



**RETURN WITH US
NOW...**

RADIO HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COLORADO

Volume 33, Number 6

June, 2008

✓ **Now, hear RHAC on the Internet - any day, any time!**
✓ **Meet the RHAC Librarians**
Turn to Page 3 and read all about it

Man who spoke for Superman and others is still jabbering away

By DONALD P. MYERS

As a follow up to last month's conclusion of the great Superman article by Paul Barringer, we thought that it would be fitting to run a reprint of a biographical sketch of our super hero's radio announcer - Jackson Beck.

Reprinted from the RWUN April 1991 issue, and originating from the Milwaukee Journal. Jackson Beck passed away at 92 in July of 2004.

NEW YORK, N.Y. - He's a wrinkled old rooster from the radio days with a lot of sock left in his cock-a-doodle-doo. Jackson Beck is the Voice, and it's still got the kick of a couple of fingers of bourbon, which he splashes into a glass at sundown, 15 floors above a busy Metropolis. He was Superman's sidekick 50 years ago, and his was the voice of the Cisco Kid and Popeye's archenemy, the bully Brutus. So he's not the impressed by any old hero. "Woody Allen's a genius, but he's been a jerk," Beck growls, his Camel dangling. "And besides, he's no taller than I am."

Maybe mild manners don't rub off on anyone wearing blue tights.

"Woody Allen never said hello, never said goodbye," says Beck, who narrated "Take the Money and Run," Allen's first film "Four months of shooting, the only thing the ever said to me was, 'Do it again, only faster.' when I walk the hell out, I'm livid."

If a tarnished old hero walks on feet of clay, like the rest of us, his shoes are size 13s. "For a little guy, he's got the biggest feet in the broadcast business," says Peter Magelof, an NBC producer. "When he walks into a room, his shoes come in five minutes before he does."

When you meet Jackson Beck, you understand that he's a little like Superman, an American myth. Nobody leaps tall buildings at a single bound anymore - at least not on New York's Upper East Side.

His first job was impersonating stars like Fredric March and Edward G. Robinson for recorded dramatizations of the now movies. His first running radio show was a soap called "Myrt and Marge," in 1931.

If Beck has been in the business for 60 years, how old can he be?

Continued on page 4

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO

PO BOX 1908, Englewood CO 80150 (303) 761-4139 -

Dedicated to the preservation of old-time radio programs, and to making those programs available to our members

Old-Time Radio is Alive and Well in Colorado!

KEZW 1430 AM	"When Radio Was", with Chuck Schaden	Weekdays, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
Pirate Radio 104.7 FM and www.pirate1047.com	"Radio Memories" (Greeley)	Sunday, 6:30 - 12:00 PM
KNUS 710 AM	"Radio Revisited"	Weekdays, 10:00 - 11:00 PM
KRMA TV Channel 6	Secondary Audio Program (SAP), "Tribute to OTR"	Sunday, 2:00 PM

Hear RHAC on the web, 4th Saturday of every month, at 9:30pm Mountain time at;
<http://www.yesterdayusa.com/saturdaylive.htm>

**RHAC Web Site - <http://www.rhac.org> RHAC Email - rhac_otr@yahoo.com
RHAC POD Cast of Internet Shows - www.rhac.libsyn.com - any day, any time!**

RETURN WITH US NOW... is the official publication of the Radio Historical Association of Colorado, Inc., a nonprofit organization. Cost of membership is \$25.00 for the 1st year with \$15.00 for renewal. Each member in good standing has full use of the club resources. For further information contact anyone listed below. Any mention of a product in **RETURN WITH US NOW...** does not constitute an endorsement by RHAC.

