

Luncheon every *third* Tuesday, 11:30 A.M.

This month: **MAY 18, 2010**

Next month: **June 15, 2010**

Gallery Restaurant - Club Room

Fargo Holiday Inn

MikeNotes Reprise

News & Memories for WDAY AM-FM & WDAY-WDAZ-TV Alumni

Web archive of all issues <http://sites.google.com/site/wdayalumni>

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Issue #18
April, 2010



Heere's Howard!

Editor's note: The above photo and the following article is from my Wordchipper column, a weekly feature in the F-M Extra newspaper.

If you watched WDAY-TV, Channel 6, from the 1960s through the early '90s, you very likely remember hearing and seeing the work of Howard Campbell. During the early '60s, he moved from doing radio announcing to television "booth duties," the voice you heard on many commercials, station breaks and various off-camera introductions.

Howard appeared regularly on-camera too, doing the Saturday evening news and Sunday night sports. He often filled-in for the late sports directors Bill Weaver and Boyd Christenson and for veteran news anchor Marv Bossart.

For those of you who have wondered where Howard is, I'm happy to report that he's very much alive and well right here in River City, enjoying a retirement he began in 1992 after 34 years with WDAY. In fact, I see Howard every month at the WDAY "Alumni" luncheons, which I attend because of my time with the station from the mid-1960s until 1975.

Born in 1927, Howard knows a lot of broadcasting history, and I enjoy hearing his anecdotes and other memories from an era in local TV and radio that came long before today's fractionalization of the media audience and the resulting over-commercialization of programming.

Howard is a native of Rice Lake, Wis., but was raised in Chetek, a sport-fishing and resort-type community situated in the midst of six lakes in the west-central part of the state. Think Detroit Lakes or Park Rapids in Minnesota. He was in the U.S. Navy during WWII, serving from 1944-46. After his discharge, Howard went to school in Minneapolis at the American Institute of the Air, which later became Brown Institute, a popular school at that time for many upper midwest broadcasters. Following graduation he joined the Alexandria, Minn., radio station as a staff announcer and, during his time there, he listened to WDAY, the preeminent regional station. He started to think about one day working at that larger station.

Following several positions at various radio stations in the Midwest, Howard saw an ad in *Broadcasting* magazine for an announcing position at WDAY. He applied, got the job, and that's where he stayed for a career he describes as very satisfying and full of lasting memories, working with some exceptional people that he's still friends with today.

Howard's wife Beverly passed away in 1971. They had five children, one of whom died,; the others all make their homes today in the state of Washington. He'll proudly tell you he has six grandchildren and three great grandkids.

In every industry, you'll find consummate professionals who do their jobs and serve the public every time they report for duty. In broadcasting, Howard was one of those, and his long career reflects his dedication to his profession. I was privileged to work with him back then and am glad to know him today as a friend and colleague. When it comes to visiting about the "good old days" in the industry, it's always great fun and very worth my while to talk to Howard Campbell. —LG

2010 Luncheon dates

Third Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.

Fargo Holiday Inn

May 18

June 15

July 20

August 17

September 21

October 19

November 16

December 21

From monthly to occasionally

This is the last of the monthly issues of this newsletter. 18 times I've been able to turn out an edition of *Mike Notes Reprise* but, alas, all the "free time" I had when I retired on January 2, 2008, has somehow evaporated. My "project load" in writing, speaking and other duties has increased, along with a growing travel schedule and JoAnne's and my list of family events.

I've appreciated all the contributions of photos and articles from readers, as well as the fine work of our two regular columnists, **Bob Aronson** and **John Erling**. Hopefully, we'll hear from them again as I plan to put out an *occasional* issue, with the next one tentatively slated for this fall.

The luncheons, begun years ago by **Don Dresser**, will, of course, continue and I plan to be a very regular attendee. I'll miss the June get-together because I'll again be in Summerlin (Las Vegas area) taking care of the dogs while our family there is on another trip.

Remember that the luncheons are held the third Tuesday of every month at the Fargo Holiday Inn and I look forward to seeing you as often as you can make it. The *Mike Notes Reprise* web archive will continue, with its Internet address stated on the masthead above. From that website and through your computer, you can read, download and print any of the issues produced so far.

I plan to keep the "alumni & friends" group e-mail list active and will send out luncheon reminder messages and other timely information that comes to my attention.

