack Benny Fan Club, has sent REPS a collection of her books, all autographed, to sell on consignment. They include compilations of her fan club newsletter, "Jack Benny Times" from 1984 to 1995 and from 2000 to 2005; and her episode-by-episode synopsis of Jack's radio show, "39 Forever," Vol. 1 covering 1932 to 1942 and her just-released Vol. 2 from 1942 to 1955.

- And Danean MacAndrews, aka the RadioLady, will again supply REPS with hundreds of OTR MP3 discs, some holding up to a hundred shows each. Two dollars of the \$5 price for each disc stays with REPS.

Danean promises to send an ample quantity of her CD that contains all of the installments of the "Cinnamon Bear" on one disc (episodes of the childhood classic will be recreated at this year's Showcase). She also has a new five-CD set of "Family Theatre" and an "OTR Westerns" CD with 110 shows.

THE STARS ARE COMING! ARE YOU READY?

Friday morning, June 23 isn't that far away. The opening shows for Showcase 2006, Cinnamon Bear and Superman, are all warmed up and ready to go. Are you? All it takes is a phone call or an e-mail to Mary Fichtenberg and you're all signed up.

Do your youngsters know about "Adventures in Odyssey" on Saturday afternoon? Yes, that's THE one and only "Adventures in Odyssey", with the famous team that make it happen, Ilana and Paul Herlinger with us to entertain this young audience as they've been doing for years. For only \$5 they can watch an exciting show with Hollywood's biggest stars. And the parents, and/or grandparents get in free. But be warned....last year the kids packed the place. One of the original "Odyssey" stars, Alan Young, probably won't be with us, but he recommended that we invite Walker Edmiston, who



Terry Mahony with a guest shot by Bryan Haigood.

Friday evening your good friend Jim French is writing a special "The Adventures of Harry Nile" starring Larry Albert, as the one and only.

Saturday morning will open up with "I Remember Mama, starring the original stars Rosemary Rice, Hal Stone and Dick Van Patten.

Then the final episode of Superman and later The Cinnamon Bear will return with some real surprises. Finally, Dinner with the Stars then here comes Dick Van Patten in Duffy's Tavern.

All this and more for....\$118. For Friday only \$49..... Saturday only \$69, that includes having dinner with your favorite star.

Don't be left out.....contact: Mary Fichtenberg, (206) 789-2319

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Published by the Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound
9811 NE 139th St, Kirkland WA 98034-1806

Volume 15, Number 12

May 2006



Homestretch for Showcase

June 23-24 seemed far off when we finished the 2005 Showcase. Now, those dates are racing toward us. The plans and the program are in place with any necessary adjustments to be made along the way.

According to Mike Sprague "With every Showcase, we find that during the last few weeks the pace really picks up." He continued, "From health issues to a new program opportunity; from details with a caterer to arrangements with the site managers...many invisible things are going on."

Actors

Honorary members who will be with us are: Larry Albert, Dick Beals, Frank Bresee, Donald Buka, Frank Buxton, Jim & Pat French, Paul Herlinger, Tommy Cook, Herb Ellis, Rosemary Rice, Hal Stone, Gil Stratton, Jr., Ginny Tyler and Dick Van Patten. First time guest Walker Edmiston will join in too.

The warm and gracious Alan Young has major back problems that now preclude travel of any kind. Alan sent his regrets, saying, "I truly find the Seattle group to be the friendliest I've experienced anywhere."

The distinguished group listed above will be joined by a number of talented folks, including 4 child actors who have been carefully auditioned and approved.

The Program

In streamlined fashion, here is what attendees will be experiencing, still subject to change:

Friday

- Kids' Radio Shows In the Movies
- What About The Cinnamon Bear?
- Re-creation-The Cinnamon Bear #1
- Re-creation- The Adventures of Superman #1
- Spotlight on Dick Van Patten
- Don't Try This At Home (fun audience involvement)

- Flashback With Frank Bresee (Radio history coming alive+ unseen video of radio shows)
- Re-creation- Family Theatre, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
- East Coast/West Coast Radio Roundtable
- Re-creation-The Adventures of Harry Nile

Saturday

- Flashback With Frank Bresee (more fascinating, behind the scenes info)
- Re-creation- I Remember Mama
- Re-creation-The Adventures of Superman #2
- Behind the Scenes In Odyssey-With Producer Marshal Younger on the phone
- Re-creation-Adventures in Odyssey
- Cold Read with the Pros-Buck Rogers
- Improv Radio with The Edge-Side aches guaranteed
- Social Hour
- Dinner & Awards
- Re-creation- Cinnamon Bear 2
- Voices You Know
- Re-creation- Duffy's Tavern
- Photo Session
- Adjourn

Mike Sprague

EXPERIENCE DRAMATIC RADIO AT ITS FINEST SHOWCASE 2006

Presented by The Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound
June 23 - 24, 2006 at the Seattle Center