President:	Larry Weide	5270 E. Nassau Cir. Englewood, CO 80113	(303) 758-8382
Vice-President:	<i>Open Position</i>		
Secretary:	<i>Open Position</i>		
Treasurer:	Maletha King	900 W. Quincy Ave. Englewood, CO 80110	(303) 761-4139
Newsletter:	Carol Tiffany	1394 Golf Vista Court N. E., Palm Bay, FL 32905	(321) 723-7803 ctiffany@worldnet.att.net
Talking Newsletter	B.J. George	Email - bj39@tds.net Talking Newsletter egroup - http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rwun	
Membership:	Maletha King	PO BOX 1908 Englewood, CO 80150	(303) 761-4139
Tape Donations:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave. #503 Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
	Herb Duniven	4184 S. Syracuse St. Denver, CO 80237	
Directors at Large:	David L. Michael, Herb Duniven		

LIBRARIES

Reference Material:	Bill McCracken	7101 W. Yale Ave. #503	Denver, CO 80227	(303) 986-9863
Logs & Scripts:	Fred Hinz	c/o RHAC PO Box 1908	Englewood, CO 80150	
Open Reel Tape:	Maletha King	900 W. Quincy Ave.	Englewood, CO 80110	
Cassette Tape:				
#1 (1-499)	David Gatch	PO Box 70	Glen Haven, CO 80532	(970) 577-0805
#2 (500-999)	David Gatch	PO Box 70	Glen Haven, CO 80532	(970) 577-0805
#3 (1000-2000)	Dave Logan	5557 S. Sherman Cir.	Littleton, CO 80121	(303) 730-1430
#4 (5001-up)	Mika Rhoden	3950 W. Dartmouth Ave.	Denver, CO 80236	(303) 937-9476
CD Library:	Thomas Woessner	9693 W. Euclid Dr	Littleton CO 80123-3192	(303) 936-4643

2008 Convention Schedules

Memphis Film, Radio and TV Festival, June 5 - 7, 2008; Whispering Woods Hotel, Olive Branch Mississippi; Contact R Nielsen, Box 87, Conway, AR 72033 www.memphisfilmfestival.com; e-mail rnielsen@alltel.net

33rd Friends of Old-time Radio Convention, Oct 23 - 26, 2008 Holiday Inn, Newark, NJ; For info: Jay Hickerson, 27436 Desert Rose Ct, Leesburg, FL 34748 (352) 727-6731, JayHick@aol.com, web site: <http://www.fotr.net>

CREDIT: This publication may, under license, use objects and/or images from one or more of the following: Lotus Wordpro97 and Corel Gallery. These software packages are protected by the copyright laws of the United States, Canada and elsewhere. This publication is copywrited 2008, with all rights reserved.

RHAC Internet Shows are now being POD-Casted

By Larry Weide, Pres. RHAC

No doubt that by now you've all seen our newsletter's page 2 schedule indicating when you can hear the RHAC internet show - "OTR From The Rockies". A lot of you have actually "tuned in" to hear it in whatever time zone you're at. However, some of you have also told us that it's not always convenient to be at your computer, ready to spend an hour of listening, at our show's schedule time.

Well, do we have a solution for you! You can now listen to the RHAC show on any day and at any time. These shows are now being archived for listening on demand. The term POD Casting simply describes how the internet site delivers and downloads the show files, to be played on any computer that supports mp3 files - which is virtually every computer.



Fred Hobbs - show host

Here's how to listen;

- Point your browser to www.rhac.libsyn.com.
- Under "Categories", at the top/left, click on "Old Time Radio" for the complete list of shows.
- Click on the black **POD** icon next to the show of your choice. If a window comes up, asking how to download, choose the option to use your media player - whichever one that may be.

Some browsers may wait to start playing until after the entire file has been loaded- if so it'll be just over a minute on a DSL line.