This isn't "goodbye," just "so long." So, stay tuned! —Larry Gauper, *MIKE NOTES REPRIS* editor





An Aronson Anecdote



by **Bob Aronson**, original host of WDAY Radio's first call-in talk show, *Viewpoint*, circa 1970s. Photo of Bob is from a 1973 *Mike Notes*. He lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

Nuclear-proof Packaging, One Man's Story

I was undecided about a column for this month until I made a trip to Home Depot today. It reminded me that there are a lot of little irritants in this world. I am convinced that somewhere in a small darkened room there are several people of genius IQs that are paid monumental amounts of money just to make our lives miserable. Case in point:

During my visit to the orange and white big box store today I purchased two Master brand locks — really good ones. The advertising said they were almost indestructible and they looked it. They were big, heavy and came two to a pack with the same key opening both locks. I also bought some PVC plastic plumbing pipe and connections, 32 pieces in all. Confounded by the "Self Checkout" I went to one that had a real person behind a counter. I paid, thought nothing more of it and left for home.

Back at my workshop I emptied the Home Depot bag and removed the locks. "Oh boy," I thought, "These babies will really protect our new RV generator."

One big roadblock — the locks were contained in consumer-proof, bullet proof, atomic bomb resistant plastic. The directions were clear, "Take out the keys, open the locks and they will easily slide out of the package." But — the keys were also protected by the plexi-glass type packaging material which was at least six inches thick.

Not one to be easily deterred I took out a utility knife and tried to cut the container, the blade broke. Then I got a pair of scissors; they slipped on the plastic and I cut myself. Thinking like Wylie Coyote I eyed my collection of power tools; drills, table, circular and jig saws, a drill press — but I wasn't quite ready for the nuclear option. I settled on a hack saw and clamped the package in a vice. I sawed around the keys and struck pay dirt. The keys fell out. Needless to say I opened the locks and they easily slid out, just as advertised and it only took 20 minutes a broken blade, a bandage and blood on my shirt.

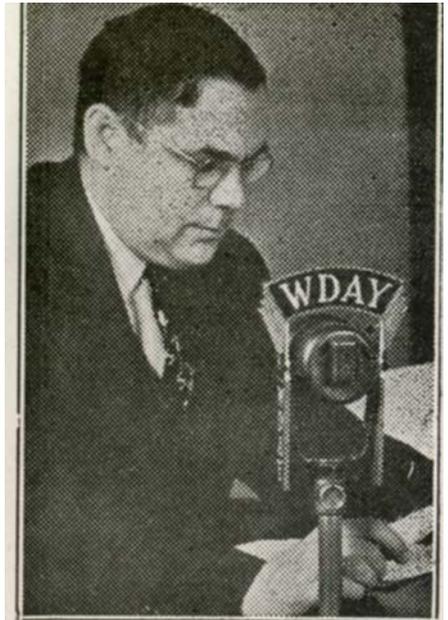
Now we turn to the PVC plastic pipe and fittings that I planned to use in building a collapsible shelving unit for Robin's art shows. Each of the 36 pieces had a small bar code sticker on it. Now, because I'm building shelves, the PVC stuff will show so I decided to remove the bar code stickers. No way! First I tried my handy pocket knife and all I accomplished was gouging the pipe, the bar code was undisturbed. My fingernails resulted in even less success.

A light bulb appeared over my head and I grabbed the electric palm sander. It roared to life and I touched it to the pipe. It took the finish off the pipe but left the bar code clearly visible. Now what? I pondered the situation and knew what would work; Goo-Gone, but I didn't have any so another trip to Home Depot. Long story short, the Goo-Gone worked and it only took 45 minutes to remove all the bar codes. By this time I had already wasted a half-day and hadn't even begun the projects I intended to finish in one day.

Why do manufacturers do this to us? Theft protection? Hell, if a thief stole the locks from Home Depot he would have to go back to the store to steal a jack hammer to open the locks package. And the bar codes — you cannot tell me that there is not an adhesive that will come off with a slight application of the fingernails. Why do they have to use Liquid Nails and rebar to fasten the stickers?

Well, that's my story. I believe those gnomes who work in that darkened room are the epitome of evil. I can see them laughing as they invent still another way to irritate the consumer, especially us old poops. From where do you think the Edsel came? How about child-proof bottles? I could go on — I won't. —B.A.

From the Texas Ranger's Radio Photo Album:

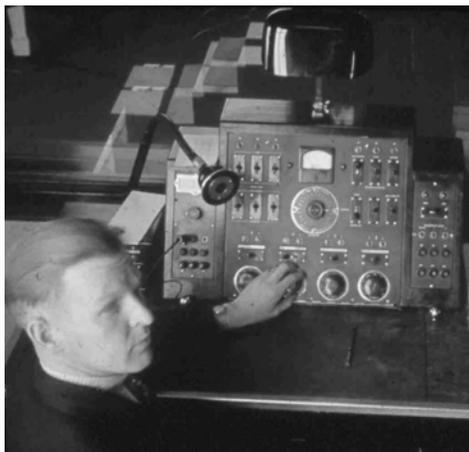


THE STAMP MAN

Meet Mr. H. M. Sherwin, the Stamp Man. Speaking of stamps, if you want to see a real stamp collection you ought to cast your optics on his. He appeared on a "My Hobby" Program and the response was terrific. From that the program department conceived the idea that he should be on once a week, which he is.