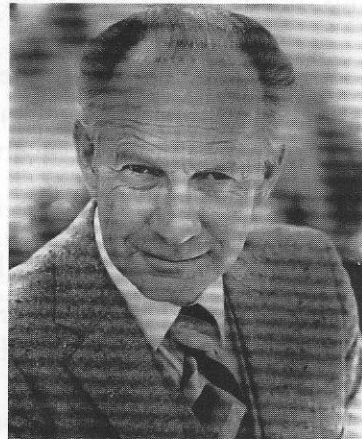
WHO IS COMING

Dick Van Patten and Alan Young will be part of the professional group on hand to re-create old time radio shows and to reminisce a lot. The cast will also include Dick Beals, Donald Buka, Herb Ellis, Tommy Cook, Rosemary Rice, Harlan (Hal) Stone, Frank Bresee, Gil Stratton Jr, Larry Albert, Frank Buxton, Jim and Pat French, Paul and Ilona Herlinger, & Esther Geddes McVey.



Dick Van Patten

Walker Edmiston



REGISTRATION

You can register for Friday only, Saturday only, or both. We are also offering a 3 hour 'sampler' on Friday afternoon and an Adventurers in Odyssey option on Saturday.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

REPS Member Yes _____ No _____

____ Sampler only @ \$19 per 1:30 - 4:30 Friday \$ _____

____ Odyssey only @ \$ 5 per 1:15 - 2:15 Saturday (Adults free with child) \$ _____

____ Friday Only @ \$49 per 10 am - 9 pm (no meal) \$ _____

____ Saturday Only @ \$69 per 10 am - 9 pm, (includes dinner) \$ _____

____ Friday Saturday everything @ \$118 per (includes dinner Saturday) \$ _____

Except for Adventures in Odyssey, prices shown are for REPS members and their guests. Non members please add \$5 for Friday or Saturday all day or \$10 for the Friday/Saturday everything.

Total \$ _____

Checks payable to REPS, Mail to:
REPS Showcase % Mary Fichtenberg,
109 NW 83rd St, Seattle WA 98117
206-789-2319 fichtenberg2319@msn.com

SCHEDULED EVENTS

I Remember Mama, The Adventures of Superman, The Cinnamon Bear, Adventures in Odyssey, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, The Adventures of Harry Nile, Duffy's Tavern, Improv Radio. Also panels, workshops, vendor room, and radio related displays.

WANT MORE INFORMATION

www.repsonline.org

Check One Only U.S. Funds Only. Please DO NOT send cash.

Check Enclosed Money Order Enclosed



VISA MC AMEX Discover

Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date ____/____ *Signature _____

(Signature required for credit card)

SILENT AUCTION/RAFFLE:

Once again, REPS members, friends and guests have cracked open their closets and filled the Silent Auction to brimming for the latest Showcase, this year with the theme "Kids Again!" June 23-24 at the Seattle Center.

The fundraising mainstay in the Mingling Room ("Mingling" means "Fidalgo" in Freedonian) will this year be joined by a raffle in which attendees try for an item of memorabilia at \$1 a ticket.

Sharing the Mingling Room will be Registration, vendors, consignment sales and the REPS Outlet Store. See the accompanying article for details.

A sampling of the Silent Auction goods includes the following:

- The absolutely, positively last chance for fans of "Archie Andrews" to get the two-volume, four-CD "Archie" set; REPS sold the special edition at last year's Showcase, down to this one lone set. Like the others, it bears autographs from the three principals of the show: Bob Hastings, Rosemary Rice and Hal Stone.

- They also inked their names on four of the transcription discs that held the previously "lost" shows for the "Archie" collection. Two of the framed discs were claimed in last year's Silent Auction to bidders who paid \$100 and \$125, respectively. This year, one of the remaining two will be in the Silent Auction and, the second, in the raffle.

- Another REPS special edition, the DVD "Looking Back," shown at 2005 Showcase, will also be in the auction. It features moments and memories with our radio actor and actress friends from Showcases through the years.

- Books have always been big at the Silent Auction. This year's contributions include a biography of that eternal kid, Walter Tetley; a copy of "The Great American Broadcast," signed by author Leonard Maltin; Frank Bresee and Bobb Lynes' "Radio's Golden Years: A Visual Guide to the Shows and the Stars"; "Dr. Christian's Office," written by the show's scriptwriter, Ruth Adms Knight, and star, Jean Hersholt, and inscribed especially for the REPS auction by

the show's announcer, Art Gilmore; the "Quiz Kids' Blue Book" of questions and answers from 1941; and Vol. 6 from the "Building America" 1941 illustrated series that examines radio.

- Photos, we have photos. Bid to win a photo of your favorite star whether that star may be Fibber and Molly, Bing and Bob, Jack and Fred, Edgar and Charley, Gildy, Jack Webb or Gene Autry. You'll also find several original, autographed photos donated by Anne Whitfield Phillips.

- Old time radio on CD and cassette tape in the auction includes collections of "Lum & Abner," "Abbott & Costello," "Amos n' Andy," "Fibber McGee & Molly" and "The Shadow."

- Fans of "Vic & Sade" will want to check out a movie poster advertising Four-Fisted Frank Fuddleman's latest adventure, signed by Billy Idelson, who played Rush on the show. Billy's autograph also appears on the remainder of a cigar he smoked during his visit to Seattle last year.