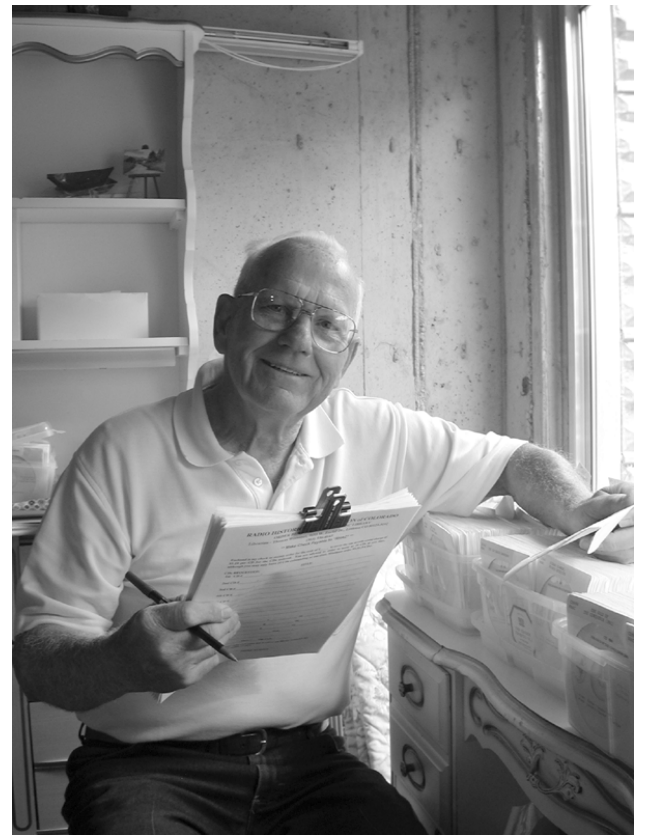
I would be very interested in hearing from you folks about what you think of this from of media distribution. Email me at rhac_otr@yahoo.com.

Good listing to all.

RETURN WITH US NOW...

Meet the RHAC Libraiians This Month Tom Woessner

By Larry Weide, Pres. RHAC



On most any day of the week you'll find our librarian, Tom Woessner, almost anywhere but at his desk. Tom has taken his retirement and turned it into a collage of volunteering, grandparenting and part time work. But you know the old saying; If you want something done, ask a busy man. So Tom has generously taken his love for old time radio and expanded it to being the librarian of our newest and fastest growing offering for our members - the CD library.

Tom followed his high school sweetheart, and soon to be wife, Claire to Denver from Pennsylvania in the early 1950s. They have a son and daughter and two grandchildren. Tom worked for the Denver Water Board for many years until retirement. This couple now enjoy the convenience and quiet living that their Littleton Colorado home, and being close to the kids, afford them.

Thanks Tom, we very much appreciate your service.

"I won't tell you," he says, "because I don't want to be the victim of age discrimination. If I want a two-year contract, someone might think I won't be around that long. I don't feel my age anyway. I look in the mirror every morning and I see Cary Grant"

The man who sold us Kellogg's Pep - plus truth, justice and the American way - is still a salesman, just trying to make a buck. Like Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman," Beck is way out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine.

"I can sell anything, anywhere," the old rooster crow, ker-thunking around in his kitchen. "I've sold everything from US Steel to Ex-Lax."

Yesterday's man of steel may be a little rusty now, but if you listen closely these days to radio and television, you'll hear Jackson Beck selling everything from cough syrup and cockroach killer to pizza and bellyache medicine.

"Look! Up in the Sky! It's a bird! It's a Plane! It's Superman!" he used to tell us every day after school. Now he tells a different story: "My job is to sell a carload of

whatever the hell it is, to clean out the supermarket shelves, and get them replenished. People like me are responsible for thousands of jobs, because if we don't sell that merchandise, the company goes to hell. I'm an advertising man, and I treat my voice as a business. People who treat it as art don't make any money."

When we sent in all those box tops to get all those secret decoder rings that turned our fingers green maybe we should have known that the buck was behind it. Beck says that he made \$11.88 for a

15-minute radio show 53 years ago. Now he rides the red-eye from coast to coast, making commercials and a lot of money.

"I'd swap checks with him," says one of his agents Peter Sawyer, vice president of Fifi Oscar Associates, a New York talent agency. "He's one of four or five prototype male sounds in the broadcast advertising industry. Everybody wants the Jackson Beck sound."