Dale Anderson on duty in WDAY-TV's Master Control Room, 1959
Photo submitted by Glenn (Douglas) Schlicht - thanks, Glenn!



Radio engineer **Juline Savold**, on duty in 1935.



WDAY Radio announcer and newsman, **Don Elder**, on a remote, circa 1940.



WDAY-TV studio control, 1959



WDAY-TV transmitter, 1959. Above photos submitted by **Glenn (Douglas) Schlicht**



The Erling Entry by John Erling

“It still hurts...”

Back in the 60’s Vern Gagne, former professional wrestler, football player, trainer and promoter from Chanhassen, Minnesota was huge. He was the big name in wrestling in our neck of the woods. He holds the record for the most combined days as a world champion. Gagne is also a member of the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame.

I was the host of WDAY’s afternoon talk show called *What’s Your Opinion?* It was a guest driven show and one day I hosted Vern Gagne. It was my opinion that professional wrestling was a hoax! And this brash young radio person was going to tell Mr. Gagne what I thought. During the course of the show I began to make my point that professional wrestling was fake, that the wrestlers were actors and I wanted Mr. Gagne to admit my point.

We were standing next to each other during the interview and Vern began to look at me with some amusement and then with disdain. I was wearing my favorite red and blue hounds tooth sport coat. So as Vern began to mount his defense he began with my sport coat and asked who I thought I was in this loud sport coat and talking about something I knew nothing about. He then challenged me to a little arm wrestling to help make his point about the authenticity of professional wrestling. And I, like a brash young radio person, accepted the challenge. He slammed my left arm down so fast I didn’t have enough time to say, “Are you ready?” I let out a loud OUCH as he was saying “do believe

wrestling is real now?” I, of course, said YES! As pain was shooting to my wrist!

Today Verne is living in a memory-loss section of a Bloomington, Minn., health care facility. In March of last year he was cleared of a homicide charge because of his dementia.

But I remember the interview to this day because of the occasional pain.

My wrist still hurts! —*J.E.*

John was host of WDAY Radio’s first afternoon call-in show that aired from the mid-1960s until 1970. He and his wife, Margaret, make their home in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where John is retired after 30 years of hosting the market’s top-rated morning show. He’s now producing an audio history project you can find on the Internet at VoicesofOklahoma.com.



HENRY SHIELS, Jr.
OPERATOR

We never call him Henry—he is always Static to us. Not only because he makes so much noise, but you see, that’s the name he’s been called around the place for a long, long time. Yes, he’s been with the station for many years. Static is a studio operator and head sound-effects man. You want a train sound? All right, Static, give the customers a train effect, will you—but be careful with the cinders. He likes to take care of dogs, ski, ride horseback, and has a weakness for redheads. Single? Yes.

From *Texas Ranger’s Radio Photo Album*, circa late 1930s

Photos from the original *Mike Notes*, July, 1958:



WDAY Promotion Manger **Roy C. "Pete" Pedersen** honors a request for *his* autograph from the Lawrence Welk Band's Champaigne Lady **Alice Lon**. I wonder if Roy got *her* autograph too?



"The Lovely **Lennon Sisters**," captured in a photo taken in Minot, N.D., as they arrived at the CP Hotel for the big "homecoming" appearance of their bandleader and his band.



And there *he* is, the maestro himself, ah-one, and ah-two...North Dakota's own **Lawrence Welk**, a native of Strasburg in the heart of "Germans from Russia" country. He was at the pinnacle of his TV career, with two shows a week on ABC-TV, when he brought his band to Minot. While in the state, he took time to drive to his hometown for a visit.



THE CO-OP SIX—Here's the latest picture of the "Co-op Shoppers." Front row, left to right: Little Joe Stamness, Harry Jennings. Back row, left to right: Warren "Dutchy" Gerrels, Don "Axel" Wardwell, Dorothy "Linda Lu" Fandrich, Les "Esty" Estenson.



The late **Millard Dunkirk**, a.k.a. **Jack Dunn**, long-time WDAY executive, is shown here with WDAY's 1927 "Whippet" Panel Truck, acquired by the station as part of the celebration of WDAY's 50th Anniversary in 1972.