Other Silent Auction offerings include:

- A Tex Ritter double-feature or two for Showcase attendees who spent their childhoods at the Saturday matinees.



30. (Left) Mr. Fred Allen, seated at the head of the table, confers with his writers before the script for his weekly broadcast over the network is whipped into shape. (Below) The Allen show is on the air, and Allen in his famous nasal voice is "pulling a gag." (Right) Engineers in the main control room.

COURTESY COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM AND NATIONAL BROADCASTING

- A two-record set of Fanny Brice as Baby Snooks, teaching kids to be well-mannered boys and girls.

- A five-DVD set of 12 "The Lucy Show" episodes, including a trip to the Jack Benny vault.
- And for those mystic messages, Chandu's Magic Slate.

Among the selections at the raffle are:

- A framed picture, copyrighted 1949 by the National Biscuit Co., captioned "Straight Arrow Leads the Comanches to Victory."
- A 1948 RCA Victor tabletop radio in gorgeous chocolate-brown bakelite.
- The aforementioned "Archie" transcription disc.
- A book about Jack Webb and "Dragnet," with autographs by REPS actor friends who appeared on the radio and TV versions of the show.

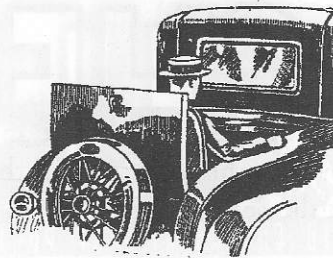
The Silent Auction will run all day Friday and Saturday. A minimum opening bid will be noted on the bid form for each item. Once someone enters this bid sum, anyone can up the ante with a higher bid.

Each item will be sold to the highest bidder with proceeds going to fund Showcase.

The auction will close about 5:35 p.m. Saturday. Attendees emerging from the last program of the afternoon will have several minutes to make final bids before the countdown to auction's end. Once the auction closes, everyone will be asked to clear the area so auction personnel can tally the bids and ready the items for their new owners. Bidders may check back in just before dinner or after dinner to pick up and pay for their items.

If you have any questions about auction procedure, seek out auction coordinator Terry Campbell.

The raffle will be held about 12:05 p.m. Saturday. Attendees will be able to buy tickets for \$1 each to place in the raffle for the item of their choice. Ticket buyers are reminded to write their name on the back of their tickets. People with last-minute Silent Auction items or who wish to donate items for next year's event are asked to contact Terry Campbell by mail at 710 S. Fifth Ave., Yakima, WA 98902, by e-mail at tcampbell@yakimaherald.com or by phone at (509) 457-5351.



Rumble Seat

Franz

With getting ready for Showcase 2006, *Kids Again*, this year, it has been a little of a chore to get all the library copies and the backup copies of the latest CD library offerings ready. If you want to order from the library pages in this issue, they may not be ready for circulation for another week. We usually have them ready for the Anderson's to pick up at the board meeting.

Due to the efforts of *Our Miss Brooks* fans, dates of the AFRS and other undated *Our Miss Brooks* episodes have been identified. By comparing the first few words of the program with the existing scripts, each episode now has a date. We found three duplicate episodes in our CD library. Those duplicates have been replaced with 'new' episodes, perhaps not as good in sound but delightful to the *Our Miss Brooks* fan nevertheless. Rather than reprint that portion of the CD library here, you can look at the REPS web page, -->www.repsonline.org<-- for the corrected list and dates. There are a small number of previously dated episodes that were incorrectly dated have been corrected also. If you cannot use the web page, write to us (address below) and we will mail you the listings.

Plans for Showcase 2006 are reaching a fever pitch now, the month before the event, but even so we must look ahead to a Showcase in 2007. Because of remodel plans for the Seattle Center and a more convenient hotel location, we are going to have Showcase 2007 at the Coast Hotel in Bellevue. Everything, rooms, events, dining facilities, will be contained in one building with lots of free parking. You may recall we used this hotel when the Showcases were held at the Overlake Hospital a number of years ago. This will be a class event. Mark your 2007 calendar for June 29th and 30th, 2007. Watch for more details as plans are formulated.

Aircheck is created on a Mac G4 computer with Adobe Indesign CS and Adobe Photoshop CS. Most of the text is *Adobe Garamond Pro* at 12 points with the headlines at 12, 14 and 18 points bold. If you would like a copy on a CD, write to Frank Rosin, 9811 NE 139th St, Kirkland WA 98034.

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May 2006

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480-474-4480



Schedule

June 2, 2006 Board Meeting

June 3, 2006 Regular Meeting Norse Home
David VanMeter, Tribute to
Rhoda Williams

June 23 - 24, 2006, Showcase 2006 at the Seattle
Center

No July Board or Regular Meeting at Norse Home

August 19, 2006 Potluck Picnic at Anderson's

Unless specified otherwise, Board Meetings are held in the Board Room of the Comfort Inn/Suits, Seattle, and start at 6:30 pm. Regular Membership Meetings are held at the Norse Home, Seattle, and start at 2:00 pm. That is the first Saturday of each Month.

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