Power is part of it. "We want the tough-guy sound," says 34-year-old Peter Magelof of NBC, where Beck promotes National Football League telecasts and network boxing. "When you hear his voice get way, way down, you expect someone who's six-foot-eight and three hundred pounds. But when he opens the door, there he is, this little guy who worked at NBC before I was born."

It's hard to imagine a grown man with gray hair perched by his living-room window and saying, "Up, up and away!" But there he is, surrounded by 14 potted plants, rerunning his radio days that started

when he answered an ad in the New York Graphic.

In those days, radio was the medium of popular culture. Radio held the family and the country together. "We know that the bad guy was going to take the rap and the good guy was going to win and then walk off into the sunset - and please tune in tomorrow," Woody Allen told the Manchester Guardian three years ago when his film "Radio Days" was released, in the interview when he talked about Beck. "Those were wonderful times, and they're gone forever."

Beck learned the radio business in the days of Tammany Hall. "We were better off back then," he says now. "They stole a helluva lot, but at least you got something for your money."

Yesterday's boy or girl was glued to the radio, just as they're stuck to the tube today.

"It was elemental theater," Beck says. "Acting had to be bravura, black and white, simple - pure-white heroes and heroines, all virgins. You knew when you picked up a script that you were going to be a hero or the villain by the name of your character. The hero was always John Noble. You avoided recognizable locales because there might be somebody from there who'd sue. So the heroines always came from Greendale or Fort Mudge. And if you were playing Banker Blackstone, you know you were a bastard from the word go."

They were knocking off people right and left in those days, and there were only a few basic plots and motives. Beck says it's the same thing today on TV.

"I'm amused when I watch 'Murder, She Wrote,' because they use the same damned plots I played 40 and 50 years ago in radio - sex, money, jealousy, revenge, the butler did it. It's easy to figure out, but you've got a half-hour to fill, so you drag it out."

Television may have helped kill radio drama, but Beck says the new medium doesn't match up with the old one. "Listening to radio was like group meditation or a moment of silence in church. You don't get the same effect with TV, unless you're very drunk."

They call Milton Berle "Mr. Television" and some say Beck is "Mr. Radio." He'd like to resurrect radio drama, but he doesn't think that will happen. "There's an audience for it. Public radio has proved that. WNYC has a drama series now. WBAI plays that old shows on Sundays. Radio drama got frozen out because it doesn't pay. People just aren't going to leave their tubes, their VCRs - in their cars, yes, but not at home. "So Jackson Beck - who's national vice president of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists - is left with some memories:

Popeye was a wimp. "He died a couple of years ago, fellow named Jack Mercer. He was the cleverest voice man I ever knew. He could do more than Mel Blanc. He played animals. He did motors. He was a little wimpy guy who never had the guts to ask for the money he deserved. I had to do it for him."

The actor who played Superman on the radio took catnaps on the piano. "Bud Collyer was a

brilliant guy with a dark side, politically. He was one of the major movers in the blacklisting of actors in the '50s. In the studio, if we had 10 minutes off, he'd go sound asleep on the piano, then he'd wake up ready to take on the world. That's what Superman was supposed to do, I guess."

Beck was best man at the Gramercy Park wedding of the man who would up playing Superman on TV. "A friend of mine thought it would be a good idea if I stood up for an actor named George Reeves. I'd never seen him before. The wedding takes about 10 minutes. The next day he flies out to the West Coast. Six months later, he's flying around on the TV screen, I never saw him again. Seven years later, he killed himself."

On the soap "Joe and Ethel Turp, "based on characters created by Damon Runyon, Beck played a few scenes flat on his back on a bed. "My wife on the show had to wake me up for breakfast, so the director thought it would sound more realistic if he hung a microphone over the bed. When I turned over, you could hear the bedsprings creak. It played like a dream."

On "Mark Trail," Beck was the announcer whose opening became the show's best-remembered feature - long before the Environmental Protection Agency was created: "Guardian of the forests! Protector of wildlife! Champion of man and nature! MAAAARRRRKKKK TRAIL!"

It's a good thing the wrinkled old rooster from the radio days still has a lot of sock left in the cock-a-doodle-do. If he didn't stay busy, he says, he'd go crazy at home at night. "There are times when I wish I had somebody to talk to," Beck says, "and if there's one thing I like to do, it's talk."



New in the Tape and CD Libraries

by Maletha King

This month we are offering a series of programs from the 1950's that certainly fit into today's events. "Journey Into Space" was just the figment of someone's imagination, but today it is a real event. Although we do not have any encounters with the residents of Mars, they were certainly a big part of the thoughts of the writers in 1956. In the Denver area, we have Lockheed-Martin who built the latest space vehicle, Phoenix, for our continued search for other signs of life in the universe.

From space endeavors, we continue on to offer some other great shows such as "Mr. President", This was a show that dramatized little known parts of the lives of our Presidents. Then we move on to "Cavalcade of America" - one of my favorite shows. The parts in 'Cavalcade were often played by some of the greatest actors of the times and they produced very intriguing shows for your enjoyment.

Homebodies

By David Michael

David, our good friend and RHAC member, wants to know; Who resided at or in, or what program was set in, or what was at?

1. 79 Wistful Vista
2. Summerfield
3. 1879 Rogers Road
4. Yale
5. 14th & Oak (find at least two)
6. Town Hall
7. Monroe
8. Glenn Falls
9. Big Town
10. Havana
11. Three Rivers
12. Niagara
13. Blair Hospital
14. 3rd Ave. In New York City
15. Sandy Harbor
16. Sea Cliff
17. Hudson High
18. Ivy, USA
19. Hartville
20. 24 St. Anne's Place

Answers to Homebodies Quiz

1. Fibber McGee & Molly
2. Great Gildersleeve
3. Ozzie & Harriet Nelson
4. Frank Meriwell
5. Drugstore, Department Store, Restaurant (Everything in Wistful Vista was at this address)
6. America's Town Hall Meeting Of The Air
7. Betty & Bob
8. Big Sister
9. Steve Wilson (Big Town)
10. Bold Venture
11. The Brighter Day
12. Buck Rogers
13. Dr. Kildare
14. Archie's Tavern
15. Ethel & Albert
16. One Man's Family
17. Jack Armstrong
18. Dr. & Mrs. William Todhunter Hall (Halls of Ivy)
19. Just Plain Bill
20. Mr. & Mrs. North

RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLORADO

ORDER BLANK FOR COMPACT DISC LIBRARY

Librarian - Thomas Woessner, 9693 W. Euclid Dr., Littleton CO 80123-3192

(303) 936-4643

**** Make Check Payable to "RHAC" ****

Enclosed is my check or money order for the sum of \$_____ to cover the one month rental charge of \$1.10 per CD for the CDs ordered. You are allowed to order as many as 10 CDs at one time, although you may only have 10 CDs outstanding at one time. Minimum order \$5.50 (5 CDs).

CDs REQUESTED:

TITLE:

1st CD # _____ / _____

2nd CD # _____ / _____

3rd CD # _____ / _____

4th CD # _____ / _____

5th CD # _____ / _____

6th CD # _____ / _____

7th CD # _____ / _____

8th CD # _____ / _____

9th CD # _____ / _____

10th CD # _____ / _____

Alternates:

1 _____ 4 _____ 7 _____ 10 _____

2 _____ 5 _____ 8 _____ 11 _____

3 _____ 6 _____ 9 _____ 12 _____

Ship To: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

I do hereby agree to abide by the RHAC rules and agree not to sell or use library materials for monetary gain, and I will return the CDs within 30 days.

SIGNATURE

PHONE NUMBER

**RADIO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION of COLO.
PO BOX 1908 ENGLEWOOD, CO 80150**

FIRST CLASS MAIL